



CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

*Clerk
Capel Parish Council Office
Capel Village Hall
Five Oak Green
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Dear Councillor Bulman,

Following concerns raised by local residents regarding both volume and speed of traffic, Capel Parish Council discussed the matter at length at their last meeting. It was agreed that the first step would be to write to the Joint Transportation Board with some urgency.

Other Agencies and interested parties are also being sent this letter in the expectation that they will respond to Capel Parish Council with both positive suggestions and solutions.

The current impact throughout the whole of the parish from the A21 dualling works is unacceptable but in particular Alders Road and the B2017 though the village centre are of major concern.

Alders Road is a narrow country lane with several bends which is now being used as a major rat run. This could be alleviated by a no right turn onto the A228 (Colts Hill) which was suggested previously as a measure to improve safety at the crossroads, a site of many RTCs, but was never implemented. Further a speed restriction would allow some monitoring/enforcement with a view to speed reduction.

The B2017 bisects the village centre. There is no crossing and it is extremely dangerous to cross the road both outside the school and the village shop. Many of the pavements are relatively narrow (certainly below the 1.7m recommendation) and speed of vehicles especially HGVs cause enough of a backdraft to be dangerous to pedestrians.

On the 18th October a 13 year old pedestrian was hit by a car and thrown over its bonnet. She luckily escaped with relatively minor injuries.

During a recent multi-agency road safety operation conducted in the rural Tunbridge Wells area, 6 locations were identified to have road safety issues. One of the 6 was Five Oak Green (Operation Wealdon, which ran on 3 dates in October).

In the 2003 Transport Strategy TWBC stated within their action plan for Villages 7.3 "Carry out an audit of pedestrian crossing facilities within villages, including dropped kerbs. Ensure suitable facilities are provided for the mobility impaired" 7.3.12 (short term 0-5 years) "Provide appropriate pedestrian crossing facilities (not necessarily a formal crossing) at local shops and schools" 7.3.25 (medium term 5-10 years)

Sadly the residents of Capel are still waiting after 13 years. The new Transport Strategy does not appear to even consider the rural environs of the borough.

We are therefore asking for an immediate reduction in the speed limit thru the village of Five Oak Green with some form of temporary signage during the remainder of the construction phase of the A21 dualling.

Further to that, steps are taken to work with the Parish Council to install a crossing within the village, traffic calming measures, (after completion of the A21 dualling the B2017 can no longer be considered an arterial route) mandatory signage, regarding HGV use (at

present we have advisory 7.5 tonne signs). There is no "Gateway" on the western approach to Five Oak Green and the one to the east gives the wrong subliminal message, as it's a 40mph sign. There is a permanent speed limit within the village of Five Oak Green of 20mph in line with the "20 is Plenty" Campaign, together with Whetsted Road and all residential side streets. A speed restriction of 30mph be imposed on Alders Road & revisitation of a possible no right hand turn safety measure (or as has been suggested a 4 way no right hand turn policy at the junction of Alders, Crittenden & A228 to prevent the frequent collisions). The areas of Hartlake and Tudeley also to be reviewed with the aim of lowering current speed restrictions and the implementation of new speed restrictions.

Capel Road Strategy Plan 2009 has previously been lodged with various authorities, it details many of the above suggestions (including traffic calming) and is as relevant today as when it was drawn up – if not more so.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Maggie Fenton (Chair of Capel Parish Council)

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