



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

28 August 2020

Cllr Michael Payne
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, and Member for Tonbridge Division
Kent County Council
Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent
ME14 1XQ

Dear Michael,

Thank you very much for your letter dated 7 August 2020 following mine of 6 July 2020 on behalf of residents in Marlpit Hill, Edenbridge, following a letter signed by almost all residents in the area regarding the urgent need for road safety improvements at the junction of B2026 Main Road, Hilders Lane and Hillcrest Road.

It will come as no surprise to you that residents are extremely disappointed at the lack of action which Kent County Council (KCC) can commit to doing immediately following an accident which resulted in serious injuries for a motorcyclist in the past few weeks, and numerous other incidents which have taken place in recent years. Indeed, just yesterday there was another road traffic accident with pedestrians, which saw Kent Police and South East Coast Ambulance Service called to the scene, and the road closed.

Residents are particularly disappointed that your letter cites that there has not been a pattern of crashes here that would warrant this junction being prioritised over others. However, using the data which KCC uses in its assessment, prior to yesterday's accident, there have been four recorded accidents directly on the junction in the past three years. One resident has tracked the data back to 2000 and found that there have been a total of 17 recorded accidents resulting in 30 personal injuries, including three serious, life-altering injuries around this area.

While the improvements that KCC undertook in 2016 to install new warning signs, road markings and high friction surfacing works were welcome, what is evident from the repeat accidents is that they alone will not be able to resolve the problem. Therefore, whether through the Parish Highways Improvement Plan with Edenbridge Town Council or any other measure, I would be grateful if you could indicate what steps KCC would consider appropriate to take which would reduce the risk of accidents here.

I have shared your response with local residents and they have also, in turn, suggested some of the priority measures which KCC can take if it is not willing to fund all of the suggestions which have been made. This would include moving the lamppost on Hillcrest Road further east, away from the junction with B2026 Main Road, to improve visibility for drivers leaving Hillcrest Road. In addition, in order to reduce speeding some residents have suggested that both the signage and road surface of B2026 Main Road needs to reflect that this is the most direct route into Edenbridge for HGVs, especially due to the low bridge and

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traffic lights on Four Elms Road. I would be grateful if you could specifically assess the merit of these improvements as a means of KCC recognising that the concerns raised by residents are valid.

In addition, I also wrote to Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) on receipt of the letter from residents to pursue concerns about parking enforcement on double yellow lines near The Row on Main Road. Adrian Rowbotham, Chief Officer for Finance and Trading at SDC had requested that to allow for additional upgrade to the existing restrictions which would allow a 'no loading' restriction, which would prevent vehicles from stopping on this section of road, especially when using St Paulinus Centre. While it is not my intention to suggest something which would be contrary to the needs of the facility or of local residents, the necessity for road improvement is such that I would be grateful if you could look at this, in conjunction with St Paulinus Centre and local residents too.

I look forward to your response and will also be writing to Kent Police about speed enforcement on B2026 Main Road. I have copied this letter to the local County Councillor, Peter Lake, as well as District Councillors James Barnett and Stuart McGregor, and Edenbridge Town Council. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best wishes,

Tom Tugendhat

TOM TUGENDHAT

CC:

Cllr Peter Lake, Sevenoaks Rural South Division, Kent County Council

Cllr James Barnett, Edenbridge North and East Ward, Sevenoaks District Council

Cllr Stuart McGregor, Edenbridge North and East Ward, Sevenoaks District Council

Caroline Leet, Clerk, Edenbridge Town Council