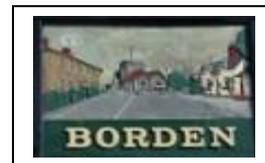# BORDEN PARISH COUNCIL

19th December 22

Parish Clerk, Ms T Millum
Tel: 07821 664737
Email: clerk@bordenparishcouncil.gov.uk

FAO Simon Jones Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport
KCC

Dear Simon

RE: SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT FOR MAIDSTONE ROAD AND CHESTNUT STREET, BORDEN

Borden Parish Council have been very concerned for some time for the safety of residents, non-motorised vehicle users, pedestrians and people who cycle or ride horses, who live along Maidstone Road and Chestnut Street, Borden, due to the high level of traffic that uses this road, especially since the improvement works that have started at the M2 Junction 5 Stockbury Roundabout. This situation has been exacerbated by using these roads as a diversion route when the A249 is closed as part of these improvement works, or as a result of an accident and when drivers then also use it as a 'rat run' believing it to be a quicker route when the A249 is then open.

The increased use of these roads as a diversion route, with now upwards of 30,000 vehicles a day including 12% goods vehicles, has led to several personal injury accidents, damage to property, damage to the highway and pavements and a considerable number of near misses, often involving residents. Other highway users such as cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders have complained to the Parish Council that they feel particularly unsafe and vulnerable along these roads, even when they are not being used as a diversion route.
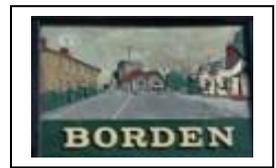
The Parish Council understands that the latest consent for use as a planned diversion route was issued in 2008 by KCC Highways and omitted to mention or consider that Chestnut Street had been closed to through traffic since 1982 having been deemed as unsuitable for the lower traffic levels of that period. This clearly is too long ago given the changed circumstances, the additional development along Maidstone Road and the absence of any other route for users who cannot use the main A249.

The Council is therefore making an urgent request for a Safety Risk Assessment for these roads to be carried out as soon as possible. Measures to minimise the risk for residents and those participating in active travel, must be developed from this assessment.

Any Safety Risk Assessment must ensure all the local population, including those living along it (and not just car or lorry drivers using it), are taken into consideration. The Parish Council accepts that you cannot eliminate all the risks on these roads, but measures must be taken to ensure that risks to the above groups are mitigated as far as possible.

Any assessment must initially be focussed on its current use as a daily and diversion route between Key Street Roundabout and Stockbury Roundabout. A further assessment also needs to be made

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when Maidstone Road is closed at the Stockbury Roundabout and traffic is
diverted onto Oad Street and then onto the new roundabout at Stockbury, and again after the planned highway changes for
Wises lane and Manor Farm development in 2023/4 have been completed by KCC.

Clearly any Safety Risk Assessment must involve the Parish Council the residents of properties in these roads and demonstrate how it takes into account both recent government guidance on provision for active travel and KCC's vision zero policy.

National Highways will also have an important part to play in the assessments and should not assume that just because a highway exists it is suitable for use as a diversion either for planned or unplanned use. No approved diversion exists between Bobbing and Iwade or between j5 and Maidstone.

I shall be reporting the matter back to the Parish Council on the 19th January 2023 and would be grateful for a reply to my urgent request mentioned above by then. I have taken the liberty of copying this letter to our Local MP Gordon Henderson, Daniel Rollinson National Highways Project Manager and County Councillor Mike Baldock.

Yours sincerely

Signed on behalf of Borden Parish Council

Teresa Millum
Clerk to Borden Parish Council