# Newport's Old Green Roundabout overhaul sparks public backlash over traffic and pollution fears



Plans to overhaul the Old Green Roundabout in Newport are stirring up significant public discontent, with many residents expressing concern over potential traffic issues and environmental implications. The proposed changes aim to transform the roundabout into a junction prioritising buses, a move intended to enhance public transport efficiency within the city. However, critics argue that this could exacerbate existing traffic congestion rather than alleviate it.

Local voices, including resident Roland Granville, have lamented the city's current state, questioning whether those in favour of the changes can recall the challenges Newport has previously faced. Granville warned that the city's air pollution levels could surge as vehicles remain gridlocked for extended periods, echoing similar concerns raised regarding the 50mph speed limits on the M4. This sentiment reflects a broader anxiety among residents about the impact of infrastructure changes on air quality and urban livability.

A petition has garnered traction, urging Newport Council Leader Dimitri Batrouni and Welsh Government Transport Minister Ken Skates to reconsider the proposed alterations. The petition, which aims for no changes to the roundabout, highlights worries over the potential for increased congestion and a decline in traffic flow. Residents are concerned that the proposed infrastructure changes may not account for the realities of everyday commuting, potentially leading to greater disruption rather than improvement.

Despite these mixed public reactions, various officials remain optimistic about the direction of Newport's transport plans. Councillor Yvonne Forsey voiced cautious optimism regarding the city’s air quality, citing improvements attributed to recent traffic measures such as lower speed limits on the M4 and the introduction of more electric buses. Yet, even she acknowledged the possibility of 'street canyon' effects, where obstructions can exacerbate pollution levels in certain urban areas.

Ongoing discussions about the overhaul of the Old Green Roundabout come amid broader transport reform initiatives across Newport, including a proposal for a new public transport interchange at the Newport railway station. The ambition is to foster sustainable travel options, emphasising cycling and walking, but opposition councillors have raised concerns about the feasibility of these plans. They argue that the proposed changes may unintentionally complicate driving conditions and could lead to negative repercussions for local businesses.

As Newport City Council pushes forward with its plans for road layout changes, the future of the Old Green Roundabout remains contentious. With local dissent clearly articulated and a petition in circulation, it is evident that the city's residents are keenly aware of the balance needed between improving public transport and maintaining the integrity of roadways crucial for daily commutes. The council's commitment to enhancing Newport's transport infrastructure will require not only strong advocacy but also careful consideration of community needs to avoid the pitfalls of misalignment between proposed changes and public sentiment.

The stakes are high, as a successful transformation of Newport’s roundabout could signify progress towards a more sustainable urban environment, while any misstep might lead to further frustration among a populace already feeling the pressure of rapid change. As public discourse continues, the outcome remains uncertain, underscoring the importance of community engagement in municipal decision-making.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2
2. Paragraph 3
3. Paragraph 4
4. Paragraph 5
5. Paragraph 6
6. Paragraph 7
7. Paragraph 8

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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2. <https://www.change.org/p/no-change-to-the-old-green-roundabout> - A petition urging Newport Council Leader Dimitri Batrouni and Welsh Government Transport Minister Ken Skates to abandon proposed changes to the Old Green roundabout, advocating for no alterations to preserve the city's current traffic flow and prevent potential congestion.
3. <https://herald.wales/south-wales/newport/newport-road-overhaul-plans-still-on-track-despite-mixed-public-reaction/> - An article discussing the ongoing plans to overhaul Newport's road layout, including replacing the Old Green Roundabout with a junction prioritizing buses, despite mixed public reactions and concerns about potential traffic congestion.
4. <https://caerphilly.observer/news/newport/1048124/major-city-centre-transport-changes-on-track-despite-lukewarm-public-reception/> - A report highlighting the progression of major transport changes in Newport city centre, such as replacing the Old Green Roundabout, despite lukewarm public reception and concerns about the impact on encouraging walking, cycling, or bus use.
5. <https://herald.wales/south-wales/newport/optimism-in-newport-as-councillor-says-air-quality-is-improving-thanks-to-traffic-measures/> - An article reporting on Newport councillor Yvonne Forsey's cautious optimism regarding improving air quality in the city, attributing it to traffic measures like lower M4 speed limits and increased electric buses, while acknowledging potential 'street canyon' effects.
6. <https://caerphilly.observer/news/newport/1048940/newport-questions-over-city-roundabout-works/> - A report questioning the proposed overhaul of Newport's Old Green Roundabout, citing concerns from opposition councillors about potential serious difficulties for drivers and harm to businesses, as well as uncertainties regarding project funding.
7. <https://news.tfw.wales/news/progress-update-on-sustainable-travel-proposals-for-newport-city-centre> - An update on sustainable travel proposals for Newport city centre, detailing plans for a new public transport interchange at Newport rail station, highway revisions to replace the Old Green Roundabout, and opportunities to improve the public realm around Newport Castle.