

NOTES OF MEETING DOVER NORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Date: Wednesday, 21 January 2009 Venue: St Peter's Hall Aylesham

Present: Parish Councillor David Hart - Chair
DDC Councillors Steve Manion and Kit Smith
KCC Councillor Eileen Rowbotham

Other Councillors and members of the public

Apologies for absence: Malcolm Wells

1. Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed the members of the public, KCC Cllr Keith Ferrin and KCC officers David Barton, Dennis Button, David Gasking, Steve Henson and Mike Smith

2. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Notes of the meetings held on 2 October and 20 November 2008 had been circulated previously, were approved and there were no matters arising.

3. Kent Highway Services

3.1 Question session

- Are any improvements to the B2046 planned e.g. widening, improving the junction with A2 to reduce congestion, creation of roundabout at entrance to Aylesham, particularly in view of Thanet traffic and Aylesham expansion? The developer for the expansion will have to provide acceptable improvements; while Highways cannot ask for a roundabout it could recommend refusal to the Planning Authority (DDC) if the proposed T junction were to be unsuitable.
- Aylesham roads were not often gritted. Highways to check whether on primary gritting route and report back.
- Two-way traffic round Market Square will be catastrophic. Developers proposals are still being examined, they need to prove it will work or could be a ground for refusal. Evidence is required so letters and photos to be sent to Planning Authority (DDC) e.g. room for bus and lorry to pass without obstructing traffic flow.
- Suggestion that route from Dorman North, Milner Road, Hyde Road and Cooting Lane be changed to provide a straight one way out for HGVs. This could be feasible but was not in the developer's proposal so could not be commented on.
- Sutton Parish Council received conflicting information regarding a piece of land previously owned by Highways, passed to PC and developed but now disputed by another land owner who moved fence, resulting in loss of walkway which was reason for development. Deed of Dedication completed in 1960s was not sufficiently precise. Highways do not respond to letters which is not acceptable when on a safety issue. Cllr Ferrin undertook to investigate the matter.
- Lorries coming into UK fill up all lay-bys on A2, A20 and M20 stopping vehicles pulling in and contributing nothing financially towards congestion,

mess and damage. KCC acknowledged the problem but could not itself take action, central government needed to address the issue. An Operation Stack site was being sought off the M20 which would also provide overnight lorry parking but a twelve month Environmental Assessment had to be completed first. Also investigating overnight lorry parking on the A2 corridor and nearer to M25. Problem was likely to get worse; cost of Operation Stack site would be about £40m and why should Kent have to pay for entry of traffic to all UK. Many lorries landing at Dover had reached end of tachograph time; police could move them on if there was somewhere else for them to go that was free. Police cannot enforce parking charges on lorries.

- How many road inspections are carried out in Aylesham? Each defect found generates £250 and utility companies are the main cause with as many as 10 defects in one road. The utility companies are billed and further details on this issue will be made available.
- Paving outside the flats on Market Square has subsided; Highways and DDC have both been advised. Believe that land is part Highways and part DDC owned. David Gasking to investigate and contact Aylesham Parish Council.
- Eythorne Parish Council: signage off A2 is in the wrong place which means HGVs follow Satnav instructions through Barfrestone damaging the church wall which is a National Heritage site. KCC agree that the 'Unsuitable for HGVs' sign is placed too late but as the A2 is a trunk road the Highways Agency will not allow KCC to put the sign where it is needed. However discussions are being held so people should write to the Highways Agency about the matter.
- Is there any progress on traffic calming at Archers Court which is a rat-run from Deal as the banks are still being eroded? KCC to find out details and report back.
- Nonington Parish Council: a piece of land which Highways bought in the mid-60s and left fallow is wanted by the Parish Council for a path to the school which would join the two halves of the village. Kent Highways has been approached but gone very quiet recently. Cllr Keith Ferrin to investigate and report back.
- Measuring traffic flows through Nonington is important, particularly before the expansion takes place: this was asked for 2 years ago and we were advised that it would be done but nothing has happened. Mike Smith advised that to carry out the survey too far in advance of the start of development would mean out-of-date figures. When the planning permission for the expansion is granted, the developer will have to pay for the traffic survey.
- What progress has been made with low energy street lighting? Cllr Keith Ferrin advised that £2.5m had been allocated for the new financial year with priority given to replacing existing bright mercury lamps at the start of the programme.
- Proposed closure of right hand turns from A256 affecting Eythorne and Tilmanstone appears to be based on one fatal accident, is excessive and will result in more HGVs using small lanes and damage to vehicles. KCC is very aware of the problem and had received a letter from the Coroner which could not be ignored. There have been 2 fatal crashes (resulting in 3

fatalities) at the junctions in the last three years. Dover Joint Transportation Board had received a report and KCC has started consultations with parishes, bus companies, etc. on a six month trial closure during which traffic would be monitored. At the end of that period a further report would be submitted and a decision made on whether the closures would be made permanent. If traffic lights were to be used instead then 50mph zones would need to be added and enforced but potential for accidents at right hand turns would still exist.

- Eythorne Parish Council: concerned about lack of surface on roundabout in centre of village used by traffic from Barville, Sandwich Road and Wigmore Road and where school children wait at the bus stop. This would be exacerbated by closing right hand turns on A256. Cllr Ferrin advised that the perfect solution, a new road, was not possible therefore every other solution would be defective in some way but all the issues would be examined. The closures would be advertised and the public/Parish Councils could then raise objection which would be reported to the DJTB before any action was taken.
- What was included in Kent Highways budget for this year? Cllr Ferrin advised that the programme of projects for the next financial year had not yet been made public but was extensive.
- There were rumours of a new A2 route from Coldred to Boys Hill. This was an option to be considered in the Local Development Framework but not before 2014.
- In a letter six months ago double yellow lines had been proposed for Market Square, Aylesham, opposite Market View, and lines to permit 20 minutes parking. DDC to update on this.
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3.2 A258 Dover to Walmer Improvement Engineering Works:

- Mike Smith referred to the multi-agency A258 Working Group which included KCC Cllr Eileen Rowbotham, DDC Cllr Nigel Collor and Parish Cllr David Hart and which had started work in April 2008.
- The Working Group had agreed with initial police conclusions that the 5 fatal accidents on A258 were not the responsibility of Kent Highways and there had been two prosecutions. However, apart from these incidents, the level of crashes warranted an in-depth study.
- Steve Henson explained that surveys had included condition of surface, width of road, signs and markings, sites for speed cameras and crash data. Because of the high number of 'wet crashes' the entire road would be resurfaced over 10 nights from 19 to 27 January.
- Road signs at certain junctions would be standardised and cleared of vegetation. Other road signs would be updated to address overtaking crashes.
- Solar powered, self illuminating cats eyes would be added.
- Details of some of the 11 schemes were presented to the meeting and the full set of plans was available on request.
- Discussion session:
 - plans for A258 are very impressive and commendable;

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40mph gateway to Ringwould to be repainted but the 40mph reactive sign had not been active for a year. KCC to investigate;
road signs are not illuminated where there is no street lighting;
Posters/placards distract the attention of drivers – does this outweigh the safety value of message?

Meeting ended at 9.15pm