

Agenda Item No. 4(a)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

22 February 2018

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**PETITION – CRICH LANE, RIDGEWAY, NEAR AMBERGATE –ROAD
SAFETY CONDITIONS**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To consider a petition received requesting road safety improvements along Crich Lane, Ridgeway.

(2) **Information and Analysis** At the meeting on 23 March 2017, the Cabinet Member acknowledged receipt of a petition requesting Derbyshire County Council to work jointly with Synseal Extrusions Limited to assess the road safety conditions at this location (Minute No. 31/17 refers). The statement detailed in the petition reads as follows:

“We the undersigned call upon Synseal Extrusions Limited and Derbyshire County Council to work jointly to assess the road safety conditions at Crich Lane, Ridgeway near Ambergate, DE56 2JL, in view of the fact that it is currently the route used to access the A610 by Heavy Goods Vehicles to go, to and from Heage Firs Works, in connection with trade at the Synseal premises.”

Following receipt of this petition, officers within the Traffic and Safety Team received a communication from the Director of Synseal Extrusions Limited. Whilst he was disappointed that he had received no advance warning of this petition being presented to his organisation from the petitioners, he communicated that he was willing to undertake all reasonable steps to mitigate the impact of his business operations on the local community.

Local Member Comment

Councillor Ainsworth has been consulted. Whilst this petition was instigated and submitted by his predecessor, Councillor Williams, prior to Councillor Ainsworth being elected in May 2017, he would wish to make the following comments.

“The discussion with my officers in respect of this report is the first communication I have received regarding traffic and safety matters on Crich Lane, since my election in May of this year.

It is evident that there are a number of constraints with regard to the road layout and location of the business that limits the routes available that some of the Heavy Goods Vehicles can take, unfortunately as a consequence of this, the vehicles have no viable alternative other than to use Crich Lane to access the site. However, this does not absolve them from driving without due consideration for the environment they are travelling in.

I can appreciate that the noise generated by Heavy Goods Vehicles using Crich Lane, particularly when they are un-laden can be disruptive to the lives of those residents that live within close proximity to the road. Therefore it may be beneficial to open dialogue with these local businesses to try and find a reasonable solution, for example co-ordinating their haulage movements to try and mitigate the impact this activity has at a localised level.

I have recently had local contact re this issue and witnessed first-hand large HGVs turning right off New Road onto Crich Lane, grass verges are used by these lorries to turn and vehicles have to reverse out of the way if they are coming down the road. There is a large depression by a gate on Crich Lane some 6 m in from the junction on its nearside where the cover now rattles every time a vehicle passes over it.

The edging stones adjacent the road surface have been broken with the weight of the vehicles using the pavement and the driveway on some occasions of the corner house.

The signage on New Road at its junction with A610 is not well positioned and is not visible until you are on the road. There is vegetation covering them. Could we please look at upgrading these, which may stop vehicles using the route as a short cut as it is access only.

I am willing to meet with Mr Edwards and my officers to discuss whether there are any reasonable steps that we could jointly take to reduce the impact on the local residents that reside on Crich Lane, following the submission of this report to the Cabinet Member.”

Officer Comment

The petition makes specific reference to a number of questions and identified areas of concern, therefore each point will be addressed in turn.

One element of the petition was a request related to Derbyshire County Council strengthening the ability of Crich Lane to accept Heavy Goods Vehicles. Officers are not aware of any issues with the structural integrity of

the carriageway construction for Crich Lane that would affect its ability to withstand the weight of Heavy Goods Vehicles. The road is of a construction and materials that can carry weight far in excess of what these vehicles carry as a moveable load. The Highway Maintenance officers consider there are currently no issues relating to the structural integrity of Crich Lane. The road will be monitored as part of the Council's routine inspection regime and remedial works undertaken as and when it is identified.

To promote the use of an alternative route for vehicles accessing the Heage Firs works, does create the potential for simply displacing these vehicles onto other roads which also have constraints for Heavy Goods traffic to use them. The drawing in Appendix A shows the current layout of the highway network around the Heage Firs Works site.

Travelling to the west towards the A6 via Newbridge Road is restricted by the height restriction for the Network Rail Bridge of 12' 9" (3.8m), therefore any vehicle exceeding this height has to find an alternative route.

Travelling to the north towards the junction with the A610 Bullbridge is one of the more suitable routes for the HGV traffic to access the nearest A-classified road, via Crich Lane and then New Road.

Travelling to the east towards Nether Heage Village via Spanker Lane is not suitable due to the narrow, winding road network for HGV traffic.

Finally, travelling to the south towards Belper, via Chesterfield Road has already in the past been identified as an issue, as officers previously met with the former Councillor Williams on site to discuss the use of these roads by HGV traffic in the past.

The specific questions that were raised in the petition are addressed below:

1. Property damage as a result of HGV traffic vibration

It is understood that back in 2015, Synseal made an offer to the residents on Crich Lane of improvements to their double glazing to help mitigate the effects of the HGV traffic vibration. The residents have asked that this expenditure be used to investigate alternative ways in reducing the vibration taking place. The financial offer of assistance for private individuals is something they would have to pursue with Synseal, and whether they would be prepared to fund something else to mitigate the impacts their operational activities may or may not be having on these residents.

2. Whether the larger vehicles are carrying a full load?

This is a logistical issue for Synseal that Derbyshire County Council, as Highway Authority, is unable to comment further upon.

3. What happens in ice and wintery conditions?

The use of the road during spells of inclement weather, such as ice and snow, is something that has to be considered for all roads similar to Crich Lane from across the County. It is for Synseal and its contractors to make an assessment as to whether it can sustain its operations, when it is likely that roads such as Crich Lane will not be given priority for precautionary gritting.

4. What happens if roadworks affect access along Crich Lane

If a scheme of works by either a utility organisation or the Council's Highways Team requires Crich Lane to be closed or managed under temporary traffic management, a decision will be taken that usually results in a temporary diversion route having to be implemented, taking into account the existing restrictions and constraints that are in place. Such a scheme would be more than adequately signed to encourage motorists to use the most appropriate route.

5. Damage to Street Lighting Infrastructure

Residents have raised concerns that damage to existing Street Lighting infrastructure is possibly as a consequence of the HGV traffic. Whilst officers appreciate the residents' concerns, no particular concern with regard to the existing street lighting provision on Crich Lane has been received and, without specific evidence, it would be difficult to attribute all instances to the HGV traffic using the Lane.

6. General Road Safety issues

Whilst officers appreciate the concerns with the New Lane and Crich Lane junction when heading north towards the A610, the evidence from a collision history perspective shows that there has been one serious personal injury collision recorded in the last three years. Whilst this is regrettable, it has to be placed in the context of this situation and it did not occur as a consequence of HGV movement.

It is clear that an effective response to petitioners can best be achieved through collaboration between Synseal and the County Council. An Officer from the Traffic and Safety Team is therefore to meet with the owners of Synseal and the Local Member, Councillor Ainsworth, to see if some improvements to the current situation can be achieved by both parties.

(3) Financial Considerations There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity,

human resources, environmental, health, property, social value and transport considerations.

(4) **Key Decision** No.

(5) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(6) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Richard Handbury, extension 38569.

(7) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member:

- 7.1 Acknowledges the local residents' concerns regarding road safety conditions on Crich Lane, Ridgeway.
- 7.2 Notes that a meeting be arranged with Synseal Extrusions Limited to discuss measures to improve the current situation.
- 7.3 Notes that the Local Member be involved in future discussions on this matter.
- 7.3 Notifies the objectors accordingly.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

APPENDIX: LOCATION PLAN

