

Draft AQMA Action Plan measures to reduce pollution attributable to congestion (Chideock).

Date: 6th May 2022

Background.

Following the meeting of the Place and Resources Overview Committee on Thursday 21 April 2022, a request was made to Chideock Parish Council by John Sellgren Executive Director Place, via Marshwood Vale Ward Cllr Christopher, that proposals should be put forward by the Parish Council to consider short, medium term and long-term measures that could prove effective in reducing the pollution attributable to congestion. The measures contained herewith have drawn on past proposals, such as the 2008 AQMA action plan and subsequent plans including recent considerations by the Parish Council. We have been specifically asked to consider those locations outside of the jurisdiction of this Parish Council that could support a reduction in traffic through the village. The Parish Council has introduced a fourth set of overarching measures regarding strategy, which recognise that some of the changes that need to happen may need planning to commence now but may take several years to be realised and they need to be owned and driven by Dorset Council.

Short term

Measures which could be achieved in a relatively short time framework of 18 months.

a) Introduce and use Electronic Signage (This proposal recognises the fact that the Traffic Police and National Highways have limited resources and that the use of electronic digital devices as used on the motorway to appropriately divert traffic will support reducing congestion across the network, reduce person-power costs and support the economy both local and nationally).

- Early signage from M3 to A303 which indicates this is the through route to Devon and Cornwall. (East - West).
- Early signage on M27, (East - West), which realistically gives timescale to arrive in Exeter (this is never two hours due to congestion).
- Early signage for traffic arriving at Monkey Jump roundabout identifying the A37 as the through route for all haulage traffic and tourist traffic going to Devon and Cornwall.
- Alternative signage at Esso garage and the Bridport Mitsubishi roundabout identifying alternative routes for through traffic to Devon and Cornwall (this could be helpful especially when there is an accident on the A35).

- In reverse order (West to East) - signage at A30 Honiton to be removed identifying A35 as through route to Dorchester, instead continue along A30 to Up Ottery, then to Chard via the A30 to Dorset and down A37.
- Sat nav providers to be updated on alternative routes to Exeter that do not go through Dorset.
- Sat nav providers to be updated on viable alternative routes for traffic when there is a blockage on the A35 from Bridport to Honiton.
- Signage to be introduced at Hunters Lodge diverting traffic through Crewkerne when there is an accident on the A35.
- Introduce signage at the Bridport Miles Cross junction which in the event of an accident automatically stops traffic and diverts back into Bridport town centre. This should include advice to residents of Chideock (and other settlements such as Morecombelake) as to whether they can proceed home or not. (This is a serious issue and gets forgotten by the police and National Highways, with residents having no other access other than through the A35.)
- Signage to be introduced at the Quarr Lane / Eype Down Road / A35 junction advising pedestrians and cyclists that crossing the A35 at this point is dangerous and should be avoided.

b). Miles Cross to Eype Down Road

- Stop traffic from exiting and entering into Eype Down Road onto or off the A35. This junction is exceptionally dangerous for vehicles / bicycles entering on to the A35 and those seeking to enter Eype Down Road. Eype Down Road would remain open to residents and, if the proposed slip road was developed (see below), then the residents could use this as an alternative exit onto the A35. (When accidents occur on the A35, vehicles attempt to use Eype Down Road as a diversion and this adds to the congestion and the likelihood of collisions).
- Eype Down Road becomes open only to residents and those utilities and services who service properties along this lane.

c). Chideock.

- Invite Graham Duggan and Janet Moore, along with councillors from the Place and Resources Overview Committee to a walkabout of the village, allowing them to see for themselves the issues, with coffee and biscuits after with the chance for a joint conversation.

- Recognition by Dorset Council that the key stakeholder is the Department of Transport, which commissions National Highways to deliver their strategic transport plan. It is not National Highways as their budget is set by the Department of Transport.
- AQMA area to be reviewed and extended to include not just what are described as a “few” properties on Main Street but also properties that sit at the back of the A35 on local roads and to include Chideock Hill to the west of the village.
- Currently the Dorset Council website does not accurately reflect the fact that Chideock is a pollution hotspot in England. This reflects the fact that there is a mapping issue with DEFRA regarding rural sites. Dorset Council need to address this matter urgently in order to both inform DEFRA of this fact, but in addition to accurately reflect the reality of the situation in Chideock.
- The research by Bristol University (commissioned by Chideock Parish Council) provides a funding opportunity for Dorset Council to be involved in a unique piece of research. Dorset Council should consider supporting the initiative through funding Zephyr monitors (which can measure up to 9 pollutants including NO2, PM1, PM2.5, and PM10) as a contribution to this research relating to the current levels of pollution in Chideock.
- Development of an alternative route for all Golden Cap Holiday Park traffic via Dog House Lane. To operate from April to October. This would significantly reduce congestion through Main Street and reduce congestion eastbound caused by traffic waiting to turn right into Duck Street.
- Deliver funding and approval for an alternative footpath / cycleway into Bridport (this was set out in the 2008 action plan but never realised).
- Campaign within the village including all village and Seatown holiday companies, to encourage residents and holidaymakers to understand that any vehicle below Euro 6 adds to the pollution in the village.
- Foundry Lea (Vearse Farm) development - Chideock to be included in consultation about traffic management and construction traffic in order to avoid Chideock becoming a construction traffic route.

Medium Term.

Measures which will need time to be considered, researched, consulted upon, and planned and delivered within a three-year period. These measures would all improve the flow of traffic, reduce the possibility of accidents, and improve pollution in Chideock

a). Crown roundabout to Miles Cross

- Consider bringing back into use the portion of New Street Lane (classified as a D road on Dorset Explorer), running parallel to the A35 westwards, to form a slip road onto the A35 westbound. Therefore, all traffic leaving Eype and travelling westwards would use the slip road and not turn straight onto the A35. **(See attached map).**
- Lengthen the central refuge for vehicles turning right from the A35 onto the B3162 towards Bridport.

b). Miles Cross to Quarr Lane (south and north) to Quarr Hill.

- Consider reducing the curve of the top of Quarr Hill by flattening and utilising spare land on the north of the A35.

c). Chideock

- Implementation of all Safety and Severance recommendations (2019 WSP report commissioned by Highways England - see attached). Yellow box to be inserted between Duck Street and North road, with traffic light system similar to that installed at the Household Recycling Centre which includes a pedestrian crossing “cycle” to enable pedestrians to cross the road at this busy junction (this should be achievable with the introduction of average speed cameras and the enforcement of the 30 mile an hour speed limit.)
- Introduction of a light controlled pedestrian crossing at East end of the village.
- Average speed cameras to be put in place from Morcombelake to Quarr Hill (THERE IS CURRENTLY NO ENFORCEMENT IN PLACE FOR ANY SPEED LIMIT).
- All utility covers to be replaced with motorway crates, this reflects the fact that currently utility covers collapse on a regular basis because of the weight of the HGVs This causes excessive noise, vibration, and additional pollution.

Long Term Measures

This measure reflects the fact that the strategic road network planning process takes place within five years funding streams. Therefore, the current planning for RIS3 and its consultation has been taking place for some time. In RIS2, Chideock submitted a full submission which challenged why Chideock had been removed from RIS2 as a pinch point. What is clear is that the same issue remains and, in fact, on the basis of National Highways own figures, the levels of congestion on this road have increased and will continue to increase in the coming years. Given the fact that the road is not fit for purpose and the fact that the pollution levels are so high, the Parish Council recognises that planning needs to commence now for any meaningful change to occur within the next ten years.

Chideock

- A Bypass or the development of an alternative East-West strategic route (it is recognised that de trunking the road has been discounted by Dorset Council). To form part of RIS3 and to be formally adopted by Dorset Council as an issue that now needs to be formally considered and planned.

Strategic measures.

- RIS3 - Dorset Council to advocate on behalf of Chideock to put the need for a new improved East- West strategic road to be planned and built including bypasses that allow rural villages to become congestion free.
- Dorset Council to advocate and negotiate with the Western Gateway, Department for Transport, DEFRA, the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership and the Road Haulage associations to include in their new strategic Transport Strategy the need for an East-West strategic route including the development of rail freight from Poole and Southampton, West to Plymouth.
- Consideration given to representatives of Chideock Parish Council as stakeholders being invited to attend strategic meetings such as the Western Gateway, specifically when initiatives are being discussed which could impact upon Chideock.
- Dorset Council to have a targeted approach to delivering a bus service through Chideock that uses the latest pollution free technology including hydrogen. (Currently buses through Chideock are old pre-Euro 6 and contribute to pollution due to the hills and the fact that bus stops are on the pavement, which means that buses create additional congestion and pollution when going through the village).
- Dorset Council to have a targeted approach to their fleet to ensure that vehicles that use the A35 through Chideock are Euro 6 or they use alternative less polluting fuels.
- Reduce road blockages, and ensure that road works minimise delay across Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, Somerset, and East Devon (this reflects the fact that often all of the strategic roads can be closed at the same time, during the holiday period, intensifying the congestion during the day time).
- Dorset Council to work with VOSA to develop a road-testing facility for road side weight, brake, and emissions testing of light and heavy goods vehicles at a site on the A35 prior to Chideock to both the East and the West. (This reflects the fact that Chideock Parish Council completed several discussions with VOSA because of the intense smell of burning brakes as HGVs hit Chideock, coming down Chideock Hill. Clearly, this relates to PM2.5 and PM10 and overweight lorries coming at speed down the hill, then quickly applying their brakes).