

# **Update on Petitions submitted to Kent Highway Services**

A report by the Head of Transport & Development to the Joint Transportation Board

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## **Summary**

1. A report to update the Board on the current status of petitions received by Kent Highway Services (KHS) and notification of any new petitions received since the last meeting.

## **Traffic Calming Measures, Heath Road, Coxheath**

2. A petition was submitted in April 2008 by 59 residents, lead by Mr A R Monk of Westerhill Road, Coxheath. It sought action to improve the traffic calming measures installed along Heath Road, Coxheath as the petitioners felt these were dangerous.
3. A number of changes have been carried out to the traffic calming since the submission of this petition and as previously reported KHS had agreed to carry out a review of the safety record in Coxheath, further speed checks and complete the safety audit of the current scheme. This work has been completed and sent to the both the County Councillor and Parish Council. A meeting is now to be arranged with the Cabinet for Highways, the local Member and the Parish Council to discuss what, if any, further action should be taken.

## **Request for the Implementation of a Weight Restriction through Yalding**

4. A petition was submitted in September 2008 by Yalding Parish Council with over 570 signatures supporting a previous request for a weight restriction through Yalding and that surveys of lorry movements through Yalding and East Farleigh be undertaken.
5. It was reported at the last meeting of this Board that surveys, to be paid for by the local County Councillor and Parish Council, had been delayed due to roadwork's in the area. These surveys were subsequently carried out in November 2010 and KHS are expecting the results from Jacobs our traffic survey consultants this month. The results of these surveys will be reported to the next meeting of this board.

## **Closure of Pheasant Lane, Maidstone South**

6. A petition was submitted in August 2008 by some 120 residents, lead by Mr David Fraiss of Osborne House, Loose Road of the Pheasant Lane Action Group which sought the closure of Pheasant Lane to vehicles other than for residential access. The petitioners felt the lane was being used as a rat run, was too narrow for the volume of traffic has too many blind bends with drivers driving too fast and pedestrians are at great risk.
7. At the October 2009 meeting of this Board it was approved to close Pheasant Lane to all through traffic on an experimental basis and the closure came into operation on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2010. The legal process requires that a minimum of six months passes before a decision can be made to make the closure permanent therefore, a report will be brought to the next meeting of this board for a decision.

## **Road Safety Measures along Walderslade Woods Road**

8. Kent Highway Services received a petition from Mrs Gillian Tatnell from Walderslade Woods with 212 signatures requesting a reduction in speed limit with traffic islands and

hatching. The petition received the support of Boxley Parish Council although Walderslade Woods Road falls within both Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling and has been reported to both Joint Transportation Boards.

9. At a previous meeting of this Board it was reported that KHS had submitted a bid for funding through the Local Transport Plans Integrated Transport Programme for 2011/12 for a scheme consisting of gateway signage improvements, improvements to the side road junction warning signs and also to provide traffic islands to protect right turning traffic. An update on the Integrated Transport Programme for 2011/12 can not be given until the implications of the Governments Comprehensive Spending Review and the budget for 2011/12 are fully known.

#### **Residents of Tovil Green Court**

10. At a previous meeting of meeting of this Board it was reported that a petition, containing 31 signatures, had been received from the residents of Tovil Green Court, Maidstone requesting the provision of pedestrian facilities along Burial Ground Lane and Farleigh Hill to enable better pedestrian access to Tesco's and Lidl's.
11. A scheme consisting of a new footway together with an enhancement of the crossing facilities along Tovil Hill has been submitted for funding through the through the Local Transport Plans Integrated Transport Programme for 2011/12. An update on the Integrated Transport Programme for 2011/12 can not be given until the implications of the Governments Comprehensive Spending Review and the budget for 2011/12 are fully known.

#### **Penenden Heath Pre-School, Maidstone**

12. It was reported to a previous meeting of this Board that a petition, containing 99 signatures, had been received from the local residents and parents of children at Penenden Heath Pre-School, Maidstone requesting safety improvements along the road approaching Penenden Heath Roundabout from Boxley Village.
13. A scheme consisting of a crossing on the Boxley Road (between The Bull and the mini-roundabout) has been submitted for funding through the through the Local Transport Plans Integrated Transport Programme for 2011/12. An update on the Integrated Transport Programme for 2011/12 can not be given until the implications of the Governments Comprehensive Spending Review and the budget for 2011/12 are fully known.
14. Cllr Chittenden is however funding, via the Member Highway Fund, a scheme to install 30 mph repeater roundels on Boxley Road in the 30mph section without street lighting from the mini roundabout heading west together with a junction warning sign, SLOW road markings and red surfacing at the Boxley Road / Neville Close junction. These improvements should help to reduce traffic speeds in the area. An update on this scheme is contained within the Highway Improvement Schemes update report.

#### **Pedestrian Crossing on Loose Road between Armstrong Road & The Wheatsheaf**

15. This request was initiated following the submission of a petition which was first reported to this board in April 2010. KHS commissioned Jacobs to undertake a full pedestrian movement survey. This was funded from Cllr Chell's Member Highway Fund budget and the survey was undertaken on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2010 and covered the section of Loose Road between Armstrong Road and The Wheatsheaf junction. Kent Highway Services

subsequently commissioned Jacob's to undertake a review of both existing pedestrian crossing facilities and the potential to install new pedestrian facilities on the same section of Loose Road. This was to include the potential for upgrading the exiting traffic signal junction at Armstrong Road and to identify the cost of any proposed measures.

16. The results of the pedestrian survey established there is a strong desire for a crossing point south of Armstrong Road. Indeed during the entire survey period a total of 263 people chose to cross at an uncontrolled location, just south of Armstrong Road without any pedestrian facilities, whilst 24 people chose to cross at the existing push button controlled pelican crossing to the north of Armstrong Road.
17. At the site of the original pedestrian crossing adjacent to Plains Avenue there were 12 crossing movements during the survey period. It is likely the desire to cross here remains but many people choose to walk either to the Wheatsheaf or Armstrong Road controlled crossings. The full survey data is available on request.
18. The review of both the existing and potential pedestrian facilities has been undertaken. The current junction arrangement dates from 2000 when the Plains Avenue crossing was removed and a traffic island was introduced in Parkway. The Plains Avenue pelican was considered to have a poor personal injury record at that time. Other options to retain the crossing were considered but proved technically difficult to achieve and would have adversely affected local properties accesses.
19. The review has established that it is not possible to improve the island south of Armstrong Road as there was insufficient width to allow for the necessary staggered arrangement of any pedestrian crossing. Improvements to the side junctions of Park Way and Armstrong Road may be possible but would reduce capacity and increase congestion. These works would create an all red phase as it would not be possible to have a walk with traffic arrangement on these arms, but this would have extremely significant impact in terms of congestion at one of the major bottle necks approaching the town.
20. The cost of providing improved facilities on the two side roads which would effectively create an all red phase has been estimated by Jacobs to be in the region of £50,000 to £75,000.
21. The reinstatement of the Plains Avenue crossing is considered technically difficult to achieve. The road is very wide and as a result crossing time would be significant. A centre island would reduce capacity and would adversely affect local properties accesses. Cantilevered signal poles would also be required and previous investigation has revealed these would be difficult to install due to the proximity of underground services. At peak hours, traffic frequently queues at this location and a crossing with a red time of up to 38 seconds would increase congestion which may prove hazardous to pedestrians trying to cross in these conditions being obscured by queuing vehicles. This is particularly pertinent as the only recorded personal injury crash involving a pedestrian in the last three years in this area was at the Wheatsheaf junction where a pedestrian was hit crossing between stationary vehicles.
22. The estimated cost of providing a Puffin type crossing at Plains Avenue location has been estimated by Jacobs to be as much as £150,000 due to the difficult constraints of this site.
23. In conclusion whilst it would be desirable to establish an improvement to the junction at Armstrong Road with a formal crossing on the south of the junction, this is not possible

without causing additional congestion and reducing capacity. The re-establishment of the crossing at Plains Avenue is technically difficult, would increase congestion and the previously crossing had a poor safety record and may continue to prove hazardous to pedestrians under certain conditions. Therefore, in view that there is no recorded personal injury crash problem, the installation of any additional measures would increase congestion at an already heavily congested area and at a time of economic pressures expensive it is recommended not to carry out any further action but to continue to monitor the pedestrian safety record in the area as part of the annual casualty reduction programme.

### **Parking Issues Tudor Avenue**

24. It was reported to a previous meeting of this Board that KHS had been passed a petition with 54 signatures from the residents of Tudor Avenue, Maidstone requesting parking restrictions be implemented to deal with commuter parking that the residents feel is causing potential road safety problems.
25. KHS will be advertising a Traffic Regulation Order giving notice of the intention to install double yellow lines at certain points along Tudor Avenue to improve road safety on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2011. It is proposed that the existing single yellow lines at the Tudor Avenue / Park Avenue junction be made into double yellow lines and be extended 15m north and double yellow line corner protection be installed at the Tudor Avenue / Norman Close and Tudor Avenue / Sittingbourne Road junctions. If the County Council receive any objections to these proposals they will be reported back to the next meeting of this Board.

### **Sutton Road Service Road**

26. KHS received a petition supported by 55 out of the 66 residents in Sutton Road service road raising concerns over the volume and speed of traffic using the service road to avoid the traffic signals on the A274. At the last meeting of this board it was reported that KHS had commissioned a survey to establish the volume of traffic which was using the service road section of Sutton Road, bypassing the junction with Nottingham Avenue.
27. The survey was undertaken on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July and took the format of an 11hour manual number plate origin and destination survey. The weather was fine and dry. For the purposes of the survey a time of less than three minutes between a vehicle entering and exiting the Sutton Road Service Road was considered to be a rat-running vehicle.
28. In general the numbers of vehicles recorded throughout the survey period was extremely low and these have been summarised using the schematic diagrams in the appendix. These are vehicles which entered and exited in under three minutes. It is possible that some drivers were put off their normal routine by the presence of the enumerators in hi-viz jackets and as a result these figures may be lower than normal.
29. A study of the recent crash history of the service road has revealed there has been one personal injury crash in the last three years. This involved a cyclist and one other vehicle which failed to stop. The circumstances of this incident do not appear to be related to rat-running vehicles. To prevent rat-running, physical measures such as stopping up one end of the service road would be required as a Traffic Regulation Order alone is unlikely to be effective as enforcement would be limited.
30. From the data obtained from the manual count and the previous good safety record of this location, there would appear to be little justification for significant expenditure to

prevent rat-running by a comparatively low number of vehicles in the service road compared to the main A274 which carries over 20,000 vehicles a day. However, the local County Councillor has requested that, if supported by local residents, they would look to use their Member Highway Fund to investigate the service road being turned into a cul-de-sac by the use of removable bollards at one end of the road.

### **Speed Limit Review on the A20 through Harrietsham**

31. As previously reported to this Board KHS had received a petition from residents of Harrietsham and Lenham in response to the review of speed limit on A20. 48 Pages of signatures were received highlighting residents' extreme disappointment of the review carried out by the County Council on the speed limit on the A20 through Harrietsham and Lenham. The petition requested that a new review is carried out which looks at implementing speed reduction measures along the route. The petition was passed to the speed limit review team to respond to the issues raised in the petition.
32. As reported to this Board the Speed Limit Review has been suspended due to Government reductions in grant funding. In August 2010 Nick Chard the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste wrote to all Members and Parish Councils updating them on the County Councils position with regards to the review of speed limits and a copy of that letter is attached to this report. In the letter it outlines that in cases where a speed limit demonstrates a quantifiable injury crash saving a funding bid will be made accordingly. Kent Highways Services are currently reviewing the personal injury crash record on the A20 through Harrietsham to ascertain whether a bid can be submitted for funding through the Local Transport Plans Integrated Transport Programme for 2011/12.

### **20mph Speed Limits Around Schools**

33. At the last meeting of this board it was reported that a petition was received calling upon Kent County Council to review its policy on speed limits starting with those around schools. The petitioners would ideally like a 20mph speed limit in all residential areas, but to start with they called for the Council to pro-actively work with schools, and where there is a request from parents and support from local residents to implement 20mph speed limits in the area around that school. This to be done in full consultation with the community.
34. It was reported that the request for a change in the County's speed limit policy was passed to the Road Safety Policy team to be considered and that Kent Highway Services will continue to investigate and promote safety measures for Schools on an individually targeted basis.
35. The following update has been received from Head of Network Management & Performance. A discussion paper to identify options to highlight the dangers of speeding outside schools is being considered by the Cabinet for Highways. The direction KCC is likely to take will be based upon meeting the community concerns balanced realistically with appropriate budget availability. This paper will be reported and debated at the Environment, Highways and Waste Policy, Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to a decision being made which will be reported to a future meeting of this Board. However, as previously explained Kent Highway Services will continue to investigate and promote safety measures for Schools on an individually targeted basis as part of the annual casualty reduction programme as road safety remains a key priority for the Highway Authority.

36. The local County Councillor has indicated they are willing to submit a Member Highway Fund request for a 20mph speed limit in Lenham outside the schools on Ham Lane.

### **The withdrawal of the Arriva 101 Service from Bus Stops at Cobtree Golf Course and Salisbury Road, Kits Coty**

37. At the last meeting of this Board it was reported that a petition had been submitted calling for the reinstatement of the 101 Service to the Cobtree Golf Course Bus Stop. A report was submitted to this Board concerning this issue proposing a number of options and seeking Members views.
38. It was agreed that further quotes be obtained for Option 2 in an attempt to reduce the costs of this preferred option. To obtain further quotes a detailed design and safety audit of the option was required and this has now been completed and KHS are now in a position to obtain the further quotes.

### **Postley Road, Maidstone**

39. A petition has been received from the residents of Postley Road, Maidstone which raises concern over the dangerous and increasingly unacceptable use of the road by buses including speeding. Kent Highway Services have met with the lead petitioner and are investigating the issues raised by the petitioners. The results of these investigations will be reported back to the next meeting of this Board.

### **Boxley Road and Beechen Bank Road**

40. At the last meeting of this Board a petition was received requesting a reduction in the speed limit along Boxley Road and Beechen Bank Road. KHS have commissioned speed surveys and are currently reviewing the personal injury crash records along Boxley & Beechen Bank Road. The results of these investigations will be reported back to the next meeting of this Board.

### **New Petitions Received**

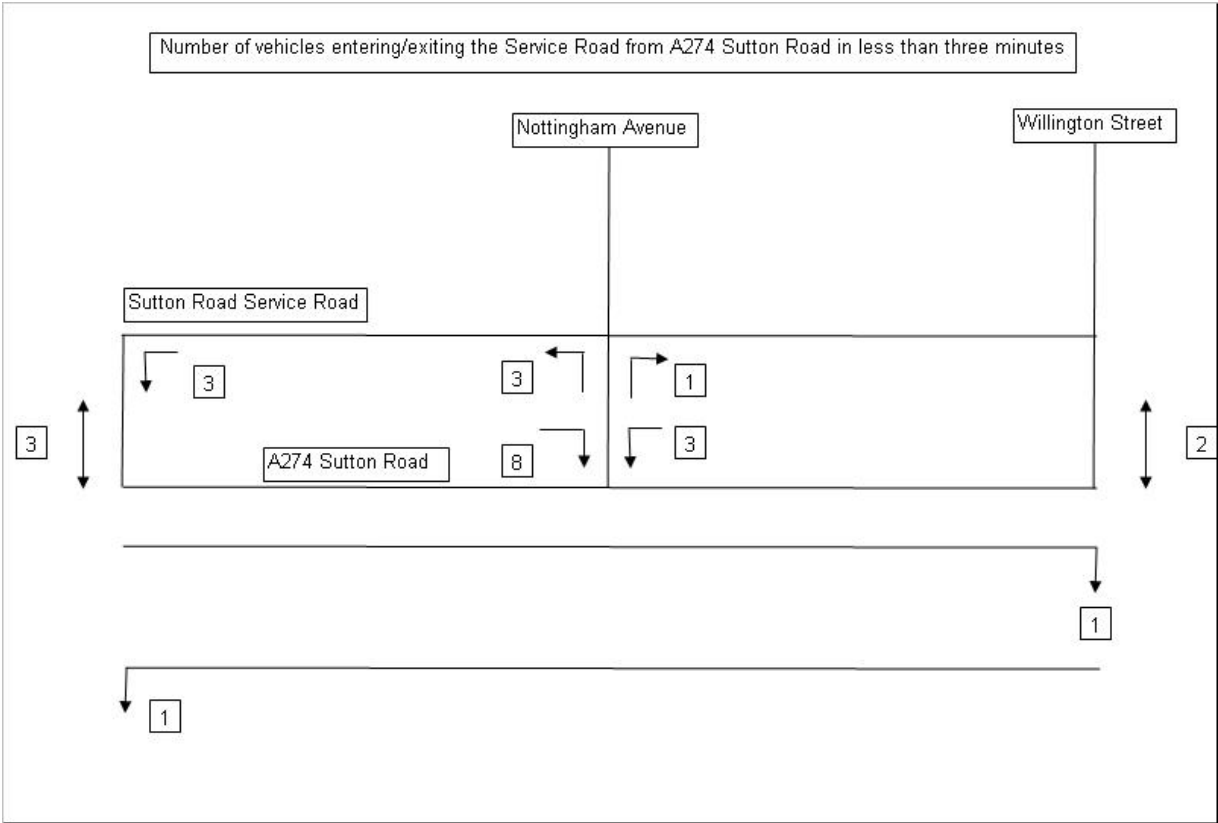
#### **Footpath along Lenham Road to Sports Field, Kingswood**

41. Since the last meeting of this board a petition has been submitted by Broomfield & Kingswood Parish Council signed by 101 residents requesting a footpath be constructed along the Lenham Road, Kingswood to ensure the safety and well being of pedestrians accessing the Sports Field and its facilities.
42. Early investigations reveal that third party land not in the control of the Highway Authority will be required to construct the footway and excluding land costs the footway could cost in the region of £40,000 to £50,000. KHS will write to the land owners in control of the land to ascertain whether if funding was available whether they would be willing to agree in principle to transfer the land to KHS. A further report will be brought back to the next meeting of this board.

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Accountable Officer: Andy Corcoran 01622 798378

Appendix - Sutton Road Service Road Summary of Surveys



Number of vehicles entering the Service Road from A274 Sutton Road and travelling North West to residential area in less than three minutes

