

Wretchwick Way / Peregrine Way Junction - AGM 2015

Chaired by Carole Hetherington. The Wretchwick Way/Peregrine Way sub-committee was formed 2 years ago to address the particular safety issues at this junction. Carole welcomed to the meeting Lisa Michelson and Ben Smith from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Infrastructure and Transport Strategy departments. She expressed her thanks for their support to date.

Carole also thanked Richard Kingshott, a key member of the sub-committee. As a retired member of the Highways Department, Richard's understanding and established contacts have taken the sub-committee further than they would have achieved otherwise.

Richard Kingshott then outlined the factors in the existing road layout, markings and signage that combine to create dangerous driving behaviours. He went on to describe proposals being put forward by the sub-committee for consideration by OCC – See Appendix III. These proposals have been put together following site meetings with police officers, local government officers and councillors, as well as a formal Safety Audit. Discussions have also been held with a highway contractor and the OCC highway design department, resulting in advised costs of £8k for road markings, £8k for islands and signage, and £10k for design. Richard was pleased to report that some of the signage improvements have recently been implemented.

Lisa Michelson advised that some of the sub-committee's proposals have been considered and are already locked in to planned and funded highway improvement schemes. Some of the proposals are yet to be considered. Lisa confirmed that OCC is currently seeking funding for highway improvements from the Gavray Drive and South-East Bicester developments.

Questions were invited from the floor and Answers provided as follows:

Q: Has a roundabout been considered at this junction?

A: A roundabout would attract a significantly higher cost, estimated at £500k to £1m. However, a roundabout solution may be considered as part of discussions on the South-East Link Road.

Q: Should measures be considered to specifically address pedestrian/cyclist safety, particularly at crossing points?

A: Not currently considered by the sub-committee. It was noted that the existing shared-use facilities are segregated from the road, although it was acknowledged that the condition is poor.

Q: Wouldn't it be more sensible to reduce the speed limit? 40 mph?

A: This can be reviewed but needs to be balanced against the road's function as a strategic perimeter route. Future developments to the east of the road may lead to re-consideration of its character and the appropriate speed.

Q: No discussion about traffic lights or cameras?

A: This has been reviewed but costs were a significant step higher than the proposed scheme.

Q: Would 'No Overtaking' signs be more cost effective?

A: These are difficult to enforce and road markings are generally more effective.

Wretchwick Way Committee Report for AGM 2014

This report is on behalf of Carole Hetherington Chairman of the Wretchwick Way Committee who sends her apologies for not being here in person to report back to you, unfortunately she already had a commitment in Oxford this evening.

Following last year's AGM a committee was set up of interested residents, local councillors and local police to take the topic of the junction on Wretchwick Way forward. The committee has 9 members in total.

Whilst we have not succeeded in our aims we have made progress, which I am pleased to report back to you.

Firstly I must mention the roadworks which were due to happen last week which suddenly disappeared, they have been postponed until 6th October. The work is to take off the surface of the roundabout, resurface it and clean all the chevrons around the roundabout. The work will take place during the night and they have said any noisy work will be between 8.00pm and 11.00pm. We as a committee cannot claim this as our success it was already in the pipeline and I know will please a lot of residents that have had issues at the roundabout.

Other progress made:

We have met with several members of Oxfordshire County Council Highways department and they have visited the site to see for themselves the issues. We have had a meeting with County Councillor Tim Hallchurch who has forwarded our case to the cabinet member.

The big stumbling block seems to be funding, so we recently met with the planners at OCC to discuss the plans for Bicester and to see if there may be funding available to improve the safety of the junction as we are likely to see an increase in traffic in the short to medium term due to the development of Graven Hill and the improvements to the railway. This meeting in particular was a very positive meeting and we are hoping that a safety survey of the junction will be carried out and a proposal for improvements developed. All of which is excellent news.

Other improvements we have succeeded getting are the replacement of all the 50 mph repeater signs along the road as these do not comply with the legal requirements for the road, a works order has been raised for this. My heartfelt thanks goes to Richard Kingshott who sits on our committee and used to work in the department and had the knowledge to identify the incorrect signage.

We have also succeeded in getting the road on the police mobile camera rota which once the signage is correct should happen and this will hopefully deter some of the speeders along the stretch of road.

We will continue with our dialogue with the council and feel as though we are talking to the right people and hopefully will succeed in getting some improvements along the road. It may happen in phase's with the first goal to get white ladder marking along the length of the road to deter overtaking which is the same as between Rodney house roundabout and Tesco roundabout and has been very successful. We should soon have a proper costing for this work, which will allow us to be more focused in our conversations with OCC as we believe this to be an inexpensive first solution to improve the safety along the road.

We will continue our efforts over the next few months and the best feedback to you will be if the work gets carried out.

If you have any questions or queries please email me, and my email address will be available at the end of the meeting

Carole Hetherington