



# MELTON PARISH COUNCIL

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**PLA(21)126.04**

## **TRAFFIC ISSUES IN DOCK LANE, MELTON**

### **Background**

These issues are based on a complaint from a resident to Suffolk County Council Highways about the conflict between vehicles, HGV's, pedestrians and school children in Dock Lane. The HGV's accessing to and from the builders' yard appear to be the biggest concern.

### **Report**

In response to this complaint Melton PC was asked for comments by Highways on 20 October 2021 and responded that Melton PC is aware of this longstanding complaint. It arises from the grant of planning permission by East Suffolk Council to Coastal Building Supplies in 2016, for a change of use of an existing factory in Dock Lane, Melton to a Builder's Merchants trade counter facility (planning application DC/16/3661/FUL). The Parish Council and the local District Councillor (as well as numerous Dock Lane residents) objected to the application, primarily in respect of the adverse impact on the residential amenity of neighbours, by the inadequate provision for the access of HGVs in Dock Lane, as well as the noise associated with the site movement of building materials to / from storage by fork lift trucks. However it was approved as the site is located within a general employment area and the proposal was deemed acceptable, subject to appropriate controlling conditions. The most relevant of these stipulate that hours of working shall be on Monday to Friday, 07.30 to 17.00 hours and on Saturdays from 08.00 until 12.00. Suppliers' deliveries to and collections from the premises shall be confined to these hours as well. The Parish Council has no up to date intelligence as to whether these conditions are being observed in practice.

On 21 October 2021 Highways subsequently wrote to Melton as follows:

We can probably list the headings of interest in Dock Lane as traffic volumes, traffic speed and conflict between all road users. It's difficult to influence traffic volumes, on the assumption that it's a cul-de-sac and all vehicles probably have a legitimate need to use the road. With traffic speeds we can carry out a speed/traffic volume/HGV numbers survey to provide data (there is a cost of £410 for this that needs a local funding source). I'd be surprised if speeds were

excessive and wary that the police have limited resources to enforce speed limits. However the data might support some form of intervention, perhaps along the lines of the speed cushions on Station Road? In terms of conflict we clearly have a mix of resident's traffic, HGV's, employees traffic, pedestrians, parents and schoolchildren, users of the bowls club and boat yard and others. It's not obvious that any of these can be removed from the mix so the challenge as it seems to me is how to manage the conflict and the things that come to mind are parking provision or restrictions, footway widths and possibly speed cushions or kerb build-outs.

To move this forward the traffic survey will provide helpful data, including the number of HGV's. The survey will be 24/7 over a full week. Once we have that data perhaps we can have a Zoom, Teams or site meeting to agree the next steps. If any scheme is developed we will need to involve all stakeholders including the school. The next steps might be to commission our in-house design team to assess the issues and come up with proposals.

If you can agree a funding source for the traffic survey I can contact our survey team and get this underway.

### **Recommendations**

Planning and Transport Committee are asked to consider in the light of the suggestion by Highways whether they wish to support the proposal for a week long traffic survey in Dock Lane. I have asked the District Councillor whether she might consider funding this and am awaiting a response. If funding from that source is not available Members of Planning and Transport Committee need to decide whether Full Council should be asked to fund this. It cannot be funded from CIL monies.

If the survey takes place and Highways identifies mitigations that can be made, then there is likely to be a request to the Parish Council to fund / part fund these.

William Grosvenor

Clerk and Executive Officer to the Council

25 November 2021

