

## **SAFE Response to Suffolk County Council Highways Department Report**

The developments already approved (the Chapel scheme, the Red House Farm scheme and other minor schemes) together with the three proposed housing developments will total 263 houses and will result in a 57% increase of personal cars in the village. Suffolk County Council Highways department have written a report stating that the impact of all of these extra cars will not represent "a severe risk to safety" and as such no longer object to the developments. Highways have received "mitigation measures" from the developer of the John Shepherd site (1432/17) and Stradbroke Road (1449/17), but have not received anything for Post Mill (1648/17). The approved Red House Farm scheme and the Post Mill proposals will result in an additional 76 cars exiting onto New Street. We assume that no mitigation measures are envisaged for the Post Mill development. The proposed footpath between Post Mill and New Street exits where there is no pavement and on a blind bend. Walking to the shop, school and Scout hut would still involve walking along a road without a pavement.

The increased flow of traffic takes no account of potential increased inflow from neighbouring villages, particularly those that use the school, shop, scout hut and surgery.

### **Comment on Suffolk County Council Highways Report ( dated 14th May 2018)**

In the Suffolk County Council Report the Highways Authority no longer objects to the developments. Previously, when considering the Application for Red House Farm, which is very close to Post Mill they objected to the Application. (*see web lobby paper – [Highways Historic Objections; Post Mill Traffic](#)*.) The cumulative impact would be even greater if Post Mill were approved.

The Traffic Assessment survey undertaken by the developers has previously been criticised (*see lobby paper [Highways, Post Mill](#)*) for various reasons, especially as it can be considered unrepresentative due to road closures immediately before it was undertaken and alternative routes therefore being used.

Accident data are inaccurate. Presumably the one recorded injury accident related to Jubilee Corner alone. Many non-injury accidents go unreported and there have been number of instances of damage to property on Jubilee Corner. Within the village as a whole there have been a number of serious injuries. (*lobby paper [Traffic Accidents in Fressingfield](#)*) The report makes no comment on the cumulative effect of more vehicles on the number of accidents and injuries in the future. Even the Cumulative Traffic Assessment undertaken by the developers concludes that the cumulative effect of the developments will result in significant extra traffic and increased accident risk.

The carriage way and footway changes for Stradbroke Road/New Street junction is dealt with later in this document but in most areas improvements to the footpaths cannot be made.

### **Conditions Noted**

**Travel Plan** It is recognised that a Travel Plan is not feasible and there will remain a strong reliance on private cars.

**Public Transport**. It is indeed very poor in Fressingfield. There is only one bus a week. There are 52 whole time equivalent jobs based in the village so travel outside the village to work is essential.

There is no secondary education in the village so travel is necessary and with the likely reduction in the school bus service more personal transport will be needed.

### **Deficiencies in the Report.**

Key areas of the village have no footways and this cannot be corrected. With more cars and more people the dangers will increase.

There are no cycle lanes in the village which means that car transport is used as the preferred (and almost only) form of transport. The problem of on road parking has not been discussed and particularly the congestion at the shop and now around the medical centre, where the car park is frequently full. With more cars and more people this will increase.

Other junctions have not been considered particularly the entry from Harleston Hill into Back Street at the War Memorial ([\*Lobby Paper - Traffic in Fressingfield\*](#)) where speeding is a recurrent problem and two fatal accidents have occurred. Similarly the junction of Church Hill and Low Road (documentary evidence of damage to property at these junctions can be supplied.) The junction of School Lane with Stradbroke Road has not been considered. The proposed additional 85 houses on Stradbroke Road together with the Chapel and 18 houses already approved for School lane will create a great deal of new traffic in an area which is currently very quiet. There must be an issue of road safety for the school children which has been ignored.

With an increased population the number of delivery vehicles will increase. This is already a problem (see [\*John Shepherd Lobby Paper; John Shepherd Traffic\*](#) )

There is NO provision for, or mention of disabled people.

The problems in Fressingfield that have not been addressed are summarised in the lobby paper- [\*Fressingfield Developments- Highways and Road Safety issues.\*](#)

No account is taken of the heritage status of the village and particularly the conservation area which includes New Street. We would expect both the heritage department at Suffolk County Council and the Suffolk Preservation Society to be consulted on the impact of these measures on the historic appearance of the village which the Council has a duty to protect. There is no evidence that they have been consulted or the issue of heritage has been given any thought.

### **The Mitigation Proposals put forward by the developer**

It is difficult to be precise as to what the developer is actually proposing as there is only one **draft** drawing submitted, which is not dimensioned and is without full explanatory notes. We believe the proposals to be:-

#### **Modifications at Jubilee Corner**

We agree that this is potentially a dangerous 5 way junction and for much of this there is no footway. It is a common route to school and is difficult for the disabled to negotiate.



*Illustration 1: Children Going To School, New Street Fressingfield*



*Illustration 2: Disabled person at Jubilee Corner - this picture also shows the topography of the one pavement at Jubilee corner and it is not clear whether the proposed measurements for the widening of the pavement will be taken from the fence or the concrete plinth. This will have an impact on the usable width of the pavement and the narrowing of the road.*

What is proposed

1. Resurfacing with a coloured material along the B1116 at Jubilee Corner and extending into New Street and Stradbroke Road. It is not clear what is the purpose of the coloured strip and whether it is anti skid material.

Review of the literature shows that there are good studies on reducing skid potential when high friction surfacing (HFS) is used. The method of application is critical, they are high cost and have a high carbon footprint and they do need frequent renewal because of wear or polishing. This has important revenue cost implications which needs to be addressed.

Although skidding is reduced the hard evidence for accident reduction is far less certain. To assess the value of anti-skid surfacing we corresponded with Nick Lloyd, Road Safety Manager of ROSPA and Mr. Howard Robinson, Chief Executive of the Road Safety Treatment Association Ltd. (original correspondence available)

The following information was obtained – 50 metres of each road approaching a junction would normally be treated with High Friction Surfacing or Anti skid. It is less effective in snow and ice as the tyre surface has to be in direct contact with the road surface.

Accident reduction data are incomplete. Work done in the 1960s in London showed a 50% reduction after treatment. However, these data were collected before the introduction of ABS and there are

no data after their introduction. There are no published figures on accident reductions on specific risk sites, such as the a 5 way junction. (because accidents are dealt with by the Police and not the Local Authority). As mentioned, the original work was done in London before ABS in an environment very different to the situation in Fressingfield.

In the Irish Government's Policy Document (DN-PAV-03024 dated 2017) it reports that high friction surfacing cannot compensate or correct adverse alignment or drainage problems. Accidents are usually the result of multiple factors and HFS may have no influence on the outcomes. The report states "It should be noted that the adoption of HFS may encourage drivers to rely on the additional grip and consequently increase speeds. The conspicuity of HFS may lead to certain drivers exploiting its potential when they are aware that it offers the highest level of skid resistance. This is a constant concern for those with responsibility for highway safety. This is a result of experiences at some sites where accidents have increased after treatment."

2. The proposed road hump in New Street with coloured surface treatment has similar short comings to those just mentioned. Arrangements would need to be made to meet the revenue costs. A hump would make it difficult for cyclists and the disabled, particularly those in wheel chairs and mobility scooters as there is no footway in the area of the proposed hump. Emergency vehicles find it difficult to negotiate the humps.

There is no mention of the effect of the hump on the surface water draining down the incline in New Street and the potential for skidding and ice formation at this narrow point.

3. A block work pedestrian strip at the exit of the alley way that runs from Back Street to New Street will depend upon people using this route. This exits at a point in New Street where there is no footway for a considerable distance. Wheelchairs would find it particularly difficult to negotiate the staggered barrier at the New Street end of the alley way. The proposed new pedestrian strip running from Jubilee Corner to this block work will not be very helpful as even at present 2 vehicles cannot pass easily and pedestrians feel threatened because of the narrow roadway..

4. Minor adjustments to the Jubilee Corner junction " to reduce the perceived breath of the existing bellmouth" ie not to make any real physical changes other than to make the road look narrower to slow traffic down.

5. To increase the width of the pavement to a minimum of 1.5 metres outside Doggetts. it is very unclear how this can be achieved. The drawing is very imprecise and it is therefore impossible to assess what impact this will have. The footing of the fence, the road signs and street lamp intrude significantly into the footway. This can only be done by taking land from the triangle where the village sign is located. Immediately after Jubilee Corner in New Street there is again no footway. What are road dimensions after these changes and will lorries for deliveries to the shop, tractors etc be able turn safely into New Street?

5. Improvements to the bus stops. It is proposed to raise the kerbs at either side of the road where the two bus stops are located. Raising kerbs is a " double edged sword ". Currently this is a natural crossing point for prams, push chairs and wheel chairs. If this cannot be used then a double traverse into the road way in John Shepherd and then across the roadway adjacent to Sancroft Hall is needed. It is not clear that such measures will meet disability compliance.

**THE MAJORITY OF THE PROPOSALS ARE TO REDUCE SPEED IN NEW STREET and ignore the other junctions in the village and other really important issues which have been raised. Speeding in New Street is not the only issue.**

The traffic safety issues are.

Lack of footpaths in New Street. New Street has the shop, Medical Centre, Scout Hut, Methodist Chapel and is the major pedestrian route in the village. A large part is without footpath. There are numerous minor accidents and near misses.

Safety at junctions. There have been numerous accidents at other junctions in the village, for example at the War Memorial. This has not been addressed.

Speeding in Harleston Hill. There have been two fatalities here. This has been ignored.

**Summary**

There are major concerns over road safety in the village and the effect of increased traffic resulting from more development. SAFE has produced papers on congestion and pinch points in the village as well as the large number of unreported accidents. New Street in its entirety is of particular concern as it is the centre of the village. Jubilee Corner and the War Memorial are worrying exits. Throughout the area roads have no walkways and on street parking is commonplace.

Developers and Planning have been discussing mitigating measures for several months, but their recommendations were only made available to us very recently.

Over the previous months we have produced a number of lobbying papers on Highways issues. These can be accessed on

[fressingfieldhousing.org](http://fressingfieldhousing.org)

Written Dr. John Castro on behalf of SAFE.

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