

Committee, Group or Sub Group : Road Safety Group

Meeting Date & Venue: Thursday 4th March 2021 at 7pm via Zoom

Report Author: Adele Sharp - Chairman

Report

Present were: A Sharp (AS), J Buller (JB) , M Buller (MB) Speed Watch Rep , Cllr Paddy Riordan (PR)

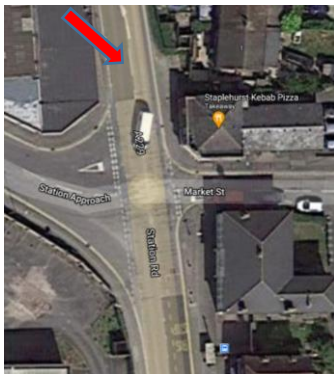
Apologies: C Bowden (CB).

Regretfully SF resigned as a Parish councillor and as a member of this group due to personal commitments. We would like to thank her for all her hard work.

The report of 28th January 2021 was accepted with agreed corrections.

1. Parking by kebab shop

A resident has raised the suggestion of having bollards (& / or a planter) outside the kebab shop to prevent parking there. A number of efforts have been made by the clerk to emphasise this should be happening but this has not resolved the issue. In order to have bollards there are regulations / measurements to adhere to. **Action:** PR will measure for distances and contact Sue Laport.



2. Bower Walk – Bower Walk at the Gybbon Rise end by post box

Suggestion to have a dropped kerb at the end of Bower Walk and other side. because of the amount of footfall there, especially with pushchairs etc. **Action:** JB will investigate who SF contacted to get a dropped curb.



3. Speedwatch – still not allowed due to lockdown restrictions.

4. Sainsburys

Station road - resurfacing work near the Pelican crossing taking place. There are still concerns about the general condition such as potholes in the roads of that area.

We await to see the impact of traffic at the roundabout area in general, once Sainsburys opens.

Residents of Roberts Cottage raised concerns that a lamp post in the car park was right by their property also a designated smoking area is on their boundary. PR had raised the issue of the lamp post and other points to Sainsburys who are putting in a shielded lamp post there and have raised other points with Sainsburys so hopefully this will be dealt with.

Box outside Gresham house for the puffin crossing is a potential problem as it has narrowed the pathway. PR will go and have a measure up as the pavement should be 1.5m to enable access (wheelchairs). Traffic light issues for temporary lights - not on! – transpires that someone was switching off the lights every night. Whilst roundabout goes in the lights will be monitored 24 hrs.

5. Marden Road / Clapper Lane crossroads / Hen & Duckhurst development - Nothing to report

6. Headcorn pedestrian crossing

It was suggested that Bovis should do a crossing in Headcorn Rd instead of the one they were initially going to do in Station Rd; as this has now been done by Sainsburys. As they still have that money, why not redirect that money and make a crossing similar to the Marden Rd one nearer to their site to make the road safer and slow traffic?

Action: Ask clerk to enquire about this - Richard Timms MBC? Picture – arrow indication of road only, not intended site.



Note -The Marden Road pelican crossing completed, except for one set facing the wrong way and the power not turned on - should have been January (2021 we assume!). J Watson Kent Highways responded *"This crossing was installed by the developer so I will speak to our Development Agreements Team and advise them that this still hasn't been resolved."*

7. SPC Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) – priorities – MB feedback from Jennie MBC:

7.1 Hawkenbury Bridge HIP item 10. Accidents. staplehurstroadinfo@gmail.com

There have been no official reports / contacts since our last meeting of any accidents but we know there were two further incidents on 24th and 26th February 2021, a head on and on in a ditch. We had called for action here but as nothing had come through to Kent Highways J Watson was *"unable to comment"* and reminded us that, *"there is no funding available to carry out any improvements here at this time."* We will continue to collect data and lobby on this matter.

7.2 Church Hill Gateway works / Cranbrook Rd at 30mph threshold

The road calming measures work was agreed well before lockdown, promised by November 2020. We are now informed that *"Works are due to take place from 1 April."*

7.3 Gybbon Rise parking issues - on hold due to COVID.

8. 'The Quarter' High street down the hill towards Pinnock Lane (Garage & Morrison shop)

There are two connected issues here: 30mph & pedestrian puffin / pelican crossing.

HIP item 4 Quarter Cranbrook Road - Increased pressure from residents regarding the change to 30mph along The Quarter, Cranbrook Road. JW's response, *"I am aware of this as I have received an enquiry from one of your residents who wanted the speed limit to be lowered as part of the upcoming works through the village, which obviously wasn't possible. As soon as lockdown lifts and traffic flows get back to normal we can arrange speed surveys to see what the mean speeds are which is the first step. However, 30mph limits are usually on roads where there are properties both sides of the road. On this stretch there are properties only on one side so 40mph is normally considered the appropriate speed limit."*

She also sent us information about Crossing and costings: *"I sent you an information sheet about zebra crossings and this provided costings and points to consider. Is this something the parish council would be*

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willing to fund? The first step would be a pedestrian/traffic survey to see if a crossing point is justified and we would also need to ensure there is enough land to accommodate this."

This was a 42 page report from MBC, but basically a Zebra crossing would cost £17,000 (not convinced that would be sufficient), puffin crossing £38,200. It has to be installed in a 20 – 30 mph area to have a crossing.

Action: We feel the following needs to be communicated to MBC & Kent Highways:

- * As per the picture below (courtesy of Google) the current 30mph starts at the Frittenden Rd area. There is the Cricket Lodge on that side of the road, which flows onto to the garage / Morrison shop / car wash site i.e. there are properties on that side of the road (East).
- * There is a bus stop on both sides of the road, opposite the garage and then on the garage side the bus stop is actually past the Pinnock Lane turn off towards Cranbrook.
- * This is used by children in the properties (West) who have to cross this busy main road during rush hour to be able to go to school in Cranbrook. We are all concerned about potential fatalities.
- * Our suggestion would be to:
 - a) extend the 30mph to Pinnock Lane where the built up properties extend to and
 - b) install a crossing between the Hallwards pedestrian walkway and the bus top (West side)



Red shows where the 30mph is (top / North) and could be (bottom / South).

White = suggested crossing placement

Note the 2 bus tops

MB's visual plan (to be added to our HIP) is at the end.

9. **Homeleights** - Parking on pavements outside Homeleights and neighbouring properties. PR did visit and have a chat about this. Homeleights are aware and assured us that they try to tell customers / drivers not to block the path. Its an ongoing problem. There has been a traffic warden who's issued tickets to a car driver on the single yellow line.

10. **Narrow paths** – nothing to report today.

A.O.B.

- * re cutting back of hedges / tidying, Payback team ready to restart in the near future.
- * PR suggested Headcorn Rd opposite houses where everyone parks could do with a tidy up or made into a proper parking layby. It looks and could easily be made to look nicer and safer.
- Action:** Ask clerk if it can be established who owns the land (land search?). Is it private land? Highways? Abandoned by developers from years ago?
- * Item 'accident report' to be added as regular item to agenda in future

Date & venue of next meeting: Thursday 1st April 2021 7pm Zoom

The meeting ended at 8.10pm.

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A229 Cranbrook Road a safer crossing

The A229 Cranbrook Road is a straight stretch which encourages excessive speeding by too large a proportion of drivers, many well in excess of the 40mph limit.

The location of the bus stop on the eastern side (travelling south) is very poor as it is on a narrow strip of land with no connecting pavement. Passengers have no option but to cross the road at this point.

The bus service here is used by Secondary-aged schoolchildren and many residents of the estate which includes many bungalows occupied by more elderly people.

The recent expansion of the range of goods on offer has made the garage shop's attraction even greater for all local residents as well as passing motorists.

The installation of three crossing points along the Marden Road and the expected one in Station Road has highlighted the need for one on the Cranbrook Road. Ideally it would be by pedestrian-controlled lights to serve both the shop and bus service.

Proposed

The siting of a crossing to the south of Pinnock Lane has already been dismissed as unjustifiable as it would serve no residential properties on the eastern side.

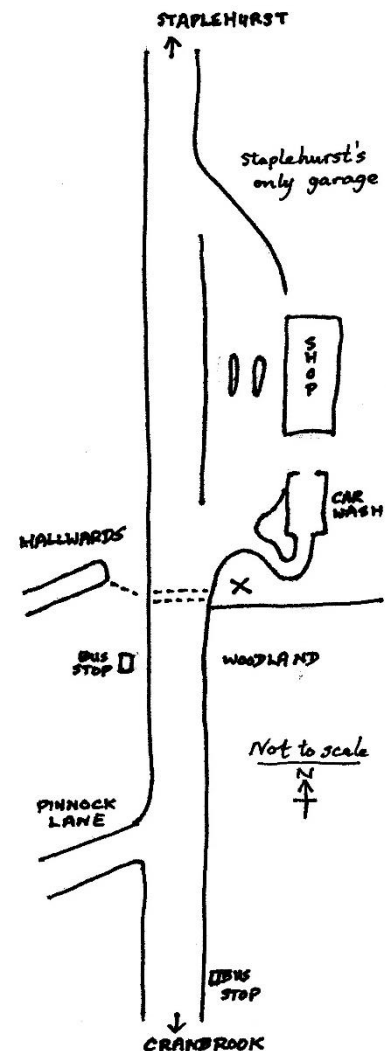
A site to the north of Pinnock Lane is possible with some imagination. (X marks the spot!)

The financial benefits to the shop on the east side of a safe connection to the housing on the west side is enormous and should be a great incentive.

This proposal can be achieved by the gift of the unused grassed-area bounded by the A229, the garage exit, the slip-road to the carwash and the southern boundary. By tarmacking this space, a bus shelter could be installed and a safe surround for pedestrians waiting or accessing the shop and crossing. A further pedestrian painted walkway-route would further encourage customers to safely negotiate the garage forecourt.

Local residents would all benefit from an enhanced infrastructure.

Road Safety would be greatly improved and motorists given more visual reminders that they were negotiating a residential area and not a race track.



Malcolm Buller January 2021

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