

Report from Cllr. Christopher Le Hardy following the Snap Ant SIS meeting with Highways at County Hall, Taunton on Friday 11th November 2016



Dear all,

I wanted to provide you all (a wide distribution to Parish Council Members and the Action Group) with an update following the meeting held on Friday 11 November at County Hall between myself and County Highways, after which Roger Gurner was back briefed in Taunton.

Summary:

- As far as I am concerned the meeting successfully included sufficient elements to satisfy not only the immediate concerns of about road safety within the village but the wider requirements of the surrounding villages and communities. This is a necessary balance.
- Highways are agreed that the first priority is to get the structure of the Highway correct; but as further reassurance to the Action Group the design I saw and poured over in finite detail included at least 22 changes stretching from Lopen Head to the junction with Lopen road to Hinton St George. All of these will help to enhance road safety and are intended to control speeding, one of your main requirements.
- The SIS takes full account of all the correspondence including Peter Little's and other earlier reports;
- The scheme design is undergoing a final revision and should be available in time for the December meeting of the Parish Council. I will also send it to **SLOW** as soon as I receive it.
- We have all worked very hard on your behalf and County Highways is fully aware of the points of concern.
- Finally, there is a lot more to do once this first phase is in place to collect the data required for any further enhancements, if they are required. It will be much clearer once this first phase (Phase A) is in place; then further consideration can look at any necessary further enhancements (Phase B).

What it did not include:

- The principal Right of Way at Snap Ant will continue as before from Lopenhead towards Merriott;
- There will not be a new 20 MPH Zone for a number of reasons: the police will not support one; the national statistics show that the effect of traffic speed is minimal, around 1-2 mph only; the national standard though villages is 30MPH; 20 MPH zones are only installed in exceptional circumstances.
- However, the changes to signage should include a reduced 30MPH zone with clear, distinct red tarmac marked 30-MPH Gateways at either end of the village; the 20MPH advisory starting above Snap Ant may be extended down to the 30MPH Gateway opposite the Laurels. (both subject to final confirmation by Highways);
- The suggestion of a white line down Upper Holloway is complicated by the parking of cars outside homes thus impeding a marked footway.

Next Steps.

- Following the Parish Council consideration of the final design all the measures will be put in place (dates to be confirmed).

- Any further enhancements need further evidence from the community and secondly police support.
- So, there is a deal of work before the next stage. Listed below are some of the measures that need to be undertaken by the Action Group and Parish Council:
 - **Establish your Speed Watch**
 - **Quantify the pedestrian** use of the road: numbers, adults, children, dogs, bicycles, cars, horses,
 - **Establish the pedestrian patterns:** school buses/times and numbers, routes across the road concerned;
 - **Locate bus stop** locations for school children;
 - **Assess the timings** of heavy traffic use am/pm;
 - **Quantify the types of vehicles** using the route: cars, vans, commercial, agricultural, under and over 7.5tons;
 - **Identify as many of the commercial users:** time, size and dates;
 - **Make a list of Commercial and Agricultural** users that require access along the route;
 - **Parking on Upper Holloway.** Consider self-help/funded parking measures on the narrow parts of the road i.e. Upper Holloway. Consider further off road parking, further lay-bys on the Eastern side of Upper Holloway;
 - **Driver education, understanding and cooperation:** Private and business vehicles, agricultural and commercial vehicles all need educating about the village hot spots and danger spots; Alert the local farmers to declare their use of the road and routes; have a discussion with the businesses on Mill Lane to ensure drivers, both regular and occasional are identified and can be contacted on this safety drive;
 - **Link up with neighbouring villages** Merriott, Dinnington, Over Stratton and Hinton on the same route; they will have similar conditions.
 - **Notify the police about this safety drive:** Action already taken (by CALeH) at Merriott PC on Monday 14 Nov
 - Work together with County Councillor who will closely monitor and advise.

I hope this goes some way to allay concerns, We have a viable scheme that will enhance road safety, that taken together with the task list above will promote road safety in Lopen Village and mitigate some of the traffic that caused your concern originally.

Yours Sincerely

Christopher

CA Le Hardy
 Cabinet Member Corporate Improvement
 Chair Somerset Armed Forces Community Covenant
 Member, South Petherton & Islemoor
 01935 850212