

MIDDLE HILL VIADUCT

REPORT OF DIRECTOR, NET

1. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The report outlines the improvements that have been suggested to the signing and lining at Middle Hill Viaduct to deter vehicles from using the tram only alignment and suggests a possible way forward in the light of recent changes that have occurred on the footway at this location.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee notes the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. It was reported to Committee in March and July 2009 that, due to a number of incidents of cars driving onto the tram only section of Middle Hill Viaduct, the City Council's Road Safety Section had been consulted in order to assess the potential for improving the signing and lining at the junction. Four such incidents occurred between the 19th November 2008 and 5th January 2009 which, although causing disruption to tram services, did not create a safety issue. In addition, a van was driven onto the viaduct on 10th October.
- 3.2. Members of the Committee attended a site meeting on 8th September to discuss the possible measures suggested and the minutes of this meeting were circulated (see Appendix A). The suggestions included changing the order of some of the existing carriageway markings on Middle Hill, the addition of a further "NO LEFT TURN" marking, the re-positioning of the existing "NO ENTRY" carriageway marking and the addition of "TRAM ONLY" and "NO ENTRY" markings beyond the pedestrian / cycle crossing. It was also suggested that the possibility of providing a "bifurcation" map type sign in advance of the junction with the legend "Except Trams" should be explored with the Department for Transport.

4. CURRENT SITUATION AND PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Since the site meeting was held, construction works to the Nottingham Contemporary art gallery have been completed enabling the hoardings and construction equipment that were located on the footway to be removed. The footway is now much wider than it was prior to the works commencing and, as a result, the area appears less cluttered and less distracting to drivers with improved forward visibility. The removal of the hoardings has also enabled the alternative route for cyclists to be reinstated on the footway.

- 4.2 The Promoters, the Highway Authority and Arrow Light Rail (the Concessionaire for NET Line One) have given their consideration to the suggested changes to the signing and lining and, having taken into account the recent improvements to visibility on the footway, have concluded that it is unlikely that significant benefit will be gained from their introduction. Instead it is proposed that the situation is monitored to assess whether the improvements in visibility alone are sufficient to reduce, what is already, an infrequently occurring problem and that, if an improvement is not detected, that any changes to the white lining are undertaken as part of the next scheduled refurbishment of the carriageway markings by the Highway Authority.
- 4.3 The possible use of a new sign with the "Except Trams" legend will continue to be pursued with the Department for Transport as this will have the potential to be used at other junctions on NET Phase Two.

5. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

None.

6. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

None.

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Greater Nottingham Light Rapid Transit Advisory Committee

Notes of Site Meeting held to discuss Possible Measures to Deter Motorists from Driving on Tram Only Section at Middle Hill

8 September 2009

Attendees:	Councillor H James)	
	Councillor I Malcolm)	
	Councillor G Davie)	Nottingham City Council
	Mr C Deas)	
	Mr A Holdstock)	
	Ms F Ashton)	
	Mr S Cotter	-	Arrow Light Rail
	Mr R Harris	-	Nottingham Tram Consortium

The measures that are recommended by the City Council's Road Safety Team to further mitigate the potential for future occurrences of vehicles turning on to the tram-only viaduct were described by Ms. Ashton. These comprise the swapping of the "No Left Turn" road marking with the "Ahead Only" road marking in advance of the junction together with moving the "No Entry" road marking so that the angle of the text is aligned with the pedestrian / cyclist crossing. It is also suggested that a "Tram Only" road marking is added immediately after the crossing and an additional "No Entry" marking is placed in advance of the start of the ballasted section of track.

It was requested by Councillor James that an additional "No Left Turn" marking in advance of the other two markings on Middle Hill be considered.

Ms Ashton also explained that the possibility of providing a "bifurcation" map type sign in advance of the junction with the legend "Except Trams" is to be explored but that this is currently not permitted by the Department for Transport and that authorisation would need to be applied for.

It was clarified that because the problem does not create a safety hazard, the use of funds from the Road Safety budget cannot be justified and that other sources of funding would need to be found to implement the suggested measures.

It was agreed that City Council as Promoters would discuss the issues with the NET Concessionaire and:

- i) consider the potential for introducing an additional "No Left Turn" marking on the carriageway;
- ii) ask the City Council Road Safety Team to discuss with the Department for Transport the viability of using the "Except Trams" legend;
- iii) confirm the scope of the preferred improvements;
- iv) confirm the funding position.

It was agreed that the outcome of the above actions would be reported to a future meeting of the GNLRT Advisory Committee.