

LUDGVAN PARISH COUNCIL - 23rd AUGUST 2017

ROADS COMMITTEE

A30 ROUTE SAFETY - ST EARTH TO NEWTOWN ROUNDABOUTS

1. Background:

- 1.1 Meetings and discussions with the Highways Agency (now Highways England) and the Parish Council have been ongoing since 2013. A Route Study between St Erth and Newtown was proposed and initially it was stated that this would be unlikely to bring forward major investment and that low cost solutions would be sought.
- 1.2 The Study was delivered in October 2014 and proposed a series of further studies which would prioritise the issues and address them in manageable chunks. The first of these was delivered in April 2016 concentrating on speed limits, junctions and accesses; due to changes in Highways England project funding arrangements, it proposed some significant improvements along the route notably the provision of traffic lights at Crowlas crossroads. Further studies will address signing & street lighting; cycle lanes, land widths and parking and finally bus stops, severance and footways.
- 1.3 At its meeting in June 2016 the Council resolved to support the improvements contained in the first Highways England Route Study Report (Minute 503(b)).
- 1.4 The delivery of these improvements is still subject to detailed feasibility work and the award of the necessary funding, originally this was expected to happen in 2017.
- 1.5 Suggestions that the timetable had slipped prompted further questions to Highways England about the timescale which elicited the following response:
*"The feasibility work and testing for the proposed signalisation at Crowlas crossroads, identified in the phase 1 study, is now nearing completion. This concept testing is essential to support a robust bid for design and delivery funding in April this year which, if successful, will enable us to take the proposals through to detailed design in 2018/19 prior to construction in 2020/21.
I realise that the local community may find this lengthy process frustrating, but we have to demonstrate that we are prioritising funding on schemes which will deliver the greatest benefit to all road users and adjacent communities, and schemes such as this have to bid against other candidate schemes. However, I can assure you that we are exploring all possible funding streams to progress through to scheme delivery".*
- 1.6 A further update from Highways England on the proposed improvements along the route was requested and their response, received on 1st June 2017, is replicated below and was reported to the Extraordinary Council meeting on 7th June 2017.
*"The business case package required to bid for funding is in preparation for the entire phase 1 proposals, including the proposed Crowlas 30mph speed limit and the traffic signals at Crowlas Crossroads, and it is anticipated that these will be ready before the end of June.
In respect of the Crowlas traffic signals feasibility study, the feasibility work (being undertaken by CORMAC) has been delayed while they complete work for the St Erth Multi Modal Hub (StEMMH) project and the signalisation of the Station Approach junction. This is required because in the event that the StEMMH traffic signals were not to proceed then the signalisation at Crowlas Crossroads within the same route section may not be viable. Once CORMAC provide their final report to Highways England their traffic models will be validated to ensure that that traffic signals at the crossroads can operate as required. We hope to be able to conclude this work across the next few months.
The Phase 2 report (Road Signs and Street Lighting) is completed in draft and currently being reviewed before being issued to me – I hope to be in receipt before the end of June.*

2. Latest position:

- 2.1 The extraordinary meeting that approved the establishment of this Committee also resolved to

continue to pressure those in power and their agencies to deliver the improvements. A letter to our MP asking him to press the Secretary of State for Transport has elicited no response to date, however, Cornwall Councillor Simon Elliott did get a reply. Whilst support was given to the proposals no funding was forthcoming.

- 2.2 An update has been requested from Highways England which has been delayed due to internal re-organisation and was still awaited at the time of writing this report.

3. Other issues:

- 3.1 As stated above other phases of the study will consider other issues that exist, one that is of particular importance relates to severance, referred to in the initial report thus:
Public comments have highlighted the issues of severance in the communities along this route resulting from the high levels of traffic which are experienced throughout the year. There is empirical evidence that, in general, traffic speed and volume reduces physical activity, social contacts, children's play, and access to goods and services. However, severance is an issue not just for pedestrians having to cross the A30 to access local facilities, but also for vehicle access across the A30 to and from nearby communities.
- 3.2 I have recent correspondence from a resident of Whitecross relating worrying instances of near misses and the option, if alighting the bus heading west, of either waiting for a gap in the traffic (up to twenty minutes) or continuing to Crowlas crossing the road at the pedestrian crossing and walking back to Whitecross or catching another bus.
- 3.3 The proposals currently on the table and the additional signals at St Erth associated with the Transport Hub may well result in traffic further speeding up between St Erth and Crowlas thus making the situation even more dangerous.
- 3.4 Severance issues fall within the last phase of the proposed Route Studies and thus no swift solution appears likely. The issues also affect other settlements along the route e.g. Cockwells and Canonstown.

4. Conclusion:

- 4.1 The improvements, both those already suggested and those that are the subject of future studies, are long awaited and are necessary regardless of whether the current road is bypassed or not, which even if were to happen would probably not be in place for at least seven or eight years.
- 4.2 The safety issues caused by the severance of settlements along the route are arguably more important than the subjects of the second and third studies as currently proposed.
- 4.3 It is therefore **RECOMMENDED that:**
 - (a) **the Council makes the delivery of the Route Study improvements contained in the April 2016 report and the completion and delivery of improvements contained in future route studies its priority in respect of roads in the Parish;**
 - (b) **it requests Highways England move the consideration and addressing of severance issues to an earlier phase of the Studies.**

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

EM HIGHWAYS SERVICES LTD: A30 St Erth to Newton Route Review (October 2014)

KIER/HIGHWAYS ENGLAND: A30 St Erth to Newtown Route Study: Speed limits, Junctions & Accesses (April 2016)