

Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth Decisions

26 March 2024

Title: Please stop the Cranleigh High Street proposed changes**Statement:**

We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to Stop the proposed redesign of the Cranleigh High Street as it will create increased noise and traffic pollution and will make access to the village materially harder

Justification:

Having reviewed the finalised proposals for the Cranleigh High Street redesign it is clear that they will not give the benefits to the High Street that they are meant to.

The changes will increase traffic noise and pollution and make it less safe for cyclists and pedestrians alike. Further during school run times the high street will become gridlocked. The changes are supposed to make Cranleigh a more attractive and safer place to visit. Sadly these do not.

Sadly there are no other opportunities to consult on the proposals so a petition to stop the changes and reconsult is all we are left with.

This is a waste of taxpayers money.

Submitted by: Philip Chapman

RESPONSE:

The response to this petition sets out:

- 1 Background.
- 2 The proposed changes and their stated benefits.
- 3 Addressing concerns over traffic noise, pollution and pedestrian and cycle safety.
- 4 Ensuring Cranleigh is more attractive and safer place to visit.
- 5 Summary.
- 6 Next Steps.

1 Background

The Cranleigh public realm scheme was instigated by the County Councillor Liz Townsend in 2021, following some work undertaken with the Cranleigh Working Party. The Cranleigh Working Party is a group of Cranleigh residents including Parish Council members, SMART Cranleigh members, Chamber of Commerce, Cranleigh Civic Society and members with particular interest in Cranleigh such as Waverley Borough Council employees.

There was a desire to widen the footways and improve the greening of the village to make it a more desirable place to visit and shop. There were three focus areas:-

- i. Fountain Square Proposal - A survey in 2021 suggested that 96% of people questioned would support the proposal to close the slip road alongside Fountain Square and 78% said they would use the High Street more if the access road was closed at weekends.
- ii. Post Office Proposal - This included pedestrianising the area and removing parking.

- iii. Widening the High Street footways, removing some on street parking, removing bus laybys and installing speed tables to regulate the speed of vehicles travelling along the High Street at all times of the day.

Following the consultation undertaken in November 2022, it was agreed to not pedestrianise the Post Office area, to reduce the size of bus laybys rather than remove them fully and not undertake public realm works outside the village hall. These significant changes were made as a direct response to the feedback provided at the consultation.

Consultation was undertaken in 2021 (initial ideas), November 2022 (concept design) and November 2023 (feasibility design). The working party continued to meet up until September 2023. Cranleigh Youth Council were also consulted via the Parish Council.

The petition was received on 9 November 2023 and finished on 20 February 2024. It received 1108 signatures. The Project Team met with the petitioner and three of the petition supporters on 16 February 2024.

2 The proposed changes and their benefits

- i. The proposal to pedestrianise the Fountain Square area (Friday-Sunday) will allow a safe area for people to meet and spend time together in the heart of Cranleigh, whilst creating a sense of community and wellbeing. We will introduce additional seating and planters with planting that helps absorb roadside air pollution, such as cotoneaster. We will be upgrading the existing bus shelter to one that includes real time information, with seats that are accessible to more people.
- ii. Pedestrianising the post office area has been removed from the scheme but proposed measures will be taken to improve the drainage along the High Street in this area. We will also look to repair and slightly adjust the existing flower beds to continue to provide a space for trees and a lovely carpet of colour during the summer months.
- iii. The High Street footways are relatively narrow on the south side of the High Street, as many of the shop fronts have wide private forecourts with bollards installed to prevent parking on the public footway area. The footways will be widened to provide a safer environment for pedestrians and improving access for all. Some on street parking will be removed to facilitate this and to continue to ensure the carriageway width is at least 6.5m along the High Street to allow two buses to pass each other along this 20mph stretch of road.
- iv. Raised tables are being proposed to help regulate the speed of traffic along the High Street. Currently during rush hour, the traffic is to a greater extent regulated by the number of pedestrians which cross at the controlled points. This naturally supports traffic speeds within the existing 20mph limit. At other times of the day traffic has the opportunity to travel much faster. Speed surveys have been commissioned to ascertain the speeds at all times of the day to understand the need for speed tables. Raised tables are also being proposed to highlight busy junctions, such as Knowle Lane and Rowland Road to improve pedestrian safety making it easier for pedestrians to cross the road and giving greater emphasis on the priority of pedestrians.
- v. The other main proposal is to remove the mini roundabout at Village Way. SCC has undertaken traffic modelling at this junction and the modelling shows that the removal of the roundabout will improve the traffic flow in all but one movement. The mini roundabout

is currently under review by our Project Team, due to the potential for a new leisure centre to be built along this road subject to planning permission.

The scheme planned for the High Street is being delivered using various streams of prioritised external funding - A successful Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) bid to Waverley Borough Council, S106 (developer funded) monies and match funding from Surrey County Council.

3 Addressing concerns over traffic noise and pollution

The concerns of some residents are appreciated and therefore it is important to address the comments raised within the petition statement. Traffic noise is generally increased when vehicles are accelerating and decelerating. Currently traffic speeds along the High Street are restricted by the two controlled crossing points, cars parallel parking on the street, and delivery lorries. The proposals for Cranleigh High Street include removing some on-street parking as well as providing loading bays. These two measures should help remove some of the delays to vehicles travelling along the High Street. By narrowing the carriageway at certain points traffic speeds are more likely to consistently remain within the 20mph limit. Lowering of traffic speeds will also reduce noise levels. Increased planting and trees within the pedestrianised area will have the potential to dilute traffic noise and reduce pollutants in the air, thus improving air quality.

4 Ensuring Cranleigh more attractive and safer place to visit

The proposed designs are focused on making Cranleigh High Street a more attractive and safer place for pedestrians to visit. By widening the footways and increasing the number of seating areas and areas of greening along the High Street the area will feel less car dominated. The proposed improvements to Knowle Lane will improve the safety of pedestrians using the High Street as well as cyclists who approach the High Street from the Downs Link.

Vehicles will still be able to travel along the High Street but at a safe consistent speed, rather than accelerating then decelerating to catch the vehicles in front.

Resurfacing the footways will create smooth footways which are more accessible to those with restricted mobility improving functionality as well as looking aesthetically pleasing.

The installation of at least one new bus stop with modern seating and 'Real Time Information' will assist those waiting at the bus stops to understand when their bus is due and provide protection from weather extremes throughout the year.

Summary

For the reasons stated above Surrey County Council consider that the proposed changes will not increase noise or pollution or make accessing the village materially harder. There has been a significant amount of traffic modelling, consultation with many groups of people representing those in Cranleigh as well as opportunities for people to feed back their own ideas and thoughts to the Project Team. The plans are in alignment with SCC's Local Transport Plan 4 giving prioritisation of walking and cycling over less sustainable modes through the delivery of making walking and scootering more convenient, pleasant, and safe. Improving the footways along the High Street, allowing cyclists to cycle along the High Street with less on street parking obstructing their pathway, and improving the passenger experience of those who travel by bus will help make Cranleigh a more attractive and safer place to visit.

5 Next Steps

5.1 Pedestrian and vehicle Surveys

Following the engagement event in November the Project Team have organised numerous surveys. These have included speed monitoring, both pedestrian movements and counts (looking at use of the pedestrian islands along the High Street), and both vehicle movement and counts (looking at right turns off the High Street).

The results from the additional pedestrian surveys and traffic movements will help us identify areas where the feasibility design can be improved, and pedestrian movements supported. It will also allow us to consider whether we can narrow the carriageway along its entirety or whether we do need to keep the turn right / left lanes. Detailed design for the High Street has not yet commenced.

5.2 Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Currently there is a LCWIP under concept design for Cranleigh and the wider Waverley Borough. LCWIPs are 10+ year strategic plans that sets out the conceptual plans and priorities for cycling and walking infrastructure to encourage more people to choose 'active travel' more regularly and use the car less often. More information on our plans to improve cycling and walking can be found here on the Surrey County Council website [Plans to improve walking and cycling - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/plans-to-improve-walking-and-cycling)

The LCWIP proposals have not been developed to a sufficient level to understand how cycling improvements could be made to the High Street. The High Street project team are liaising with the LCWIP team to ensure we are joined up where possible to prevent potential clashes in the future.

5.3 Further engagement

The County councillor, Liz Townsend and Director Planning and Placemaking, Tim Crawshaw are working together to consider further engagement opportunities.

Matt Furniss

Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth