

Committee, Group or Sub Group : Road Safety Group

Meeting Date & Venue: Monday 4th December 2023, 9am @ KLC

Report Author: Cllr Adele Sharp - Chairman

Present: A Sharp (AS), M Alesi.

Apologies: M Buller (MB) Speed Watch Rep.

Matters Arising:

The Clerk has contacted KCC re the Sainsburys roundabout which needs repainting. This should be a regular Maintenance issue and not need a reminder by residents to KCC.

1. Highways Improvement Plan – Please note MBC only allow us to have 2 'live' projects – our other projects / wish list are 'archived'. Team leaders: Michelle Norris & Greg McNicholl.

HIP 1. (NEW) Double yellow lines (DYL) on main road A229, single lines (SYL) on Cornforth Close and Chestnut Avenue

Kent Highways have now agreed to us going ahead but that SPC will have to pay for it - @ £3,500. If this is an official item on our HIP we question why SPC not KH would pay for this!

NP parking policy DM23 1.5. **Action:** Report to SPC

HIP 2. The Quarter - Bus stop / crossing & 30mph HIP item 3

Clerk and PR are meeting with Kent Highways (KH) team to look at the site. Feedback when its happened. Reiterated we can get funding, so KH don't need to fund it.

Action: We await feedback of the meeting.

Background

Reasons KH have turned down our request for a crossing are: -

- * It's a 40mph area – We would like it to be moved back to at least Pinnock Lane, ideally moved back a bit further maybe to the convent. (See our HIP4)
- * Footfall is considered too low, only accessing the garage shop or the bus stop.
- * a crossing cannot be near the entrance / exit of the garage/ Pinnock lane
- * no footpath from Frittenden Road to garage nor on to the bus stop. There is only a tiny bit of footpath that the bus stop is on.

In answer we :-

- * There is no cost to them as funding is there via the developers, KH do not have to foot the bill. S106 funding £350,000 for improvements & station CIL money redirected for road crossing.
- * We feel that the very fact that pedestrians are crossing at a dangerous point on the A229 is an accident about to happen.
- * nowhere suitable for a crossing there, (if this was the only criteria used, there would be no crossing at the parade by the chemist. It does have a desire line and more footfall but not ideal).

* KH installed the bus top there (historical?) 'in a dangerous place' so its disingenuous to ignore that there is no issue to address.

2. SID – permission at Headcorn Road, Marden Road, Bathurst Road sites.

Batteries last 5 – 11 days depending on traffic going past i.e. run out quicker on Headcorn Rd

Headcorn Road facing east for 2 weeks

Headcorn Road facing west for 2 weeks

Bathurst Road for 1 week (this should ideally be 1 in term time / 1 in holidays)

Marden Road facing west for 1 week

Marden Road facing east for 2 weeks

Currently Jean changes the battery weekly and sends the data. Recommendation is that the camera does not stay in the same location longer than 3 weeks.

Looking at latest report

The latest data on Marden Road and Headcorn East results seem to indicate that the SID is helping to slow traffic (Av. 28mph but max speed 65mph late at night).

Over 11 vehicles per day are exceeding the 30mph limit by at least 50% which would result in points on their license if police officers were there.

This adds weight to planning concerns regarding any developments on those roads. The impact on passing drivers of a vehicle emerging from extra driveways will undoubtedly be a distraction on Marden and Headcorn, especially if they are driving more than the speed limit.

MB contacted the company re some anomalies in early hours with a flurry of activity obviously not human traffic – response was not overly helpful. Continue to monitor.

Action: Agreed to recommend MB's TOR / guidelines for SID to go to next council meeting.

3. Sainsburys shuttle bus

Latest news is with MBC / KCC for the change of route – approved. Nothing further yet from Sainsburys about implementing and advertising the route.

Action: clerk will chase.

4. Crossroads

A parishioner raised a complaint about the safety of the crossroads with traffic trying to overtake stationary vehicles and mounting the kerb.

Action: We recommend the following - SPC contact Kent Police and Kent Highways to suggest installing cameras on the traffic lights, redoing of the white lines, and the possibility of

wooden bollards on the high street turning into Marden Road (chestnut tree side) all other sides the pavement is too narrow for this possibility.

5. Hawkenbury Bridge HIP 3

We now have Kent Highways FOI response

In just the last 5 years they have been called out 19 times and spent £39,349. 88

Crashes are categorised by severity (and has approximate costs of):

Fatal - a crash resulting in a death £2.1 million

Serious - detention in hospital, inc paralysis, fractures and severe lacerations £243,000

Slight - includes whiplash, sprains and minor lacerations. £25,000.

This means the true cost of these 19 call outs would be £475,000. Previous KH comments said that traffic lights would be in the region of £60,000, which may have been more cost effective for KH in the long term.

Potential Solutions

A – Do nothing

B – Lobby for traffic lights – no doubt technical issues but appears the common-sense approach – KCC estimate £60,000

C – Build a second bridge – would be challenging and expensive

D – Priority signs – discussed but considered dangerous as there are no clear sight lines either way for traffic to see. Rejected as an option.

E - Mirrors - Concern that they would be smashed very quickly. KCC won't install as 'people rely on them' ?!

Verbally we have support from Headcorn Parish Council who have been campaigning for improved safety at Hawkenbury Bridge.

Action: report written to SPC

1) Lobby Kent County Council to undertake a feasibility study and report back the findings

2) Seek support from Headcorn Parish Council and others to lobby Kent County Council to undertake a feasibility study and report back the findings

6. Commuter parking in Poyntell Road

Background - A resident contacted us and requested parking permits for residents.

Commuter parking at the railway station does 'migrate' to nearby roads but some investigation indicates this may not be the main issue here as there are cars parked at 8pm. It has also been observed that driveways capable of having 2 cars seem to only have one which may infer that the other car on the road is not on the drive-in order to not block the one on the drive?

The Poyntell development has separate garage blocks, but residents may consider them too small or too far away or they may even have been sold off now.



This is a lengthy report that shows a lot of Councilor consideration about this.

PR made a request to MBC Parking services about this. Their response:

Ref: URN742: Request for restrictions: Poyntell Road, Staplehurst

We have surveyed the Poyntell Road area on several occasions and although on the first survey a large number of vehicles were observed to be parked on the road, a large number of properties did not appear to have any off-road parking availability, there was also notable parking still available on street. There were also spur roads that did not appear to have similar issues. When we visited the site again there did appear to be less vehicles parked and therefore more available space on street at the time of the survey.

Due to the above findings, we were unable to identify any substantial evidence of extensive parking difficulties which would enable us to put forward any recommendations to place parking restrictions at this time.

Permits for residents

1. SPC would have to consult directly with residents in a number of roads to see if there was support for this.
2. However, this is a public road so anyone can park there. There is no residential privilege to park on the road, although we can all agree it's convenient and hoped for.
3. Managing a permit scheme is a lot of money - there is no MBC enforcement for here.

DYL / SYL

Noted - Hurst, Newlyn, Fishers and Market St. And Lodge Rd have a single yellow line to stop all day parking. Neither Parisfield Cl or Headcorn Rd have yellow lines (once the DYL from the crossroads end, at the top of Hurst Close).

Lime Trees does not have SYL south or east of the play area.

1. SPC would have to consult directly with residents in a number of roads to see if there was support for this. If there was support in favour, SPC would then ask Kent Highways if they can undertake the legal consultation required.
2. DYL / SYL would mean that residents would not be able to leave their cars on the road.

Overall

- * when built, each home without a drive was allocated a garage in the block (Corner Farm, Poyntell etc)
- * public roads are for public use – visitors should park considerately not blocking drives.
- * restrictions (such as permit-holders only) are put in place near pre-car housing
- * or coloured lines on roads that are near to dangerous junctions (Cuckolds Corner), sensitive buildings (school), etc
- * or where traffic flows need to be kept free (A229)

Other public roads are for driving on and can be parked on, as long as it is safe to do so.

Recommendation: SPC cannot recommend using public money to provide extra parking for a resident unless it falls into the criteria above.

7. Headcorn Road Layby Layby - £11228.40

Background – Area along Headcorn Road where about 8 vehicles park just off the road on the side. Suggested it be tarmac'd.



PR obtained a quotation £11228.40 and suggested CIS (CIL?) money be used to fund this.

Agreed that it does look messy as a self made DIY parking area. Only room for about 8 cars.

1. Who owns this area? Suspect its Kent Highways.

Most Kent main roads have a strip of land, about 1m owned by KCC Highways for services etc, and then the land could be anyone's – private , housing association / MBC / PC etc

2. KH should do / may refuse SPC doing it / may expect KH quality job – more £

3. Not sure it is a safe area to park as its mostly opposite a T junction.
4. If agreed to go ahead with the project, SPC would then be responsible long term.

Action:

- 1) Do not recommend SPC spend £10,000 of CIL to benefit 8 residents
- 2) Ask Kent Highways their thoughts on them maintaining this area as its theirs (most likely) - or would they fill it in as they have done in other areas?
- 3) We could let the 8 residents using it regularly know that £10,000 would fix the problem if they wished to fund it, but they would need to liaise with KH.
- 4) We need to continue to remind MBC when passing developments with 1.5 parking spaces that this is the problem that occurs

8. Hedges

Malcolm put thankyou notes through those that had cut back. Adele had investigated a complaint on the Lime trees estate but felt it was not encroaching anything other than two strands of briar that a secateur would fix. Action: deliver letters if needed

9. Speedwatch - Not been out recently.

Auto Speed watch - Auto speedwatch records cars 46mph – 69mph
Still with us but may go soon. Letters sent automatically not by SPC.

10. Accidents/incidents reported – staplehurstroadinfo@gmail.com – none reported

We know that a car hit a telegraph pole on the Headcorn road bend.

AOB: none

Dates of forthcoming meetings: Tuesday 2nd January 7pm tbc – only if urgent matters

Notes on HIP items not activated as far as Kent Highways work:

- * Fishers Road - bottom - car parking - filling in ditch area to make rear access to gardens - sounds like an MBC planning enforcement issue. **No further info**
- * Market Street / Winches Garth - an access made into Fishers Road at rear & parking on green at bottom of road.
 - * bins not collected before people go to work due to too many cars. They will be doing them later in the day which may solve that. **clerk to check if MBC own the green** - suggest they either protect it or grass crete it. left into Wiches garth into . . . some parking bays and then dble yellow line - could be parking area as no purpose to dble yellow line and we are sure no one enforces it. MBC need to investigate this area.

Selling cars down there too, even though police have done a check. Have they moved to Fishers road? **No further info** Action : Has MBC looked into?

Archived HIP items as can only have 2 things live on HIP. **AS will tweak HIP**
HIP 6. Hawkenbury Bridge work – archived as Kent Highways felt that as they had put signs and painted road marking it was completed.

HIP 8. Narrow paths Cuckolds Corner / crossroads - Greg felt road might yield 20cm nothing significant. MB emphasised that the junction is already above capacity and pedestrians have to step into the road to pass each other. Too narrow for wheel chairs and buggies. - **archived 9-14** Michelle returned to the only 2 priorities per year - remaining items are 'archived' Broken edges of country lanes should not be on HIP but be reported via 'report a fault' on website. The Marden Rd roundabout misuse is a police matter.

New contacts at KCC Highways - email addresses on file for ease of access by all

Kent Highways contacts

west.highwayimprovements@kent.gov.uk

the new system (since 6/6/22) of a team instead of one local person (Jennie Watson) who knew us personally and visited Staplehurst so knows the roads!

Claremarie.Vine@kent.org

Marden Road projects ref. Hen & Duckhurst aka Dickens Gate estate

Elizabeth.Bineham@kent.gov.uk

Assistant Engineer @ Highway Improvements (West Kent) | Design & Delivery | Road Safety & Active Travel Group | Highways & Transportation | Kent County Council | Doubleday House, St Michaels Close, Aylesford, ME20 7BU | 03000 41 81 81 | www.kent.gov.uk

Toby.Donlon@kent.gov.uk

Overseeing the surveying of sites in co-operation with Claremarie, to install an interactive SID system, to be paid for by Hen & Duckhurst development

Sainsburys contact? Gary ?

Note – kept on minutes FYI

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

Costs: Zebra crossing = £17,000 , puffin crossing £38,200.

We would need to lobby for the 30mph to extend to past Pinnock Lane, Iden Manor, as they have to be installed in a 20 – 30 mph area to have a crossing. **Action:** On the HIP

* current 30mph starts at Frittenden Rd area. On that side of the road (East) is the Cricket Lodge, which flows onto to the garage / Morrison shop / car wash site

* Bus stop on both sides of the road - opposite the garage & on the garage side it's 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 at least to Pinnock Lane where the built up properties extend to, ideally to where the 50mph threshold is (Fuller House) and

b) install a crossing between the Hallwards pedestrian walkway and the bus top (West side)