



Reading
S C J N C I

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Our Ref:
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Direct: 0118 [REDACTED]

Date 9th June 2017

Your contact is: [REDACTED] Network and Parking Manager

Dear Peter Bedford

Thank you for your email of 3rd April 2017 and your issue of a Regulation 28 report to prevent future deaths in relation to the death of Mr Malcolm Langford on 14th May 2016.

There have been a number of changes at this junction with the aim to improve road safety over a number of years. These changes have been implemented both before and after the fatality of Mr Langford and there remains an ongoing commitment to keep this junction under review.

Local concern was first raised following an accident on 14th November 2013 and a petition (for road safety improvements) was submitted to the Council's Traffic Management Sub-committee on 16th January 2014. Since that time there have been a series of reports to the Traffic Management Sub-committee exploring the cause of accidents, possible options for improvements and recommending changes to be considered.

On 11th September 2014 the Sub-committee considered restricting the eastbound Highmoor Road general traffic movement across the junction to reduce the risk of collisions. As a result of significant local objection supported by the local MP this proposal was deferred with a further review of the options.

On 15th January 2015 the Sub-committee considered this review of options but in the meantime a large tree overhanging the junction had been removed. The result of the removal of the tree was such that the junction became much more visible (as opposed to always being cast in shadow). The Sub-committee again deferred any other changes at the junction in consideration of further local representation.

The next report to the Sub-committee was on 15th June 2016 and after the death of Mr Langford. As a result of this report the Sub-committee agreed to changes in road markings on the Highmoor Road eastbound approach and to meet with two local campaign groups, Highmoor and Albert Road Campaign (HARC) and Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA). Further reports have followed and further lining changes have been carried out at the junction.

The latest report on works carried out and further commitments to improving road safety at this junction is being presented to the next meeting of the Sub-committee on 14th June 2017. This details work and debate on improving road safety at the junction of Highmoor Road with Albert Road since 2013. All of these reports are publically available on-line (within the Council's website) but can be made available to you if you so wish.

However, it is important to express that the junction is presented with STOP signs on both Highmoor Road approaches coupled with contrasting coloured road surfaces and associated signing. Prior to the accident on 14th November 2013 the junction had no significant casualty record that justified road safety improvements. The position of the STOP line and central hatching on Albert Road through the junction was in response to a previous casualty reduction scheme involving right turning vehicles.

During the period from 14th November 2013 (as detailed within the Traffic Management Sub-committee report) there has been gathering of evidence as to what the collision risk is at the junction. The evidence of drivers failing to stop at the stop line on the eastbound Highmoor Road approach is overwhelming hence the original recommendation to restrict vehicle movements on this approach.

Whilst the views expressed by [REDACTED], Forensic Collision Investigator for Thames Valley Police are appreciated they do not reflect the evidence provided by the police to Reading Borough Council and that collected (by us) through CCTV video surveys.

As you may be aware, the local highway authority is often asked to attend a site meeting following a road death to establish any highway related issues that may need to be considered. In response to the death of Mr Langford a site meeting was held between representatives of the council and Thames Valley Police. At this site meeting it was clearly indicated that the death of Mr Langford was as a result of the driver failing to stop at the eastbound Highmoor Road approach. This, as already indicated, is consistent with other collisions at the junction resulting in casualties and the CCTV gathered evidence. On this point the two local campaign groups (HARC & CADRA) also agree although they continue to campaign for additional traffic calming measures.

The visibility restrictions at the junction are obvious hence the reason for the regulatory STOP requirement and the other associated measures. It is the professional view of officers that once a driver has stopped, by slowly edging forward to gain improved visibility, it is irrelevant as to where the STOP line is positioned. This point is made by the Forensic Collision Investigator in 5(4) of the regulation 28 report. Therefore, regardless of the exact position of the STOP line drivers will still have to 'nudge out' slowly to gain sufficient visibility before crossing the junction.

As it is believed by us that Mr Langford died as a result of a failure to stop there appears to be conflicting evidence. For us, as the local highway authority, to properly ensure that we meet our duty as highway authority I request absolute clarity on the circumstances of this collision.

If you require further information, evidence and/or copies of the Traffic Management *Subcommittee* reports please do not hesitate to contact me either by email or telephone.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Network and Parking Manager