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Road Safety Team
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10/08/2026

Dear Lindsey Tonks

**Re: Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths Report – Charlotte Marie SAUNDERS
00161 - 2026**

I refer to your Regulation 28 report regarding the inquest into the tragic death of Charlotte Marie SAUNDERS following a road traffic collision on 27/08/2024 on Christchurch Way in Stone.

This letter is in response to the matters of concern recorded in section 10 of your report, which states:

The location of the road traffic collision involves a one-way carriageway, consisting of two lanes of traffic. This is a busy section of road that serves as a bypass around Stone town centre. At the section in question, there is a large supermarket on the outer part of the ring road and the main shopping area of Stone is located within the inner part of the ring road.

There is a purpose-built pedestrian walkway leading from the supermarket car park to a bus stop, with metal pedestrian guardrails at the edge of the road to the north of the walkway preventing pedestrians from crossing the carriageway. There is no similar fencing to the south.

On the inner side of that section of the ring road, there is an alleyway that leads directly into the town centre. There are metal pedestrian guardrails at the edge of the carriageway on that side also, running north from opposite the bus stop. Again, however, there is no similar fencing running to the south. There is a pedestrian crossing to either side of the collision location – one to the north and one to the south - each of which is traffic light controlled and each being said to be at a distance “within less than 100m” of Mrs Saunders’ crossing point.

Police inquiries revealed that Mrs Saunders had walked from the car park of Morrisons and had been attempting to cross the furthest lane carriageway, heading towards the town centre, at the time that she was struck. The Police Report stated that this route “is often used by pedestrians to cross over in to the town, rather than walking to one of the crossings”. A police officer who

gave evidence also described having visited the site for the purposes of his investigation and having observed at least ten pedestrians crossing at the same location during a period of no more than thirty minutes.

I have concern that there is a risk of future deaths as a result of the current layout of this location, given the following:

- 1. The ring road is a busy road with heavy, consistent traffic flow, this being a bypass around the town centre*
- 2. There is a busy supermarket with a large car park on one side of the ring road and the town centre on the other*
- 3. There is a purpose-built pedestrian walkway leading to the pavement on the outer side of the carriageway and an alleyway leading directly into the town centre on the other side*
- 4. There are no pedestrian guardrails either side of the carriageway at what appears to be a primary location used by people for their speed and convenience, to avoid the need to walk further to use the pedestrian crossings*

As part of our statutory function and commitment to road safety, Staffordshire County Council routinely monitors personal injury collision data reported on the public highway to identify collision clusters and trends. Any treatable pattern of collisions identified will have proportionate remedial measures put forward for funding and will be prioritised against other locations around Staffordshire.

A review of the collision history at the location of concern, (Christchurch Way between the Supermarket access and the Lichfield Street/High Street junction) has been undertaken. No other personal injury collisions have been recorded by Staffordshire Police at this location since before 1 January 2020. A site visit and an assessment of the highway layout have also been completed.

From the pedestrian exit point behind the bus stop, measurements have been taken to each of the nearest formal pedestrian crossing points (north and south) providing access to the inner pavement of the ring road, and High street. Both pedestrian crossing facilities are at equidistance from the bus stop, being approximately 107 metres. However, it is recognised that pedestrians will choose not to use formal crossing points if alternative routes provide a perception of time and/or distance saving.

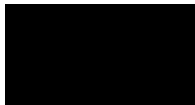
The provision of additional pedestrian guardrail, to encourage pedestrians to use the formal crossing points, has been considered. However, initial observations have identified that the addition of pedestrian guard rail on the southern side of the carriageway may impede visibility for vehicles exiting the private business vehicle access; and the addition of pedestrian guardrail on the northern side of the carriageway may encourage pedestrians to enter the carriageway at either the bus stop or private driveway access that is situated approximately 47 metres away.

Notwithstanding the above, the County Council has a scheme in this year's capital programme to consider active travel and structural maintenance at a number of locations in Stone; and, following receipt of the Prevention of Future Deaths Report, the study area has been extended

to include the Christchurch Way pedestrian desire line crossing location. The study will consider the current national guidance on pedestrian guardrails and whether alternative measures or interventions may be appropriate to encourage safer pedestrian crossing routes at this location.

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