

Large Scale Planning Committee

Minutes of Meeting 5th July 2019

Attendees

- Martin Hassell Chair
- Anne Howell-Jones
- Allan Jones
- Hamish Masson
- Stan Studd
- John Thelwall

Copy to Barry Jobling

NB. Actions are in bold.

Lucks Lane

HDC Planning Meeting is 15th July 2019. Lucks Lane reserved matters are on the agenda for approval. We need to respond with our concerns by 12th July. **AHJ to coordinate.**

We plan to attend this meeting, to protest at the decision to approve Lucks Lane despite concerns about the Flood Agency response and that the Stirtloe Lane Safety Audit remains outstanding. **AHJ to attend.**

The issues with the Safety Audit, which had not been fully reviewed at the time of the meeting are included at the end of these minutes. These will be raised with HDC.

BPC will consider making an independent complaint if no progress is made. **MH**

A meeting is planned with Pegasus to discuss a number of outstanding issues in the w/c 18/7.

Updated TTRO response still outstanding. SS to follow up with John Napper.

It was noted that there had been an accident at this junction on 27th June.

HM mentioned that there had been an issue with asbestos in the property next to the petrol station which may have contaminated the land on the site.

A1- Update re Meeting with Highways England (HE) held on 3rd July

HE confirmed that there is no planned strategic solution to the A1 before the 2025-2030 planning window. Therefore, an interim solution to the problem of the roundabout is required and Highways would be pursuing a solution themselves if nothing had come forward from the developers.

HE appear to be happy with the traffic volume numbers in the proposal from the Church Commissioners and believe the proposal could reduce queueing time at the roundabout. However, they have outstanding concerns about 'spatial stacking' and hence safety.

New EU container vehicles are longer than current. **HM to confirm.**

There is a need to identify the location of, and update the pollution monitoring process. **HM**

Our formal response to HE following this meeting will include the below points:

- That HE should share with BPC the proposed sequencing of the traffic lights so that we can make observations as to the likely impact on access to the roundabout from Perry Road and High Street, before it is agreed.
- Request that HE confirm that safety audits for the proposed roundabout scheme will be done at peak usage times. Whilst audits at other times, such as at dusk, may be desirable, it is essential they are done at times of greatest risk.
- Once HE has a final plan for consideration, they undertake to send us a copy before approving it, allowing us a reasonable period to respond, and take into consideration our responses before approving it. At least a month is required as we may wish to have our own traffic expert review it.
- Request that they send us copies of all the draft briefs for each safety audit for the roundabout before approving them.

Should HE decide to go ahead with any trial of the traffic light scheme, the following points are relevant:

- Request that HE confirm that if the traffic lights, as initially sequenced, *do not have the effect* of making the traffic flows on the A1 no worse than they are now as the developments progress and after they are completed, they will not change the sequencing in such a manner as will make access from Perry Road and High Street more difficult.
- Will they be measuring traffic flows as the developments progress? If so, at what intervals and will they also measure traffic access to the roundabout from Perry Road and High Street. If those become worse, will they undertake to re-sequence the lights to correct that.
- We draw to their attention that the traffic light scheme implemented at Sandy roundabout was such a disaster that it was withdrawn six months after implementation. Will they please undertake to implement a six-month trial to see if it works, before finally approving the scheme?
- It was also noted that the Perry Road stream runs under the roundabout and that the soil substructure had been sited previously as a constraint on expanding the roundabout. These issues need to be clarified prior to any decision.

A1 Safety Meeting/Political Pressure

Agreed that we should join any campaign being run by Sandy SG19 to raise the priority of the strategic A1 solution. **HM to set up meeting of all concerned before end July.**

Make a proposal to this end at the BPC meeting. **AHJ**

HM shared a proposal to lobby interested parties to generate the 100,000 signatures required to petition parliament. **All to review and feedback.**

The A1 Safety Group would be set up by BPC. **AHJ**

Arrange a meeting with Jonathon Djanogly. HM

Arrange a meeting with the James Palmer, the mayor. **HM**

Contact Police. **AHJ**

Silver Street/Mill Road

HNA has been sent to HDC and the Church Commissioners.

Should also go to CC and Gladmans. **AHJ**

Once final Design Code received this should also be sent out. **AHJ**

Cycle ways report and endangered species document should also be sent.

Consider getting an independent report re Offords Crossing. Raise at Tuesday BPC meeting. **AHJ**

Advise HDC/CC that the new digital signalling system has been implemented and previous analysis of traffic at the crossing will be out of date. **Advise David Allatt. AHJ**

Concerns about Stirloe Lane Safety Report

We have identified the following issues and shortfalls within the report and general audit process:

Section 1.3 – Time of audit. Date of the audit was Thursday 2nd May. Two audits were undertaken, but the length of each is not recorded.

Audit 1 – 15:45 – one of the quietest afternoon periods, just ahead of the school run and too early for the evening peak.

Audit 2 – 21:20 – the report states that “traffic flows were low due to nearby A1 junction road closures”

No volumes of traffic are recorded in the report, but at least one of the audits should have been during a peak period. While accepting that is desirable to undertake an audit during late evening/dusk. the timing of the second audit during an A1 road closure is totally unacceptable from an audit perspective. Road closures are published well in advance, there is no excuse. Given this, we would have expected Highways England to have, at the very least, requested a repeat of the second audit when the A1 was fully operational.

On these grounds and given our well-documented concerns about the design of this junction, we do not accept that this was a valid Road Safety Audit. We contend that the audit should be repeated at more appropriate times.

Section 1.4 – mentions that the audit “has not examined or verified the compliance of the design to any other criteria” – presumably, this is because it was not specified as part of the brief. Please can you confirm that a design review has taken place, and by whom, and that this design complies with all Highways England’s standards and guidelines. In particular, we wish for confirmation that the lack of deceleration and acceleration lanes within the design has been reviewed and approved by an independent authority.

Section 2 – items outstanding from previous audits. There is a deep ditch and culvert just to the north of the modified junction. This was identified at RSA Stage 1, (we don’t have a date for this), as a “Potential risk of increased severity injuries to the occupants of errant vehicles.” It was not resolved by the time of RSA Stage 2, (December 2018), and had still not been resolved by the time of

RSA Stage 3- (May 2019). A member of the Parish Council has subsequently inspected the site, and they confirm that this problem still exists.

Looking at the Decision Log, (item 3.1), the Highways England response to this is: "... confirmed that it would be acceptable to move the headwall along the ditch and extend the culvert....this would negate the need for a restraint system." The Agreed RSA Action column then states "Agreed. No further action". Our interpretation of this log is that Highways England are stating that it "would be acceptable to move the headwall, etc..", but there is no action on anyone, be it the Developer or Highways England, to actually do anything about it. Meanwhile, road users face the prospect of "increased severity injuries" should they run off the road at this point.

We fail to understand how such a serious risk can remain unaddressed as a result of two audits and then simply be closed with "No further action" after a third audit. We wish to see evidence of an action and owner of this risk and a date by when it will be addressed.

There is a further item, 3.3, relating to a faulty streetlight. The log shows that this was identified during a pre-construction survey, but once again, has still not been addressed.

Section 3.4 – Foliage obscuring signs

An inspection by a member of the Parish Council confirms that this is still a major problem and vegetation has not been cut back despite the Action Log stating that "The Developer has agreed to cut back foliage".

Please confirm when this action will be addressed, and confirm that the Developer will undertake an inspection for active nest sites before any such work is undertaken.

Section 3.5 – Right Turns at the central reservation

The report states "At the time of the site visit, some road users were observed to utilise the gap in the central reserve and turn right". This can be interpreted two ways and needs clarifying:

It either means that vehicles were observed turning from Stirtloe Lane onto the central reservation (virtually impossible given the junction changes), or A1 southbound vehicles turned right onto the central reservation (more likely).

In the Action Log, it is proposed to possibly install a "No Right Turn" sign on Stirtloe Lane (after monitoring the situation for 12 months). While a sign would be sensible as a 'back-stop', whoever proposed that is obviously not familiar with the junction or the recent changes, all of which calls the whole audit process into doubt. The issue here is that, following the junction changes, it is impossible to turn right at this junction. Vehicles wishing to cross over to houses on the A1 northbound, are now forced to turn right from the A1 southbound outside lane, rather than driving straight across from Stirtloe Lane onto the central reservation. The change has effectively increased the risks of using the central reservation crossing point.

The Action Log Agreed Action is that "Matter needs to be monitored over the next 12-month period...".

Please can you advise what form this monitoring will take, who will undertake it and how much monitoring has taken place since the report was signed off by Highways England on 31st May 2019.

Section 3.6 – Risks associated with construction traffic

The section, we assume, relates to the proposed 40 mph speed restriction during the construction phase. Please can you confirm that a safety audit has been undertaken for this Temporary Traffic Management plan and please may we have sight of it.

In summary, we cannot accept that a valid Road Safety Audit Stage 3 has been undertaken. On-going risks, item 3.1 being of major concern, have not been addressed even after multiple audits, with no evidence that there are firm actions or plans in place to resolve them.