

## Notes from a meeting to discuss traffic issues around The Cornerpiece, Upper Bucklebury

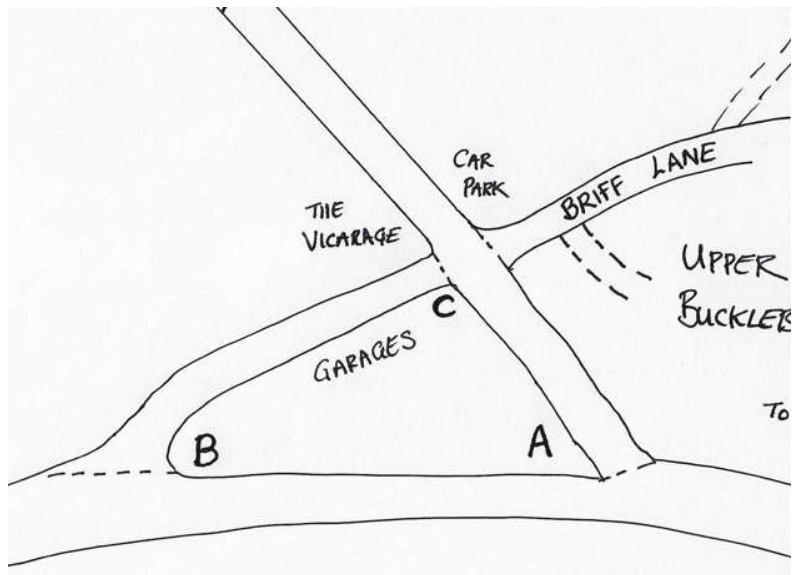
Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at 7.30pm in the Victory Room.

1. **Present:** Cllr. Dickens, Cllr. Allum, Cllr. Morgan, Cllr. Southgate, Cllr. Teal, District Cllr. Chris Read, Mr. Gareth Dowding (WBC Highways), Mrs. Helen Pratt (Clerk) and 16 parishioners.
2. **Apologies.**  
Apologies of absence were received from Cllr. Austin, Cllr. Clarke, Cllr. Loader, Cllr. Spours and Alasdair Jones-Perrott (Bucklebury Estate).
3. **Introduction.**  
Cllr. Dickens introduced Gareth Dowding to those at the meeting and gave an introduction to all those present of the purpose of the meeting. The aim is to produce a report to be sent to WBC recommending, and supporting highway changes to The Cornerpiece to improve safety for all users.
4. **Expectations and Legal Aspects (Gareth Dowding).**  
All highway changes have to go through a lengthy legal process which is likely to take between 18 months and 2 years. Once a plan is in place, there has to be a public consultation, the plan has to be assessed, and it could still then be modified. It is possible that any changes could be included in the 2024/25 highways programme.
5. **Possible Options.**  
The parking problems mainly occur during the working day (mornings and afternoons), which might make timed parking restrictions a sensible option.  
No right/no left turns have the disadvantage that there is no one to carry out enforcement, and someone would make the manoeuvre.<sup>1</sup>  
There is the option of parking restrictions at the top of Briff Lane.  
It is not up to the highways department to provide businesses with parking.
6. **Current Situation.**  
There are currently no restrictions in place. However, the Police have powers in the case of obstruction, or if there is parking too close to the junction. In these instances, reports can be made to the police on 101 (the non-emergency number). BPC has been in contact with the PCSO and the Police have visited the site on at least one occasion.
7. **Comments.**
  - BPC supports local businesses.
  - If the parked cars are all removed there is concern that vehicle speeds will increase ridiculously.
  - The Saab garage has been in situ for more than 20 years and questioned why complaints had only recently been received given that nothing has changed. An ariel photograph from 1964 showed fewer homes. The Saab garage contests whether it is a dangerous road, but has put up a no parking sign at the Burdens Heath end of the fencing.
  - Whilst some people see the parked cars as an obstruction, others see prohibiting them as being more dangerous (due to speed).

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<sup>1</sup> There are two properties with vehicular access **only** from the south side of the Cornerpiece, which would not be accessible from Burdens Heath if a 'no left' and 'no right' turn were to be implemented.

- More physical restrictions, to reduce speed, when approaching from the south were suggested (sleeping policeman/chicanes).<sup>2</sup>
- The parked vehicles are a natural traffic calming measure.
- Parking restrictions (yellow lines) at either end of the link road, but not in the middle to ensure unlimited egress/ingress.
- The businesses have outgrown the sites.
- On some occasions parking extends down Briff Lane, as well as in the Briff Lane carpark.
- A mini roundabout at points A and B.
- A single roundabout at A, such that the link road can be made into a cul-de-sac.<sup>3</sup>
- All Saint's Church car park has been made available for the businesses to park cars, but is a 5-minute walk away. The Saab garage were not aware of this option and would like to try it. The Clerk will contact the Church office and ensure the offer still stands. All Saint's church carpark is used by some parents whilst dropping off and collecting children from Bucklebury Primary School.
- It was suggested that it is up to the businesses to manage and sort out their own parking arrangements.
- It was questioned whether all of the vehicles parked inside the Saab garage site are for spares or repairs; they are all for repair.
- All vehicles parked on the road should be in a road worthy condition – if not, this can be pursued with the Driver Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).
- There are an increased number of cars parking in the link road.
- It is OK to park some cars in the link road.
- Comments from Bucklebury Estate:
  - The Estate is looking at the provision of car parking and walks for the community and visitors, this has been publicly exchanged and acknowledged. This forms part of a wider environmental scheme and the likely increased population on the fringe of the Common and nearby settlements.
  - The Estate cannot close the car park off Briff Lane due to access required by SSE to serve substation and the statutory rights of way for legitimate use of the byway.
  - There are clearly mixed views regarding the multi-use of this area of the Parish which includes car parking for visitors, local business use, pedestrian access for safe passage off Burdens Heath, stakeholder use and stationary vehicle parking associated with local business lining the highway. To sum up there is currently not enough space for all users.
  - The estate supports local business and enterprise.
  - The Estate would be willing to consider objectively a greater area of parking for multiple use however this would need to be designated and formalised with local business so that access is available at all times for other legitimate use. If this was an option WBC would need to be consulted in terms of possible planning requirements.



<sup>2</sup> Gareth Dowding commented that the link road is not suitable for traffic calming measures.

<sup>3</sup> There is unlikely to be sufficient highway grounds at point A for a round-a-bout. There is very little highway ground at this point.

- The Estate has demonstrated its commitment to community safety with the provision of Winchcombe Way linking Upper Bucklebury to Chapel Row avoiding Broad Lane. The Estate is therefore delighted to support further initiatives balancing use and safety.

8. **Speed.**

- Cllr. Southgate reported that over 60,000 datapoints have been collected using the BPC SID, which back up the reports of speeding in the parish.
- The BPC SID records the entrance and exit speed for vehicles going past the device in both directions.
- Some scary speeds have been recorded (in excess of 70mph in a 30mph zone).
- On average, SID is obtaining approximately a 5mph reduction in speed, however it is more effective in Chapel Row than at Burdens Heath (where the worst speeds are seen).
- More volunteers are needed to utilise SID.
- Thames Valley Police only carry out 12 hours of speed enforcement in the parish and this is now all in Chapel Row.
- WBC only has a limited number of hours of Police enforcement time across the whole district.
- Thames Valley Police have reduced the number of speed camera sites, but WBC is maintaining all of the sites (current and former), so they are all perceived as being active.
- BPC has agreed to invest in more kit to work with Thames Valley Police under the Community Speedwatch programme which is based on a speed gun, operated by two or three volunteers. Data collected is submitted to the Police who will send letters to registered keepers of speeding vehicles and make a visit on the 3<sup>rd</sup> offence.
- It was noted that signage is required for the Community Speedwatch.
- Accident data for accidents involving injury can be found on the crashmap website – see link on the BPC website.
- The Estate has agreed with BPC that the unmade pedestrian route running parallel with Burdens Heath can be upgraded to create an all-weather surface.

9. **Next Steps.**

Gareth Dowding commented that in Streetly, similar issues existed along the high street to those at the Cornerpiece. The PC carried out a survey with options, before submitting a report requesting restrictions to WBC who then had to carry out a further consultation, but given that people had already been consulted the proposal went ahead and includes sections of restricted and unrestricted parking. BPC strongly supports local employment and those who live locally; all need to be considered in future proposals.

BPC needs to determine a scheme which is supported by the majority of stakeholders and submit this to WBC. A consultation with detailed options was put forwards.

10. The meeting closed at 8.40pm.