

## **DECEMBER 2022 UPDATE ON HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

Since my last report in November 2022, I have reported 3 further Highway issues to KCC. This means there is an increase to a grand total of 106.

These 3 new issues are:-

Mud on Hearts Delight from local development.

Warning sign on Oad Street just before hamlet of Oad Street has been damaged.

Footpath and hedge condition in Maidstone Road near ZR69 overgrown and thus obscuring vision.

95 of the 106 have now been dealt either in a satisfactory manner or with a satisfactory explanation. 11 are still outstanding including the 3 new ones.

The 30mph signs in Pond Farm Road just as you enter the village are obscured by vegetation and the 30mph sign on the road is worn out. KCC Highways have said because of the winters bad weather they will not action these issues till the Spring.

The cutting back of the vegetation around the 30mph sign in Borden Lane has still not taken place likewise the provision of new signs at the junction of Sutton Baron Road and Pond Farm Road.

The blocked drain in The Street is scheduled to be cleared in the next few months. The school sign in School Lane has yet to be moved. Other works still to be completed include the white line renewals in Pond Farm Road, and Oad Street.

### **Provision of Bench at junction of Mountview and The Street**

The provision of a bench at this junction was agreed recently by Council and KCC Highways have given permission for it to be located within their land. KCC have now decided to remove local bus services, The Council has two choices about the location of any new seat. Either in the bus shelter or just outside the shelter on the originally agreed spot. A decision about the standard of Bench, also has to be reached now that estimates have been obtained.

### **M2/Junction 5 Stockbury roundabout improvements**

The Chairman Councillor Sims and I, as a result of an invitation from Graham's, visited the site of the M2J5 Improvements. It was an extensive visit lasting nearly 3 hours. My main conclusion is that the construction works is a very complex business very dependant on weather and unknown factors such as a moving of a main water main that is 27 inches in diameter. The scheme is on schedule for completion by the end of 2024 and within budget. We were showed the ongoing extensive improvements to the eastbound slips which are on schedule for completion in January.

There is shortly to be released a broad programme of works in 2023 including diversion of Maidstone Road and the westbound slips.

We highlighted the major problems being experienced by residents in Maidstone Road and Chestnut Street. In particular we asked that other speed measuring facilities and traffic calming measures should be provided which would encourage lower speeds and also the need to use this diversion route only where necessary. Graham's promised to consider this and there was a meeting schedule between Grahams, National Highways and local residents for 13<sup>th</sup> December and further information may be available.

KCC Highways need to do an assessment of risks to residents around the use of these roads as a diversion given the extra flows of up to 30,000 vehicles a day and recent accidents. Council is asked to approve a written request to KCC Highways demanding that this takes place.

Information about road closures and diversions continues to be supplied by Grahams and are displayed by the Clerk on our various social media pages.

There has been a recent further email from KCC Highways with regard to the missing link at Oad Street. In it the current positions was stated:-

**“I understand from KCC Public Transport; that the Arriva and KCC position on the issue has been shared with National Highways and we are awaiting their response before an assessment of the available options can take place. Once the available options are known; this will be shared with the Parish Council for comment.”**

I will keep Members informed of any developments.

## **KCC Highways Service**

A number of speed measurements have been conducted during October throughout the Parish and the raw data has been passed to me in late November. These are being studied and a further meeting of the Highway Improvement Group is scheduled for early January to discuss these results. A further report will be made to the January 2023 Council meeting.

## **Waiting restrictions in The Street, Borden.**

It was agreed by Council in October to consult with local residents about the proposal to extend the waiting restrictions in The Street, Borden by some 50 metres. Letters were posted to 17 affected properties in The Street. There has been 5 responses so far, 29%, 4 supporting the extension and 1 objecting and these are attached as Appendix 1. Councillors will need to decide in the light of this consultation whether or not to proceed with asking KCC Highways to extend the existing no waiting restrictions in The Street by 50 meters.

## **Key Street Roundabout Improvements**

I have received an update from KCC Highways with regard to the proposed improvements to the Key Street roundabout.

They have said that there are a number of matters that have put details of the Key Street scheme on hold, as they are awaiting more certainty on the timing of the delivery of the Chestnut Street roundabout by the developer. Depending upon when that roundabout is to be delivered, they say it may influence the final design of the Key Street scheme, and they wish to avoid incurring extra costs on the project from having to design and construct interim measures.

Their intention has been to tie into the Chestnut Street roundabout, but if that cannot be delivered before they wish to commence on site, an alternative form of connection onto the A249 southbound slip road from Chestnut Street will have to be progressed.

I also understand that the Major Projects team, which are progressing the scheme, hope to be in a position to make the decision soon, and do intend to provide a report on the project to the next JTB meeting, which I am attending in late February, detailing the scheme and timetable. However, they state that works are expected to start late 2023/early 2024 to avoid conflict with the M2J5 Stockbury works and their associated temporary traffic management.

I will keep Councillors update as soon as I find out further information.

## **Speedwatch**

Initial work to get the Speedwatch scheme off the ground has started. The new Co-ordinator has been contacting volunteers to see if they are still available. Equipment has been passed over and he will be continuing his development as Coordinator.

John Fassenfelt December 2022.

## Appendix 1 – Responses to Consultation about extending No Waiting restrictions on The Street

Survey returned	Do you live in the Street	Do you object or support 50m	Comments
1	Yes	Support	<p>We live in one of the bungalows opposite the recreation park and have noticed how many near misses there has been when cars are overtaking the parked cars near the park entrance and cars driving past Home Farm.</p> <p>I totally agree with the proposed Yellow Line extension. Has it been considered the adverse effect this would have on the opposite side of the road. If cars were to be parked there this would cause vehicles to veer into the road past Home Farm when heading towards the Church.</p> <p>I am happy for the parish council members to discuss this issue with me, either by e-mail, phone or in person.</p>
2	Yes	Support	<p>Please can I ask, was there a summary document published with recommendations from the main survey we completed a few months ago? I have assumed that extending the yellow lines in The Street is probably one of the outcomes, but I haven't seen anything circulated following the survey.</p> <p>My partner and I feel strongly there should be a speed hump across the road from The Forge to Holly Tree Cottage (or close by). Is this something the Parish Council is considering?</p>
3	Yes	Support	<p>This Road is getting very busy these day as many drivers use it as a Rat run. It really needs parking only on one side as Buses often cannot get though. Worry is a Fire Engine will be stuck one day.</p>
4	Yes	Support	<p>Hi, I support double yellow line's extension for safety of children's and everyone else using the park. I would like to be extended all the way to the church and install a zebra crossing on front of the park. Thanks!</p>
5	Yes	Object	<p>We object to the proposal as stated as this will impact how we safely access and egress our drives at St Martins Cottage and Lodge. I have a disabled son and on many occasions we have either not been able to access or leave our property especially when a wedding or christening is being held because the parked cars do not consider the drop kerb as an access point and leave enough room for us to safely leave</p> <p>I would rather offer an alternative and place the planned double yellow lines on the opposite side of the road in front of the house's</p> <p>This will also have the added benefit of speed reduction in the street by means of a natural chicane.</p> <p>I would welcome the opportunity to explain this alternative suggestion if needed.</p>