

Subject: Response to email dated 2.6.26

Importance: High

Dear Chairman,

Thank you for taking the time to reply and also for taking the time to walk the route yourself along with another councillor. Could you please advise what day and time of day this was, as traffic levels can vary significantly, and this does have an impact.

I have to admit that I was disappointed to read the comments that excessive traffic and speeding are simply "the way of things now" and that people walking on Bannisters Lane do so at their own risk. Whilst I appreciate that many areas face similar issues and there are often limitations on what can be done, I had hoped that these concerns would be viewed as matters that can at least be explored and safety improved where possible.

I appreciate your views, however, there may have been some misunderstanding regarding some of the issues I have been trying to raise. I therefore just want to clarify these ahead of the meeting tonight and hope that they can be discussed and some solutions agreed.

With regards to the pavements, I agree that, in places, they are adequate; however, in other places, such as opposite the care home, they are very narrow indeed. They are also uneven in places, and they become very slippery and moss covered during the Autumn and Winter months. My concern is not that the pavements should be widened as I am aware this is not something that would be possible. Rather, when vehicles are speeding and HGV are passing, pedestrians are extremely close to this traffic, particularly around bends and near the care home. Furthermore, when large HGVs use the road, there is insufficient space for vehicles to pass, and they end up mounting pavements or verges. This creates a risk for pedestrians. In my view, this is not simply a matter of driver behaviour, but a question of whether the road is suitable for the size of vehicles using it.

I have personally experienced a vehicle swerving towards me while I was walking on the pavement. My husband has also had a vehicle lose control on the bend and career towards him. I have also seen cars mounting the pavements to avoid lorries when children are walking on the paths. I genuinely worry that an accident will occur if speeds continue at the levels we regularly see and these large vehicles continue to use the road.

I note that you do not support a weight limit because of the potential impact on local businesses. Could I ask you to explain this in a little more detail? In particular, I would be interested to know whether there has been any assessment of the road width, available passing space, suitability for HGV movements and the impacts on pedestrians and the road itself. There are no businesses located on this stretch of road and there are more suitable routes available. I am therefore struggling to understand how asking HGVs to use those more suitable routes rather than to cut through an unsuitable road, would significantly impact local businesses.

The current HGV use of this road is causing a number of issues, including pavement mounting, road deterioration, risks to pedestrians and cyclists, noise, house vibrations and damage to trees. Particularly on the single-track section from Ralphs Lane up to the start of the 30mph limit, the road is simply unsuitable for HGVs and their use is causing significant deterioration of the carriageway edges. If 2 HGV are to meet anywhere down this road I don't really know what would happen.

Given the above issues being caused, could you please advise how this has been considered against the damage to local businesses and what assessment has been undertaken of road suitability and the wider impacts on the surrounding road network? Particularly as those roads are suitable to take HGV traffic.

Regarding Bannisters Lane, my concern has never really been the lack of a pavement, as I fully appreciate that there is unlikely to be sufficient space or funding to provide one. My concern is more about the suitability of the traffic using the road, particularly HGVs, together with speeding vehicles and the lack of warning signage.

I also struggle with the idea that people are simply choosing to accept the risk of walking there, as many residents have little option but to do so because they live on the lane. Residents have told us that they do not feel comfortable even gardening at the front of their properties because of the speed of traffic. I therefore think it is reasonable to ask whether there are measures that could make the road safer for those who live there and those who use it to access places such as the village hall. Residents should be able to walk and cycle to local destinations, such as Jenny's Wood, without feeling at risk from speeding traffic.

At present there is very little visible 30mph signage on this stretch, save for one small sign that is partially obscured by a bush. My husband has also experienced several near misses with speeding vehicles and regularly estimates traffic speeds to be well in excess of the speed limit.

We have also identified that some in-vehicle navigation systems appear to display an incorrect speed limit for sections of West End Road and Bannisters Lane. Given the level of speeding already identified, I would be grateful if this could be investigated alongside the visibility and adequacy of existing speed limit signage.

With regards to the crossroads. The drop curb section you are referring to where you can cross over to the bus stop, this is actually so close to the junction and cars come around that sweeping bend at speed and are on you in a second. My daughter and I had a frightening near miss here when a car came around the bend from Kirton at speed. If you are able to, it would be worth you spending some time at the bus stop area at a busy time (8-9am or 3:30-4:30) so that you can identify how fast they go around that corner and past the bus stop and how vehicles use the junctions to overtake. I also regularly see people walking in the carriageway around that bend because there is no footway provision and then see cars speed past them.

I also note your comments regarding visibility across the main road. However, this is made much more difficult by the sheer number of speeding vehicles using the crossroads (55% recorded on the survey). Cars approach quickly from both directions (much faster than 30mph) and I do not believe this creates an easy crossing point for children, elderly residents, people with prams or those with mobility difficulties.

Pedestrians then have to negotiate a further crossing at the Middlegate Road West junction, where I regularly see vehicles overtaking traffic waiting to turn into both West End Road and Middlegate Road West.

My concern is not simply whether an able-bodied adult can cross safely on a quiet day, but whether the route feels safe and accessible for children, elderly residents, bus users and those with mobility difficulties on a day-to-day basis with identified high levels of speeding traffic.

For these reasons, I do not feel that there is a safe and continuous route into Kirton village, particularly for children, elderly residents and those with accessibility needs. As you are aware, there is an overgrown grass verge around the bend and I would simply ask for your support in seeking funding to explore whether this could simply be turned into a basic pedestrian walkway into the village.

With regards to the speeding on West End Road, I am pleased to hear that you acknowledge this issue. Can I ask whether the Parish Council has any ideas or proposals for addressing this now that it has been acknowledged? I had understood that permanent digital speed signs may be considered and wondered whether this was still being explored? I had also understood that the SID would return and be put closer to my house if possible, however this has not yet happened. It was only in place for a very short time.

Can I also ask why speed humps would not be considered purely because we are not an estate? I see speed humps used in multiple locations which are non-estate and believe that they are suitable traffic calming for roads that have a 30mph limit and an issue with speeding. I am not aware that they are limited to estates. The humps are less obvious, blend into the road more and are more subtle. Whilst West End Road is not an estate road, it is nevertheless a residential road with housing on both sides and which now has two new housing

developments. As you are aware, there is also the care home situated down the road which I feel is a further reason to do something to combat the speeding. I understand that traffic calming measures have to be considered carefully, but I would be grateful to understand why they are ruled out in principle in this case. Can I ask that they are formally considered? Our SID has recorded speeds of around 60mph and, combined with the volume of traffic using the road, I do feel this justifies at least considering what traffic calming options might be appropriate.

Lastly, we are still missing the HGV sign from the Ralphs Lane entrance to West End Road. I have emailed yourselves and Highways and cannot get a response. It appears that someone has moved it to the Bannisters Lane entrance. Whilst I appreciate it is needed here also as they lead to the same road, there still needs to be the sign at the Ralphs Lane entrance as this is the first one the HGV come to. I would be grateful if someone could please advise me on this, as it was reported some time ago and it needs to be looked into.

I would appreciate if you could discuss these matters at the meeting tonight and provide me with responses to the points that I have raised and clarified please.

We will do our very best to attend the next meeting. Unfortunately, I cannot attend tonight as my daughter and Husband are both poorly. I am however always happy to talk over the phone or in person.

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards