

Angry British villagers stop Google maps car: report

3 April 2009



A Google Street View car with its camera in Amsterdam in March 2009. Angry residents of an English village blocked the driver of a Street View car who was filming the neighbourhood, saying they feared he would encourage burglaries, a report said.

Angry residents of an English village blocked the driver of a Google Street View car who was filming the neighbourhood, saying they feared he would encourage burglaries, a report said Friday.

One resident, Paul Jacobs, told the BBC he had alerted his neighbours after spotting the car from his window in Broughton, Buckinghamshire, southern England, on Wednesday.

"I don't have a problem with [Google](#) wanting to promote villages. What I have a problem with is the invasion of [privacy](#), taking pictures directly into the home," Jacobs said.

"We've already had three burglaries locally in the past six weeks. If our houses are plastered all over Google it's an invitation for more criminals to strike. I was determined to make a stand, so I called the police."

After his call, a police car arrived in Broughton to reports of a dispute between a crowd of people and a Google [Street View](#) contractor.

"They felt his presence was an intrusion of their

privacy. When police arrived at the scene, the car had moved on," explained a spokeswoman for Thames Valley Police.

The Google Street View project, set up last month in Britain, aims to provide detailed 360-degree views online of streets all over Britain.

The project has already been strongly criticised by associations like Privacy International, a pressure group which has launched legal action against the IT company.

Google is confident their new mapping project is within the law.

"Before launching Street View we sought the guidance and approval of the Information Commissioner's Office. The ICO has repeatedly made clear that it believes that Street View includes the safeguards necessary to protect people's privacy," a Google spokesman said.

"The Metropolitan Police (in London) told us they saw no appreciable security risk, that burglars are opportunistic, and that mapping products can be useful in solving and mapping crime in an area."

He added: "Embarking on new projects, we sometimes encounter unexpected challenges, and Street View has been no exception."

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