

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

29 November 2010

Report of the Director of Kent Highway Services

Part 1- Public

Matters For Information

1 PETITIONS SUBMITTED TO KENT HIGHWAY SERVICES

Summary

An update on petitions currently being considered by Kent Highway Services (KHS) and information on fresh submissions.

1.1 Petitions currently under consideration

1.1.1 In keeping with recent practice, this report on petitions received by KHS is a standing item on the Board's agenda paper. For this meeting, KHS will be considering the following items:

- Priory Road Bridge Bashing Incidents
- Holmes Court, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge.
- A228 / Kent Street Junction Improvements
- A20 Wrotham Hill
- Greenfrith Drive & neighbouring roads – school related parking

1.1.2 Petitions received since the last meeting:

- Traffic Volume and Congestion on the High Street, East Malling
- Traffic volume and speed of traffic along Vines Lane, Hildenborough

1.2 Priory Road Bridge Bashing Incidents

1.2.1 At a site visit with local Councillor Sarah Spence on Monday 7th June 2010 it was explained to Kent Highway Services that several HGV's have in the past hit the railway bridge (both sides) near Lavender Hill junction.

1.2.2 It was identified on site that there is already extensive existing signing that is in good condition on the approach to the bridge and at the bridge itself. However another sign could be installed on the B2260 High Street at the junction with

Priory Road to give advance warning to the majority of the HGV drivers coming northbound along the High Street. Two additional signs could also be installed just after the junction of Pembury Grove with Goldsmid Road and Pembury Rd junction with Goldsmid Rd (northbound) to warn of both low bridges at Priory Road and Strawberry Vale.

- 1.2.3 At the last meeting of this Board it was reported that the new signs are now being detailed designed and subject to funding will be implemented in due course. It has now been agreed that these works will be carried out as part of an overall review of signing at bridges in Kent. This review will give priority to bridges that have been struck and will ensure all signing is up to date and consistent with current signing policy. However, due to budgetary constraints this work will not be implemented until the new financial year which starts in April 2011.

1.3 Holmes Court, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge

- 1.3.1 As previously reported Kent Highway Services had received a letter signed on behalf of 18 residents of Holmes Court, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge requesting a safe cross-over for residents to cross at this junction to access the local shops.
- 1.3.2 A scheme is now proposed to be funded by a combination of developers to assist pedestrians crossing from Holmes Court and Ashby's Yard to the town centre and encourage vehicles to use Medway Wharf Road and Sovereign Way as opposed to the High Street in line with the objectives set out in the Town Centre Area Action Plan.
- 1.3.3 Funding of approximately £65,000 has been negotiated with developers and outline design is currently being programmed and once an outline design has been prepared consultation will be carried out with local Councillors.

1.4 A228 / Kent Street Junction Improvements

- 1.4.1 As reported previously Kent Highway Services had received a petition signed by 42 residents of Mereworth requesting safety improvements to the junction of Kent Street and the A228 for drivers and pedestrians.
- 1.4.2 Officers and the then Cabinet Member for Highways met with the petitioners, members and local representatives to discuss potential improvements at the junction. At this meeting it was agreed that Officers would progress with acquiring land to improve visibility splays and provide a new footway. A further petition was then submitted signed by 56 residents registering continued concerns over the junction and supporting the proposals agreed at the meeting.
- 1.4.3 As previously reported land negotiations to provide a scheme comprising visibility splays and a roadside footpath on the western side (behind the hedge) had reached a successful conclusion and a detailed design was required to further inform cost estimates, exact land take requirements, details such as bus stop

location, removal and relocation of telegraph poles, exact fencing details, method and timing of construction, location and negotiations regarding work compound etc.

- 1.4.4 However due to Government reductions in the Integrated Transport (Improvement) Schemes budget the County Council has had to reorganise existing staffing resources. This process has delayed the start of the detailed design process. The new Highway Schemes Manager whose remit covers detailed designs and liaison with Ringway to implement schemes, has now been briefed on this scheme. Discussions have also taken place with regards to when detailed design can commence. Currently design resources are focused on schemes due for implementation this financial year with their construction broadly to be undertaken next calendar year to the end of March. After the Christmas break design resources will be available therefore to address new projects and we are advised that moving the Kent Street scheme forward should not be too onerous. The Board will be updated on progress at the next meeting.

1.5 A20 Wrotham Hill

- 1.5.1 As previously reported a petition was received from the local County, Borough and Parish councillors regarding recent fatal road traffic crashes on the A20 at Wrotham Hill (minute JTB 10/018 refers). Kent Highway Services invited the petitioners including Kent Police to a meeting to discuss the incidents and whether a highway safety scheme can be developed to overcome the safety issues raised in the petition.
- 1.5.2 This meeting was held on 20th September and it was explained that solutions should not be considered without first undertaking a detailed analysis of the crash records and gaining an understanding of any crash patterns. Kent Police and local representatives confirmed that the injury crash records Kent Highway Services have for the length between Gravesend Road and the Old Coach Road, were complete. There was some discussion that the general lining arrangements at Wrotham Hill were fundamentally flawed. It was explained however that this is a standard crawler lane arrangement which allows for ascending slow moving traffic to be overtaken safely with relative ease, preventing tailbacks and minimising associated irrational manoeuvres.
- 1.5.3 A study of the crash records has been undertaken. There have been two very regrettable fatal crashes in the last three years, one of which involved three fatalities and another causing the death of a cyclist. The circumstances of these crashes are unusual and the strongest pattern of crashes involve rear end shunts both at the Gravesend Road roundabout and Old Coach Road roundabout.
- 1.5.4 At the meeting on the 20th September there was also some discussion regarding the challenge that Wrotham Hill faces to cyclists and the numbers of cyclists that are attracted by this together with discussions regarding the condition of the footway on the northern side. A study of the rights of way network shows that

there are anomalies in the bridleway network in that isolated links do not provide connection or make a network. As cyclists can use bridleways it is considered that the formation of bridleway connections in this area should be advanced so that the adjacent footpath could be signed accordingly, encouraging off-road use by cyclists. Further discussions will be required with rights of way officers to establish further details about how to achieve this.

- 1.5.5 It is also considered that the use of graduated transverse bar markings (getting progressively closer together) at the approaches to both roundabouts could be a useful addition to this section of road to alert motorists of their speeds when approaching these roundabouts. These measures will be added to work which will be specified from crash cluster analysis currently being undertaken.

1.6 Greenfrith Drive & neighbouring roads – school related parking

- 1.6.1 At the previous meeting of this Board it was reported that a petition had been received signed by 62 residents expressing concerns about school related traffic resulting in residents' drives being blocked seeking the installing of access protection markings.
- 1.6.2 Kent Highway Services have carried out site visits to ascertain the extent of the problem highlighted in the petition. At the most recent site visit carried out during heavy rain when we expected the problem to be at its worse it was witnessed that no drives were being obstructed and that all virtually all parent parking had left the area by 15:30. KHS will continue to monitor the situation and a further verbal update will be given at the meeting.

1.7 Traffic Volume and Congestion on the High Street, East Malling

- 1.7.1 A petition has been received signed by 32 residents of East Malling concerned over the heavy flow of traffic using the High Street. This reinforces the comments about traffic management in the earlier report in these papers on the East Malling Local Parking Plan. The petition states residents' regularly suffer being disturbed by horns, abusive language and threatening behaviour from motorists who experience regular grid lock on the road.
- 1.7.2 The led petitioner has been informed that the petition will be reported to this meeting and that Kent Highway Services are investigating the issues raised. Currently we are gathering the necessary data required to analyse the concerns in more detail such as speed, road safety and traffic volume information and once our investigations have been completed we will report our findings to the Joint Transportation Board for Members to consider the recommendations we have made and agree on any appropriate action to be taken. I would envisage that the completed investigations will be reported to the 7th March 2011 meeting of this Board.

1.8 Traffic volume and speed of traffic along Vines Lane, Hildenborough

- 1.8.1 A petition has been received signed by 37 residents of Vines Lane, Hildenborough requesting action be taken to traffic calm Vines Lane before a serious accident occurs to pedestrians due to the speed and volume of traffic.
- 1.8.2 The led petitioner has been informed that the petition will be reported to this meeting and that Kent Highway Services are investigating the issues raised. Currently we are gathering the necessary data required to analyse the concerns in more detail such as speed, road safety and traffic volume information and once our investigations have been completed we will report our findings to the Joint Transportation Board for Members to consider the recommendations we have made and agree on any appropriate action to be taken. I would envisage that the completed investigations will be reported to the 7th March 2011 meeting of this Board.

1.9 Legal Implications

- 1.9.1 None at this stage.

1.10 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.10.1 As reported.

1.11 Risk Assessment

- 1.11.1 Not applicable.

1.12 Policy Considerations

- 1.12.1 Community.

Background papers:

Nil

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