

COMMUNITY ROADWATCH(UK) C.I.C

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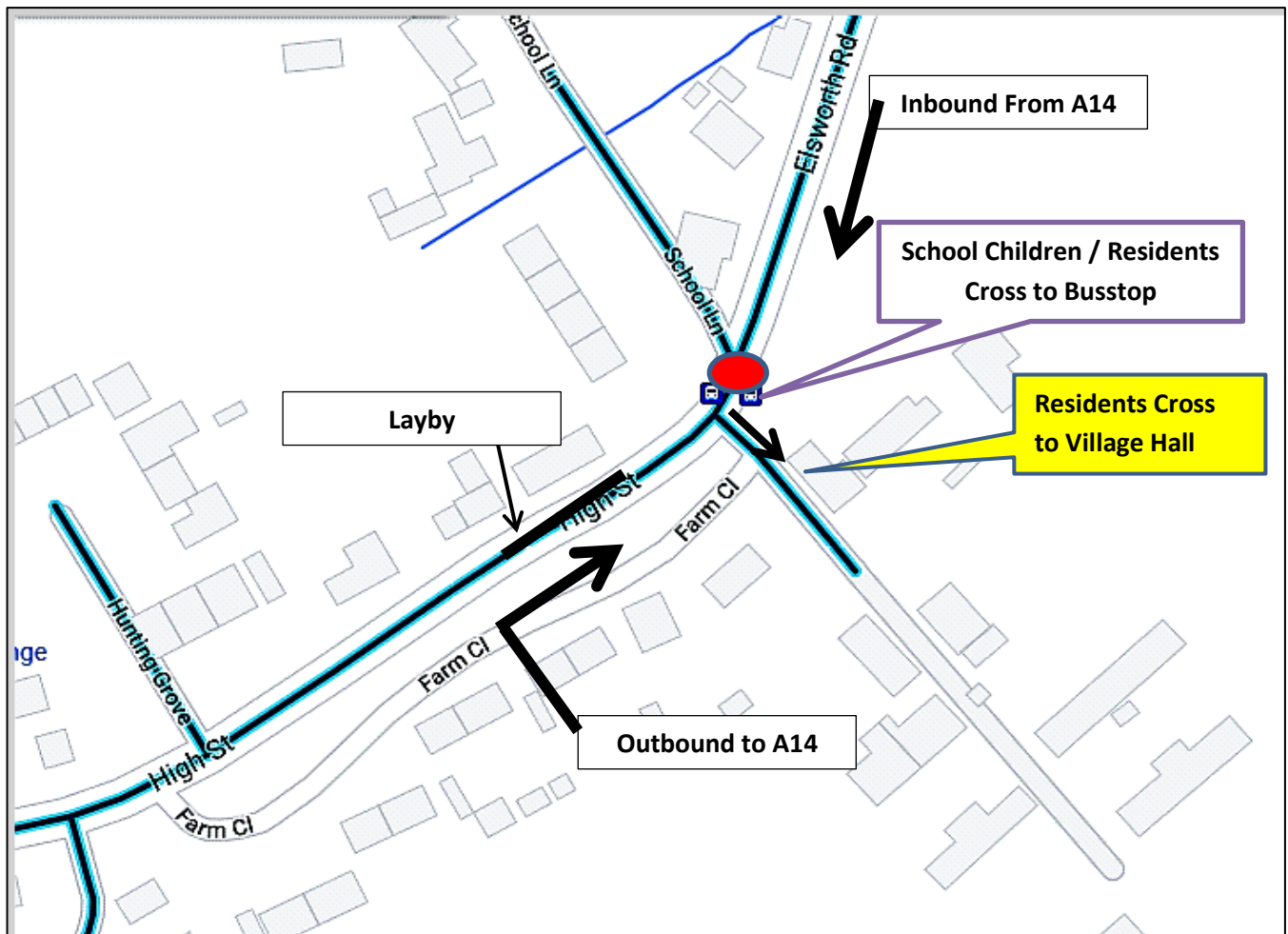
BOXWORTH RESIDENTS' FEEDBACK ON ADDRESSING THE DANGERS

AT THE HIGH ST/ELSWORTH RD SCHOOL LANE JUNCTION



Location – Blind Junction where High St, Elsworth Rd and School Lane Meet at The Front of the Village Hall

(Please refer to the Original CRW Report & Flyer >: www.roadwatch.org.uk/Cambs/Boxworth/LHI23-24)



1. Situation. The junction - along with vehicles exiting and pedestrians crossing from it to busstops or the village hall - is not visible to outbound vehicles until far too late for them to stop, even in an emergency. We can state that authoritatively based on:

- empirical data from our published Logger and SID records (at Reference) , that show that it is not uncommon for outbound vehicles to be travelling at up to 40 mph i.e. 60 feet (20 yards – the length of a standard cricket pitch-) per Second AND
- Where even a cursory common-sense observation reveals that drivers (even at 30 mph) DO NOT have the visibility or distance to react and stop in time. Neither do they have adequate and timely warning of the dangers that exist there. According to the Highway Code on a straight flat road in good condition and good light, a vehicle travelling at 30 mph needs 75 ft (25 yards) and 118 ft (40 yards) at 40 mph, to STOP once the driver realises they have to STOP and that realisation normally takes 3 seconds. **The outbound 85 percentile here was 34 mph in March 2022.**

2. Consultation: During March 2022, a village-wide social media consultation was carried out complemented by a personal Consultation leaflet (see Reference) drop to all residents living:

- a. in School Lane & Farm Close
- b. between Seagraves and School Lane
- c. between School Lane and the Chicane (towards the A14)

Additionally, verbal feedback was received from several residents and included in deliberations.

3. General Consensus from Feedback relating to the Report. The vast majority - of those expressing an opinion or providing written feedback (held by the Chair) - agrees that fundamentally:

- a. Despite an unofficial* mirror being installed, this junction IS DANGEROUS for emerging vehicle drivers who are at great risk from outbound drivers (even at 30 mph) because visibility is seriously restricted to their right by:

- (1) high hedges and
- (2) the straight road from/to Seagraves being swept back.

*CCC Highways does not approve of private mirrors being erected/installed as Road Safety measures (see response in the initial Report with Feedback at Reference).

- b. those crossing TO the Village Hall or TO the bus stop (including children to/from the school bus) are at unacceptable, avoidable risk. However, FROM the Village Hall to School Lane is not as dangerous if the roads are clear of parked vehicles.

- c. something needs to be initiated/done by the Parish to reduce the risk to those affected remembering that according to the Government, children below the age of 10 (some say 14) are unable to accurately judge vehicle speeds above 20 mph. Search the Internet for 'Age for Children Judging Speeds' for more info on that. So, '20 is Plenty' would definitely help them.

- d. a Raised Table or Humps – generating noise, vibration and pollution - is not acceptable to adjacent residents, so has been dropped as an option.

- e. a Buildout or Narrowing in the High St – causing vehicles to stop start and create noise and pollution - is not acceptable to adjacent residents so has been dropped as an option.

- f. effective Signage (as suggested in the report) with distances was an excellent improvement.

- g. white road markings, whilst drawing a comment that they might spoil 'the look' of the village, were agreed by most to be a non-obstructive way of:

- (1) using 'SLOW' painted ahead of the junction to alert drivers to the blind bend.
- (2) using 'double white lines' to prevent most of the overtaking on the bend and to keep vehicles in their own defined carriageway lane around it as some dangerously and blindly cut the corner.
- (3) using double yellow lines to prevent vehicles, especially vans, blocking the view of drivers /pedestrians exiting School Lane from seeing inbound (from A14) vehicles). However, these may not be practical because fuel tankers need to stop at houses to deliver domestic fuel-oil.

4. New Ideas from the Feedback. A number of alternatives (or enhancements) were kindly offered by residents to the issues/solutions highlighted in the report. These have been classified into 'Unaffordable for a £15k LHI and 'Maybe'. (*CRW Comments are in italics*)

a. Unaffordable for a £15k Max LHI with 10% minimum from the Parish

- (1) Install Traffic Lights – *Please refer to the County Council Highways website of measures where the cost of these is £20k+ and even if justified by continuous traffic flows in all directions, they would be outside the means of a small Parish to afford.*
- (2) Install a Speed Camera – *These again cost upwards of £20k to install and maintain (at Parish expense) and many have been vandalised with the Parishes having to pick up the cost of repair. It is worth noting that cameras are set to trigger tickets at 35 mph in a 30 zone and the stats (at Reference) do not indicate a persistent speeding problem to justify the cost when a post-mounted Speed Indicating Device (SID), enhanced by Speedwatch using it, can have a worthwhile effect to bring a 10% speeding profile down to 3%(Proof available on request). Police say cannot be used as a 'cash cow'.*
- (3) Install a Zebra Crossing. *If justified by footfall (that is doubtful) , these again usually cost well over £20k.*

b. Affordable for a £15k LHI

- (1) A £5k Morelock MVAS (+ 2 Poles) – seen elsewhere - that can be scheduled to display a 'Children Crossing' and other graphics (i.e. a Speed limit sign or 'Junction') at particular times and Green 'Smiley face' at others and of course Speeds in RED if excessive (as in Willingham).
- (2) A 20 mph limit either side of the junction – *CRW is always supportive of this limit along narrow residential roads with narrow / no footpaths. Cost £2.5k for a Road safety Audit, £1k for a TRO, £2k for replacement/additional repeater signage + CCC Installation/Admin costs. However, there is a minimum length of 400-600 yards for any mandatory limit. Consequently, it might be better to opt for a 20 limit for the village.*
- (3) Move the Busstops – *partial solution for the school children but not for the junction as a whole. This need not wait for an LHI before it can be considered and actioned.*
- (4) A simple/basic painted mini-roundabout – like in Earith Bridge (possibly even raised slightly). *As an alternative standalone solution a mini-roundabout - with appropriate signage and give-way lane markings - would not generate anything like the same level of noise, vibration and pollution as a raised table or buildout but would have much the same speed-moderating effect residents are seeking. It would not need all the other signage or road markings highlighted in the CRW Report to make drivers aware of the junction and some of that signage could well become redundant to be superseded by roundabout ones. Needs an 85%ile of less than 35 mph – it's 34 mph here.*
- (5) More Mirrors – *mirrors on the highway are not supported by CCC Highways.*

5. CRW's Recommendations

As an independent company - having directors with over 12 continuous years' 'kerbside traffic monitoring' and 'driver behaviour analysis' experience , and notwithstanding our personal opinions or any outside influences that we may encounter - we have a duty to reflect and properly assess and report the applicability / practicality of all the feedback from residents but with special consideration given to feedback from /opinions of those who would be most affected or whose 'enjoyment of property' or living environment might be adversely affected by any proposals in our Report (at Reference and attached).

Consequently, even though measures may still be subject to approval by County Highways Rules & Regulations (by the 'Book'), and limited by a finite budget may restrict the extent of proposals, and if the CCC LHI 23-24 application timescale does not permit a Parish Meeting before submission (likely) ...

we would urge the Parish Meeting on 26 Apr 2022 to vote a £1000* contribution, for a FY23-24 LHI application to allow the Chair (or sub-Committee) + CRW to explore, get the best pragmatic deal from CC Highways and also approve, one or more, of these:

(1). Signage & Road Markings (as depicted in the Report At Reference)

- a. Change Signage type and locations to provide better and timely notifications to drivers of the junction and that Pedestrians may be Crossing.
- b. Have SLOW painted on the road to alert drivers.
- c. Have Double White Lines painted around the bend to retain vehicles in the carriageway.

AND

(2) A £3k graphics-programmable Morelock battery-powered MVAS and 1x £400 extra inbound post to allow speeds and dangers to be displayed to drivers at scheduled times even though the data capture by vehicle volume is known not to be accurate for this device.

OR – AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO (1+2) – if Traffic regulations permit:

(3) A 3-arm SIMPLE/BASIC mini-roundabout at the junction with appropriate giveway road / carriageway markings and signage – similar to that at Earith Bridge.

OR - (4) just a 20 mph limit throughout the village + a Morelock MVAS for the junction.

ALSO - IN THE MEANTIME AND NO NEED TO WAIT FOR THE LHI PROCESS TO BEGIN:

(5) Police Community Speedwatch should be resurrected using the villages post-mounted SIDs and carried out at least 2-weekly for effect. CRW had such SIDs approved for Speedwatch use.

(6) Bus stops to be moved to a safer location (Seagraves / Hunting Close has been suggested as pragmatic by the bus company MD).

****Offer.*** *If the village vote for this project and the cost is greater than £10k but under £15k then CRW will undertake to add £500 from its donations to the £1000 contribution so £1500 will then allow the village to bid for up to £15k from the County during the LHI process. Local donations also welcome.*

On 8th April 2022 - We commend this report to you.