



A tram leaving Torre del Mar to run light to the depot in mid-afternoon.

# Vélez Málaga: The small new tramway

The smallest of Europe's new tramways is the 4.67km (2.9 mile) line in the Spanish town of Vélez Málaga (population 52 150). It is located 35km (22 miles) east of the better-known resort city of Málaga in Andalucía.

The new line, opened on 11 October 2006, provides a link to the coastal development at Torre del Mar, and cost EUR18m to build. Some 3.1km (1.9 miles) of the standard-gauge line is double track. The 25-year operating concession was awarded to a consortium formed by bus operator Alsina Graells, railfreight company ACS and construction company Sano Construcciones.

The operator purchased the three low-floor trams for EUR7.75m, adding on to an order placed with CAF by the city of Sevilla for

17 low-floor cars. The cars are 31.26m long and 2.65m wide with a floor height of 350mm. Each accommodates 54 seated and 154 standing passengers; estimated traffic is 1.2 million passengers per year.

A further 1.3km (0.8 mile) of single track is under construction to take the line north from its Parque Jurado Lorca terminus across the town centre to the former railway station. A 20/40-minute service operating 07.00-22.00 (Sundays 08.00-23.00) requires two trams (from 15.20 the 40-minute frequency requires just one tram). The trams have obviously made an impact on local motorists, with seven collisions reported in the local press, and dents in the trams to prove it. The pictures were taken by **Gary Conn** in February.

Right: An interior view of one of the CAF-built trams.

Below: The extension through the town centre under construction.

Bottom: Leaving the Vélez Málaga terminus, opposite the bus station.

