

Shorne Parish Council

— Borough of Gravesham —



PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

June 2017

Lower Thames Crossing Public Meeting

The parish council held a public meeting at Shorne Village Hall on Thursday 11th May, attended by around 140 residents, to discuss the Lower Thames Crossing.

Councillor Bob Lane gave a presentation about the flawed nature of the consultation process, which included directly conflicting information from Highways England and Transport Ministers, and which discounted the responses from 13,240 people opposed to Option C.

Councillor Susan Lindley gave a presentation which described the provisional route of the Western Southern Link in detail, the impact this would have on traffic in the area, and the measures we shall be seeking to mitigate the adverse impacts of the crossing.

Questions were taken from a number of residents who live close to the chosen route. Speakers from the audience included Kent County Councillor Bryan Sweetland, and Reverend Nigel Bourne, Vicar of Chalk.

Meeting with Highways England

Representatives from Shorne Parish Council met with representatives from Highways England on Thursday 18th May, to discuss the route and the development process, and the possible measures that could be taken to mitigate the impact of the crossing.

In high level terms, the parish council requested that the tunnel portals should be extended as far to the south as possible, that there should be no junction to the A226 junction, and that maximum use is made of cuttings, cut & cover, and sympathetic landscaping.

In terms of the tunnel portals, we explained that as currently shown, not only would this result in severance of Chalk Church from its parish, and unacceptable noise and pollution to residents of Chalk, the present siting of the portals is within the Thames flood plain and would lead to dewatering and permanent damage to the marshes.

We made it absolutely clear that the proposed diversion and junction on the A226 is both unnecessary and unwanted, and would result in heavy traffic on the A226 and create rat-runs through Shorne, Gravesend east, and the surrounding areas.

We said that cut & cover green bridge techniques should be used either side of where the link road crosses under Thong Lane, to minimise noise and visual impact on Thong and Shorne West, two areas which would be particularly hard hit by the link road.

Highways England agreed to take these issues into consideration in their design options. They are also looking to see whether access to and from the link road could be incorporated at the Gravesend East junction at Marling Cross.

Highways England also mentioned that they are looking at 'future-proofing' the link by widening it to 3 lanes in each direction between the A2 and A13. They pointed out that this would also mean that the A2 would need to be widened to 5 lanes in each direction between the M2 and the link road junction on the A2.

Arrangements have been made for future stakeholder engagement meetings between the parish council and Highways England, and we shall also be looking to arrange drop-in meetings where parishioners can talk to Highways England.

Advertising Vans

During April, a "Hire2You" advertising van appeared on the overbridge at the Inn On The Lake. The parish council contacted the Police, who asked the company to remove the vehicle. The vehicle was duly removed, and parked on Brewers Road overbridge instead. Its place on the Inn On The Lake overbridge was then taken by a "Fleet Hire" advertising van.

Both these situations were again reported to the Police. The legal position regarding static advertising vehicles may be a grey area, however the parking of vehicles where they obstruct pavements or cause traffic hazards is not a grey area. At the time of writing, both vehicles have been removed.

Parish Council Meetings in June

- Thursday 8th June - Planning & Highways Committee
- Thursday 22nd June - Footpaths, Properties & Greens Committee

The meetings will start at 7.45pm in the Committee Room in Shorne Village Hall.

Annual Civic Service

This year's Annual Civic Service will be held at the St Peter's & St Paul's Church at 10.00am, on Sunday 2nd July, followed by a reception in the small hall in the Village Hall.

Bob Lane
Shorne Parish Council