

Mr N Walker
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07/10/2024

Dear Mr Walker,

Re: K Thurman (Deceased)
A518 Lower Loxley

I refer to your Regulation 28 report regarding the inquest into the death of Kial Ryce Thurman and your comments concerning the A518 Lower Loxley.

This letter is in response to the matters of concern recorded in section 5 of your report, which states the following points.

- (1) Drivers travelling towards Uttoxeter are faced with a right-hand bend that the inquest heard can catch drivers unawares and has been the location of other road traffic accidents
- (2) Although the road has signs that warn drivers of the nature of the hazard ahead, a police collision expert considered that a reduction in the speed limit at this location would reduce the risk of collisions.

To date, the following action has been taken in response to the concerns raised:

- A site visit with representatives from Staffordshire County Council Highways has taken place to review the layout of the road and consider the points raised through the PFD report submitted.
- Research and analysis of historical personal injury collisions has been undertaken at the point of the right-hand turn and bridge location of concern.
- Wider highways asset management colleagues have been consulted regarding the history of the bridge and immediate area.
- An assessment of the general speed of traffic has taken place.

Personal Injury Collision History

During the last complete 5-year period (2018-2022) and including any reports we have received from Staffordshire Police since, there has been one other (slight injury) collision recorded in this area of concern, and not associated with the right-hand turn heading towards Uttoxeter. The causation of this other collision was due to a vehicle following another too close, there is no indication of excessive or inappropriate speed.

Staffordshire County council are aware of a number of minor non-injury collisions which are not reportable/recordable that may have occurred on the bridge over the last decade, but we do not have any the details of the mechanics of these collisions required to analyse vehicle movements or contributory factors to assess the common patterns.

Site Layout

In relation to point 1, upon approach to the right hand turn when travelling towards Uttoxeter drivers are pre-warned by the following highway features:

- Large yellow backed right hand bend & narrow carriageway signage.
- SLOW markings on the carriageway.
- Double white line system.
- Illuminating 'Bend Ahead' electronic vehicle activated signage (inspected and in good working order on 16/11/2023).
- Large yellow backed chevron signage at the point of the right-hand bend along the highway curvature.
- Reflective marker posts on the bend and at the point of the bridge.

It is assessed that the current safety features are sufficiently appropriate to warn drivers of the approaching bend. The same features exist when approaching from the opposite direction.

Of note, a future long-term proposal to replace the bridge structure is currently underway depending on funding.

Speed Limit

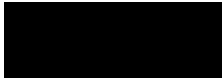
National speed limit roads are applied throughout the county network in accordance with the Department for Transport "setting of local speed limit" guidelines. Speed limits should be evidence-led and self-explaining and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. They should encourage self-compliance. Speed limits should be seen by drivers as the maximum rather than a target speed. An assessment of the speeds at this location shows and all-day average traffic speed of 39.7mph, with 85% of the traffic travelling at 45.5mph or less.

When setting a lower speed limit, robust consideration needs to be applied to assess if motorists will then interpret a lower limit as the recommended safe target speed rather than the maximum, thus causing more of a risk.

As part of our statutory functions and commitment to our communities and road safety, Staffordshire County Council routinely monitors personal injury collision data reported on the public highway to identify accident clusters and trends. Any treatable pattern of accidents identified will have proportionate remedial measures put forward for funding and will be prioritised against other locations around Staffordshire. Any appropriate mitigating solutions identified at this location will be prioritised alongside our annual programme of road safety schemes.

I hope the information provided within this letter is useful. Please let me know if you require anything further.

Yours sincerely,



Road Safety Manager
Staffordshire County Council