

JUNE 2022 UPDATE ON HIGHWAYS ISSUES

Since my last report in May 2022, I have reported 2 further Highway issues to KCC. This increases the grand total to date to 87.

The new reports were for: -

Illegal 50mph carriageway markings on Maidstone Road
Missing Give Way markings at Washley Hill junction with Hearts Delight

77 of the 87 have now been dealt with either in a satisfactory manner or with a satisfactory explanation. 10, including the two above are still outstanding.

The trees covering the speed camera in Wrens Road have been cut back and the sign seems to be working. The diseased tree in Wrens Road is under active investigation. The temporary TRO covering the 30mph speed limit in Chestnut Street and Maidstone Road has been confirmed as legitimate, but I have raised as a report, see above, the signs burnt into the carriageway showing 50mph. KCC Highways and National Highways are in discussion at the moment as to who is responsible for burning off these road markings.

Other works still to be completed include the white line renewals in Pond Farm Road, Wises Lane and Oad Street. The provision of a new Slow sign on the road at the entrance to Oad Street from the Borden village direction is still outstanding and has been since June 2021 which now has been the subject of 3 reports.

No progress has been reported on flooding issues at Danaway or at the junction of Wises Lane and the A2.

The give way markings at the junction of Washley Hill and Hearts Delight have been provided but are hidden under stones and mud and I have asked KCC Highways to clear this debris

Site meetings with KCC Highways to discuss the Parish wide 20mph limit and also for problems at Bannister Hill/Hearts Delight, at Oad Street and at Maidstone Road have again been requested. Please see below for more information.

A greater use of the Parish for lorries making through journeys has been reported and a further lorry watch is being considered.

Highways Improvement Plan

The Highways Improvement Plan (HIP), including for the first-time priorities, as agreed at the last Council meeting was submitted to KCC Highways. Unfortunately, it was rejected as it was not in the correct format. KCC had changed the format of the form but failed to tell us. The new form has been prepared and resubmitted. However, recent correspondence from KCC Highways states that any meeting, to discuss our HIP submission, should be on an annual basis. They stated that as the last meeting was in the Autumn of 2021 the next meeting with the new Project Manager will not be until the Autumn 2022..

M2/Junction 5 Stockbury roundabout improvements

No further face to face meetings have been held with National Highways, KCC Highways or Grahams concerning the impact of this scheme. A couple of long phone calls with the representative from Grahams have taken place and details of closures have been given and circulated. It is their intention to hold regular walk-in clinics locally to allow people to raise issues with them. The first one was at Oad Street Food and Craft centre on the 8th of June. Attached at the end of this report as Appendix 1 is a report summarising the conclusions of the recent survey into the provision of further works in Oad Street.

It is proposed to Council that a summary of the survey's findings is sent to all interested parties for their comments as well as being posted on the Parish's website and various social media.

KCC Highways Service

Promises were made by KCC Officers late in 2022 that as a result of the Council decisions with regard to the provision of 20mph limits on various roads in Borden further work was necessary. The scope of this further work need to be agreed and the need for this and other meetings has been pressed on KCC Highways many times since the beginning of the year.

The situation in Maidstone Road/Chestnut Street continues to deteriorate as a result of it being used extensively as a diversion because of construction works at the M2 Junction 5 junction with the A249 (Stockbury Roundabout). KCC Highways are responsible for this road but have not put into place measures that will improve the safety of the road and conditions for residents living along it. Councillors have asked for meetings with KCC Officers on a number of occasions but have not been met with any response.

As outlined above, KCC have refused to meet with Councillors to discuss major issues within the Parish. This situation is totally unacceptable and means that KCC as Highway authority are not accepting their legal responsibilities. I therefore suggest that the Council proposes the following motion:-

Borden Parish Council makes a formal complaint to the KCC that they have not fulfilled their lawful responsibilities by not meeting and discussing with Councillors serious highway issues within the Parish.

If this proposal is passed I will formulate a complaint letter for the Clerk to send as soon as I am able.

John Fassenfelt June 2022.

Appendix 1.

SURVEY REPORT

DIVERSION OF MAIDSTONE ROAD

As part of the improvements to the M2/J5 junction at Stockbury Roundabout, Maidstone Road is going to be diverted southwards to join up with Oad Street just before the M2 overbridge. Thus, cutting its existing access to Stockbury roundabout. Oad Street will be diverted to form a new junction directly with the new Stockbury Roundabout. There are no proposals to widen all of the section of road between the M2 overbridge and the junction of Oad Street with Pett Lane. National Highways and KCC Highways are considering whether to widen this section so that it can be used as a diversion route for the A249 and also capable of being used by large buses.

Therefore, a survey was conducted by Borden Parish Council to ask residents of Maidstone Road and Chestnut Street whether Oad Street should be widened and used as a diversion route during maintenance works on the A249 or remain as it is. This short report outlines the results from this survey.

Response

30 Residents (25%) responded out of 121 survey forms distributed.

Which age bracket were they in:-

0%	16-24 years
14%	25-44 years
31%	45-64 years
55%	65+ years

How long have they lived in Borden Parish:-

17%	0-5 years
3%	6- 10 years
28%	11-20 years
52%	More than 20 years

How often did they use the local bus service:-

7% Every day
14% Once a week
41% Once a month
38% Never

Question 1. Should the whole of Oad Street be widened between J5 and the Motorway bridge to allow use by HGV's and large buses, please tick?

Yes 37% No 63%

Of those living in the Parish for 20 years or more 80% said No

If Yes, should it be used as a diversion route

Yes 24% No 28% No Answer 48%

If it is not to be used as a diversion route, please explain why:-

It will not be used just as a diversion, Danaway and Chestnut Street will suffer heavy traffic permanently

Big Lorries disturbed sleep grid locked traffic.

Rural area, 3 small businesses will be harmed by traffic, other diversions – make A249 single lane using removeable barriers.

Because it will be spoiling another village and rural area.

Road is not built for this amount of traffic and speed and accident issues, Buses are never full so smaller buses will suffice.

Noise, pollution danger

Problems with noise and vibrations caused by heavy vehicles.

The rebuilt A249 should be OK to cope.

Using other half of dual carriageway is normal elsewhere.

Because we do not want large buses going through.

Maidstone road is not suitable for HGV's.

Single deck coaches would be OK but nothing bigger. This is a quiet country lane with 6 6 restrictions. The lane is used by cyclists and horse riders so large vehicles should stop, see letter 23.

Question 2. Should the route be left unwidened, making it unsuitable for use by large buses, please tick?

Yes 66%

No 24%

No Answer 10%

GENERAL COMMENTS

Main concern was for speeding drivers as I am often overtaken along this road.

I think there should be a public meeting as I don't think people realize the implications.

Diversions on Maidstone Road are dangerous, and traffic moves too fast breaking the speed limit - not enough width on the paths.

There are no alternative routes from Stockbury to Detling. HE and KCC have managed. Why cannot barriers be moveable as they are on A14 when closures are necessary. Your area and that of Oad Street are designated as residential and agricultural and should remain this way. Any changes will further open doors to unbridled developers stating that the infrastructure exists for further housing development.

Speed limit and calming measures in Maidstone Rd and Danaway needed.

The X3 and X4 buses miss Danaway which could be served by small coaches as Stockbury have.

30 Speed limit ignored by 90% of commuters.

Chestnut St and Danaway used at the moment when A249 is not in use resulting in becoming extremely busy, widening Oad Street will only exacerbate problem that we already have.

Too many lorries using A249 at present and will unfortunately double in 5 years which would block up Maidstone Road also causing more rubbish, noise and air pollution which is already dangerously high.

New part of Maidstone Road alongside the M2 I suggest planting of trees (Walnut as used to be end of Maidstone Road) so as to screen the view and noise pollution. Top of Maidstone Road new junction with Oad Street I suggest a small mini roundabout so as to improve safety when pulling onto a fast and dangerous part of Oad Street and it would stop queuing of traffic on steep hill causing even more pollution of air and noise.

I do believe this route should continue to accommodate local buses and diversions (should the need arise) however further safety restrictions and speed limitations should accompany the Danaway end for the support of all road users.