



Update for Icknield Way

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County Councillor
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Speeding, Safety, Drainage, Crossings and Repairs

A New Crossing

New Mill has been under pressure for some time now - extra houses, loss of some parking spaces and increase in traffic and traffic speeds on the Icknield Way.

Behind the scenes the County Council has been slowly chipping away at the problems - but like everything connected with our poorly run local councils, it really is slow!

You've probably noticed that work has now started on a new light controlled crossing between Longbridge Close and Chapel Meadow.



This should make it much safer and easier for local residents, including school children, to cross the busy Icknield Way. It is part of a longterm plan to improve Footpath 41 all the way from Longbridge Close to Silk Mil and the Town Centre

However, we still need better visibility looking from Chapel Meadow towards the roundabout. Currently this is poor for both pedestrians and drivers. DBC has been asked to cut back the hedge on the south side near the roundabout, which they did to a certain extent. Nevertheless the trees and shrubs still block the view of oncoming traffic when looking eastwards. Should we ask DBC for all of those trees and shrubs to be removed completely?

Slower Traffic

It is expected that the crossing will tend to slow traffic down even when it is not in use - just by being there. However, to reinforce this effect it is intended to extend the length of the 30 mph speed restriction (down from 40 mph) to a point west of the football club.

A Speed Indication Device (SID) was installed facing the westbound traffic as it approaches Longbridge Close. There is a second pre-installed socket opposite Icknield Green and now the SID has been moved up there, to face eastbound traffic approaching the New Road junction. Moving the SID around like this keeps drivers alert in the 30 mph area and will protect the crossing site.



A Quieter Life and Less Wear and Tear on Vehicles

There have been rumble strips between the Industrial Estate and Miswell Lane for some time but these and the road surface became badly worn. This produced more noise than was designed for and shook up small cars.

Speeds were measured some time ago with a view to extending the 40 mph restrictions further west. It showed the traffic was slower than this already and so the rumble strips were not replaced when the road was repaired.

However to protect the residents further down the Icknield Way a SID socket has been provided and a SID sign will be shared between there and on Aylesbury Road near the cemetery.

Flooding Prevention



A lot of work has now been carried out on the Icknield Way drainage by Dundale Wood which should reduce the flooding there. A ditch on the north side has been cleared, roots removed from pipework and channels cut through the roadside bank to let water drain off. In particular, deep below the grassy area in the northwest corner of the crossroads, an old blocked up soakaway has been replaced with a new one with a far larger capacity.

Those floods at the crossroads will now be a thing in the past. The picture shows Nick Hollinghurst in 2014 cutting a short channel to drain the flood water away and into the woods.

Unfortunately it's not all good news though. All the drainage from the crossroads up to Miswell Lane is defective in several ways - including gulleys filled up due to DBC's chronic failure to keep the gutters around Tring swept and clean. So far it still doesn't seem to have been scheduled into the works program.



Safer Bridges



The year before last Cllr Nick Hollinghurst commissioned a report into the need for traffic control on the two canal bridges on the Wingrave and Tringford Roads between Tring and Gubblecote. The report recommended enhanced signage at Dixons Wharf, near Gubblecote, and traffic light control on the bridge at New Mill. However the cost of the lights alone will exceed £65,000. On the other hand repairs after accidents are also costly! Added to which three accidents involving injury were recorded between 2010 and 2015. One was a serious injury. More recent data is being sought. However please note that collisions or impacts on the bridge itself which do **not** involve any injury are not recorded.

A "smart" light control system is planned to be installed. With no traffic, both lights are set to red. The sensors need to be set sufficiently far back from the stop lines for approaching traffic to slow down gradually and, if no traffic is already on the bridge approach, then the light will have turned green, obviating the need to stop, and producing a net cut in traffic waiting times.

However there are a number of complications.

- (a) electricity supply across the bridge
- (b) protection of pedestrians
- (c) parking control on Tringford Road
- (d) protection of junction into Bulbourne Court and the rest of the area from displaced parking
- (e) additional, improved and corrected signage both at the bridge and in advance of the bridge.

A first step is, however, being proposed to immediately enhance safety, independently of any lighting control on the bridge. This will be an extension of the 30 mph speed limit from Bulbourne Court over the bridge to a position just north of the entrance to the DBC vehicle store. It is in its first stage preliminary consultation and will progress to the second stage of consultation shortly.

Yours sincerely,

County Councillor Nick Hollinghurst