

Dear Neighbours and Residents, --- *email circulated 24th January 2020* ---

You may be aware that KCC Highways has now responded in ambiguous (and worrying) terms. In short, they have corrected some of the assumptions used by the developers and they (KCC) want to have further discussions before they come down on one side or the other.

KCC are not objecting but they are insisting on more information regarding the predicted impacts of traffic (calculated as an increase of 20% increase over and above projected traffic arising from existing Planning Approvals).

In my view, KCC's letter doesn't really nail home their own point that traffic flows into the junction with the A2 will have (their words) an **exponential impact** on queue-length using standard modelling techniques. I understand this to mean that increasing traffic by 20% will have **much worse impact** because the layout of the junctions, narrowness of the lane and patterns of parking along Lynsted Lane will conspire together to create problematic tail-backs south along Lynsted Lane and jams on the A2 as traffic is blocked from moving into Lynsted Lane.

This means that there is no 'straight-line' relationship between increased traffic, capacity of Lynsted Lane/A2 and actual flows of traffic. As KCC says, the model breaks down because the CURRENT and projected traffic from approved developments in the Plan places such a degree of burden on traffic queuing that there will **much increased problems** when factoring a 20% increase arising from the proposed development combined with the patterns of parking/narrowing along Lynsted Lane – and creating much more complex problems with lines-of-sight. The concerns of KCC are consistent with "queuing theory" that says that problems in traffic flow do not build up gradually with increased traffic. Instead, a point comes when the capacity of roads/lanes suddenly and "exponentially" breaks down to create accelerated build-up of tail-backs.

KCC **do** question the optimism of the developers that A2 traffic will behave in a civilised way by letting vehicles join the queues along the A2 from Lynsted Lane. My own experience of trying to get out of our drive onto the A2 – this is a bloody nonsense! It is VERY rare to see such civilised behaviour.

In my experience, drivers already in a queue do not follow a rational model of civilised behaviour! All too often, drivers act independently and rarely respond to being 'held up' by opening a gap to add further to their woes!

I am not confident that the standard models used by the Developers and KCC adequately take into account the flow of HGVs into Lynsted Lane as well as regular agricultural vehicles (farmers, cold stores, harvesting, Amethyst, etc). The models are largely based on an "averaging" principle across all types of roads. Local conditions bring into question the use of "average" models meant to apply across the whole UK.

KCC makes no mention of proposed access directly to A2 through "coffin path" outlet – creating a rat run. This needs to be addressed as it is a transport/highways issue and further complicates the flow of traffic along London Road.

It is very worrying that the KCC approval/disapproval is in abeyance. The implication is that KCC might be "persuaded."

Finally, and most importantly – the proposal falls outside the SBC Local Plan which has not yet delivered all the developments already approved. The potential for further housing being imposed on SBC is under dispute between SBC and central government. Nothing in these circumstances can be used to bully SBC to "meet a shortfall" in housing development – the Local Plan provides a current and robust rational model (or the best that can be done). Slipping new proposals under the wire is not persuasive.

As matters unfold, I shall continue to share my (and your?) thoughts.

I attach a PDF copy of the KCC letter to save you some time! It is pretty technical but anything you or others can offer to unpick this specialist language ... please do!

Kind regards,
Nigel Heriz-Smith