

14 April 2014

Mr P Bedford  
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RG1 7TA

**Highways and Transport**

Market Street  
Newbury  
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**Our Ref:** MCE/sc

**Your Ref:**

Dear Mr Bedford

**Report to Prevent Future Deaths**

Thank you for your letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> February 2014 concerning the Inquest report following the recent death of Mr Kenneth Gerald Aldridge on the A4 at Padworth.

This section of the A4 has been the subject of some investigation, which I have outlined below:

**Speed Limits**

The speed limit on the A4 between the two A340 roundabouts was considered by the Council's Speed Limit Task Group at its meeting in April 2010 when it was agreed that further traffic survey information was required. This section was considered again in December 2010 when it was agreed to introduce a 50mph speed limit to cover the junctions with Beenham Industrial Estate and Beenham village. The task group also agreed that the existing speed limit on the remaining length of the A4, which included the dual carriageway, was appropriate.

An objection was received during the statutory consultation and advertisement of the 50mph speed limit, which was considered by Individual Decision (ID) with the recommendation to install the 50mph speed limit. The recommendation was agreed but the decision was 'called in' by five Councillors. A copy of the ID report is enclosed for your records.

The reasons for call in were considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission during May 2012 when it was resolved that 'the A4 Bath Road, Padworth, Proposed 50mph Speed Limit be referred back to the Portfolio Holder for Highways for reconsideration'.

The reasons for call in and the reconsideration of the speed limit were considered again by the speed limit task group at its meeting in August 2012. This was followed by Individual Decision report (ID 2470 A) on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012 when it was agreed 'That the proposed speed limit is introduced with the start of the speed limit at the eastern end being located approximately 140 metres to the west of its advertised location as shown on Plan No SLR/10/04/002B (Appendix C)'.

The matter was again raised at a meeting of the task group on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2014 to resolve if the section of dual carriageway needs to be reconsidered. The task group were informed of your report, local residents concerns and the recommendations in Traffic Management Assessment (TMA) 168. It was agreed that the speed limit does not need to be reconsidered but consideration needs to be given to the installation of pedestrian warning signs between the bus stops and measures to assist access and egress to the entrances within the length of dual carriageway.

### **Recorded Injury Accidents**

Within the latest three year period to the end of January 2014 there have been 8 recorded injury accidents on the A4 between the 50mph speed limit and 100 metres east of its junction with Ufton Lane. These resulted in 1 fatal, 2 serious and 5 slight injuries being received.

Of these 6 were within 100 metres of the Ufton Lane junction and resulted in 2 serious and 4 slight injury accidents. 3 of the accidents involved eastbound vehicles.

The other two involved the recent fatal accident and a slight accident when a HGV travelling eastbound changed lanes.

I have checked the accident data back to January 1994 to determine the number of injury accidents that have involved entrances/exits and below is a summary of the results:

- 1 accident occurred in April 1998 at Max's Cafe when a vehicle failed to give way when entering the A4;
- There have been no accidents involving the first service road entrance/exit;
- There have been 3 accidents at the second service road entrance/exit, but these all involved U-Turning vehicles at the gap in the central reservation;
- The third entrance at the Comfort Hotel is within the 50mph speed limit and therefore has been excluded from my analysis.

These results do not indicate that the entrances/exits on to the A4 are particularly unsafe.

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## **Traffic Management Assessment 168**

A TMA was undertaken on the dual carriageway section of the A4 during November 2013 and considered the recorded injury accident record, traffic speeds and volume and comments from local residents. It was recommended to improve the signing at its junction with Ufton Lane, and install an additional 'No Entry' sign.

These works are identified for implementation as part of the approved Traffic and Road Safety works programme 2014/15. I have enclosed a copy of the assessment for your records.

### **Access Improvements**

The two lanes for westbound traffic could be reduced to one lane so that traffic travels in the middle of the carriageway as shown on the enclosed plan TM213/001. This would have the effect of creating small deceleration lanes into accesses and improving visibility for traffic entering the A4.

To improve access into the service road the first entrance could be blocked up and a new access created as shown on the enclosed plan 213/002. This would prevent 'U turn' manoeuvres. However this could have the effect of vehicles entering the service road at speed. Due to the change in the nature of the road it is proposed to consult the local ward members and parish councils on the proposals and I will contact you again when I have received the comments to the consultation.

I believe we are addressing the matters of concern described in your report but should you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Head of Highways and transport**

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