

MEETING WITH THE BECCLES SOCIETY AND PETER ALDOUS MP 08/12/2018

Attendees.

Peter Aldous MP

Mark Bee (as PA's agent but also responding to issues as County Councillor).

Beccles Society: Paul Fletcher, Bob Aris, John Sayer

Beccles Road Safety Group: Adrian Simpson-James (Guest)

Meeting was part of PA weekly surgery, allocated 20 minutes so discussion was brief.

PF introduced everyone & pointed out that AS-J represented Beccles Road Safety Group. He then handed over to AS-J.

AS-J told the PA/MB that SCC Highways had been dismissive towards complaints about signage during road closure and that by and large they are being uncommunicative at top levels.

PA/MB acknowledged that point.

RA then requested meeting to follow the Discussion Points document & asked for the assistance of PA to get SCC to action the points presented. The meeting then basically went through in the order laid down within that document.

Beccles Society feel there are three stages to the whole issue as listed: -

First stage having low/negligible cost that could be quickly undertaken.

Second stage having intermediate cost and currently being actioned.

Third stage being longer term due to cost/complexity issues.

First Stage

RA handed over copies of SCC Lorry Management map.

PA was asked: -

1. To request SCC to update their website and lorry route maps to include the new A145.
PA agreed to action.
2. To request SCC to inform all haulage companies in Suffolk and Norfolk about the new road.
PA agreed this as reasonable.
3. What outcome did he have with his meeting with RPC/M&H?
PA stated he had met with the CEO of RPC/M&H they had agreed to route their delivery vehicles via the A145 & will put up relevant signage.
4. To request SCC to be pro-active in communicating with local haulage companies re. Deliveries.
PA agreed this as reasonable.

NB. PF had previously spoken to Peter Aldous outside the Town Hall on remembrance day and mentioned that it was Star Transport who caused one of the biggest problems going to M & H Plastics. PA had confirmed that he was meeting the latter company the following Saturday and would raise it with them.

5. To get SCC to put pressure on SATNAV companies to display the new road.
RA referred to a meeting with Guy McGregor at Endeavour House where Beccles Society/Beccles Town Council were advised SCC were involved with other authorities in trying to get HGV Sat-Nav's commonly used.
MB confirmed this continues to be the case.
6. PF drew attention of PA to the Beccles Society suggestion of colour coding signs in accordance with the SCC Lorry Management map. RA added that this could be throughout the county similar to the Emergency Coding system.
PA confirmed his understanding and noted the point.

Second Stage

RA handed over two bound copies incorporating Beccles Society review of sign modifications (part 1), cross referenced against the original SCC sign review (part 2).

PA was asked: -

1. If the review could be put before SCC.
PA/MB agreed to pass it on.
2. A S-J pointed out that despite repeated requests by Beccles Road Safety Group no completion date was forthcoming from SCC.
MB said that the reasoning behind doing everything at once was cost. A S-J felt that he seemed unhappy about this.
3. RA pointed out there were some SCC signage omissions & while it is our intent to contact SCC to suggest inclusion, help on this would be useful.
PA/MB agreed to pass review on for action.
4. The review includes two signs on A143 which we believe require changes but they are in Norfolk.
Action by SCC to talk to NCC would be helpful.
PA agreed the point and would action.

A S-J commented that people want to see something happening now and simply blanking out 'A145' on town signs with 'Gaffer Tape' would contribute to drivers using the new road. RA stated that as most alterations were clearly intended by SCC to be 'self adhesive overlays' they could be manufactured in 2/3 weeks with a day to execute.

A S-J advised that SCC Highways have told us that they have no intention to designate the new road as a lorry route with a black sign – reasons unclear from the correspondence we have received.

MB assured everyone that there is a willingness at Council to make all these things happen.

Third Stage

Traffic Survey

MB was asked:-

1. Why was the traffic survey programmed for so long in the future?

MB has spoken to the SCC portfolio holder for highways, who had agreed that all the signs and survey etc would be carried out at the same time on the advice of their Highways Department. The intention is to allow the effects of the new road to be felt with unintended consequences to emerge before either sign changes or survey will take place. In regard to signs we expressed our opinion that they should be completed as quickly as possible without the need for the survey to have taken place as correct signage would probably take care of 90% of the traffic problems.

MB reiterated that he wanted the survey to be very early in 2019.

PF stated it was imperative that the signs were erected some time before the survey was carried out.

MB reiterated the 'all at same time' approach and RA stated our disagreement with him because signs were directional not dependent on traffic flows. MB indicated agreement but the feeling remains that the 'all at once' intention will remain as policy.

PF pointed out that with proper planning at an early stage the cost of road signs could have been charged to the project and thought this could still be done, normal practice as the original project had probably not yet been closed out.

RA and PF commented that proper signage would be more effective than 7.5 tonne weight limit. PF stated that from his professional experience of traffic management that weight restrictions were difficult to enforce although not impossible, but use a lot of manpower to do it.

A S-J suggested that this is where Lorry watch comes in.

2. RA reminded PA about a meeting PA had chaired some years ago at Ringsfield on the SRR and said we think it would be valuable to have a similar meeting coinciding with the survey to allow feedback on the effect of the new road on surrounding parishes.
PA agreed to that proposal.

JS raised the question of adding an HGV indicator sign to Ellough at the A12/A145 junction (north bound & south bound) at Blythburgh and removing any routing indicators at the A12/B1127 junction (north bound & south bound) in order to minimise HGV traffic through Hulver.
PA acknowledged the relevance of this suggestion.

JS Raised a personal issue concerning the lack of a 30 mph speed limit down Cucumber Lane.
Whilst PA acknowledged the point it did not appear that any action would be taken over it.

Following cessation of the meeting it was agreed that Beccles Society and Beccles Road Safety group would write to SCC mentioning all the issues discussed.