

New Stanton Park National Cycle Network 67 blockage

As part of the development of New Stanton Park, the existing route of National Cycle Network route 67 has been closed and fenced off and the replacement route that was made a condition of the original planning permission has not been opened.

I'm writing to make 2 points – firstly to complain about the lack of timely enforcement of the obligation to open the replacement route (reference ERE/1221/0002) and secondly to object to the proposed installation of gates and timed restrictions (reference PA/2026/0182) on the replacement route.

Lack of opened replacement route

Planning application reference ERE/1221/0002 was approved in August 2022 and included a number of conditions including Condition 31 “The provision of the relocated Cycle Route 67 shall be undertaken in accordance with ..., surfaced and made available for use prior to first occupation of any building.” and condition 32 “The provision of the proposed cycle path between Merlin Way and the proposed estate road shown on ..., shall be undertaken, surfaced and made available for use prior to first occupation of any building.”

The first occupation of any building occurred in January 2025 with the DX Freight depot and hub. Subsequently Starbucks and McDonald's have opened on site.

Thus it is clear that the developers have been in breach of their obligation to open the replacement route since January 2025.

Initially this wasn't a serious issue as the old route of NCN67 remained open. This wasn't a great route but was adequate and had been used for many years. The Transport Assessment document (Clause E11) states “In addition, as part of the proposals a section of the Nutbrook Trail (National Cycle Route 67) would be relocated away from its current route along Crompton Road to pass through the Site instead. The realignment would represent a significant enhancement of the Nutbrook Trail, as cyclists and pedestrians would no longer be required to use the existing section of the trail that is heavily trafficked by cars and HGVs entering and exiting the numerous industrial accesses, not street lit and offering a poor road surface that is uneven, cracked and subject to ponding and mud.”

However, around June 2025, the old route was closed in order that the developers could fence and establish the old route as a “biodiversity enhancement area” in order

to meet their obligations under Condition 30 of the planning permission “prior to the first occupation of any building on the site, the Biodiversity Enhancement Areas depicted... shall be enclosed with fencing”

Once the old route for NCN67 was closed, the breach of planning condition 31 became serious. The suggested diversion for family and other leisure cyclists was to use Crompton Road and Hallam Fields Road which have no cycling infrastructure and represent a danger to family cyclists. All the problems of the small area identified in the Transport Assessment remain and are made worse by the need to use the connecting roads “heavily trafficked by cars and HGVs entering and exiting the numerous industrial accesses” (quote from the Transport Assessment). The diversion requires cycling on these unsuitable roads for 800m.

As per the Erewash Borough Council Planning Enforcement Plan <https://www.erewash.gov.uk/planning/planning-information/planning-enforcement-plan-2022> the lack of a replacement route for the closed NCN67 (i.e. from mid summer 2025) should be prioritised as a Priority 2 (Significant Harm) case due to it being a “development that compromises public safety” by forcing users onto the unsuitable road diversion.

It is therefore disappointing that, as of April 2026, this breach of the planning conditions has not been resolved and units on the new site are open while the replacement cycle route remains closed.

Given the importance of the closed route, the planning conditions should be enforced urgently to ensure the route is open as soon as possible to reduce the public danger risk.

In particular, the planning application for gates and timed closures of the route should not be used as a reason to not enforce the existing breach of the planning conditions. Planning process means that it will be months before the new application is determined and having the route closed for this further period is not acceptable.

Proposed part time opening of replacement route

While the replacement route remains closed, the developers have made a planning application (reference PA/2026/0182) to install gates and to introduce a procedure to close the route between 6pm and 7am each day for an initial period of 3 years.

This is not an acceptable solution and I would like to register my OBJECTION to this proposal.

The planning application covering letter states that there is a need for the public to be restricted from accessing the rest of the development site due to a number of on site hazards such as trenches for utility cables, and electric cabling.

However, there are many alternative methods of preventing access including:

- retention of the original NCN67 route until such time as the new route is ready for use and fenced. This could have been the plan but, with the work already done on the old route, is probably no longer possible.
- Fencing of the new route so it can be opened 24x7. The site is currently protected from other, currently open, sections of NCN67 by temporary, portable metal barriers. Obviously these are adequate to protect the safety of path users from accessing the site so could be extended along the side of the new route in order that it could be opened.
- Sufficient manpower could be provided to allow the route to be open 24x7. The proposed opening between 7am and 6pm will require manpower to prevent users of the path from “wandering” so the only reason this cannot be extended to 24 hours is the cost of the additional manpower needed.

The timed part time opening will prevent a number of groups of users from using the route including:

- families wanting to use the traffic free Nutbrook Trail on summer evenings – i.e. after 6pm.
- Workers wishing to commute by cycle but needing to be at work early and thus wanting to use the route prior to 7am

The timed closures are also reliant on the opening and closing times to be rigorously adhered to. In practice there will be occasions when the morning opening is late (staff sickness, etc.) or evening closing time is early. The uncertainties of timing will cause concern to users who travel in one direction but then may be unsure they'll be able to make the return trip before the closing time. If they miss the opening times they'll have to use the totally unsuitable and dangerous diversion route.

The planning application requests permission for timed closures of the route for a period of, initially, 3 years.

The developers have demonstrated their preference to have the new cycle route closed for site management ease and there is no indication that they would be keen to reduce any imposed restrictions on access to the new route. Instead it can be expected that further reasons will be found for continued timed closures and that these closures may extend beyond the 3 year initial period.

The route is an important part of the National Cycle Network. I'm not aware of any other section of the National Cycle Network that is subject to a daily timed closure.

Importance of the route

The closed route is an important cycle link and it is urgent that it is reopened. The route is:

- A key section of the National Cycle Network – route 67.
<https://www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/find-a-route-on-the-national-cycle-network/nutbrook-trail/>
- Forms part of the Nutbrook Trail publicised by Derbyshire County Council <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/walking/walks-and-trails/nutbrook-trail.aspx> and the subject of a leaflet handed out to visitors to the area
<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/pdf/leisure/countryside/countryside-sites/country-parks/shipleynutbrook-trail.pdf> where it is advertised as “a 10 mile traffic free path between Long Eaton, Shipley Country Park and Heanor” which with the current diversion is no longer “traffic free”.

Without the route being opened it is necessary for pedestrians, those with pushchairs, wheelchairs, cyclists and disability vehicles to use the diversion route on roads which are heavily trafficked and, in some places, have no footway (e.g. Hallam Fields Road). Clearly this is dangerous for all non motorised users.

To summarise, the existing breach of the planning condition (dangerous since summer 2025) should be the subject of enforcement measures now to ensure the, already built, new route is opened immediately. The planning proposal for gates and timed access restrictions should be refused. Prior to completion of the development site, access from the cycle route to the wider site can be restricted by use of the existing temporary metal fences and thus could be opened immediately.