

Open Forum to discuss the traffic calming at Cuddesdon Road with OCC Area Traffic Engineer – Mr Peter Ronald. (2 November 2010)

Mr Ronald explained to Councillors that he is responsible for Traffic Management and Road Safety within this area. There has previously been a lot of mis-information that OCC Highways Department does not have the budgets available for traffic calming measures but Mr Ronald stated that funding is available if he recommends and supports the measures. Mr Ronald stated that he wanted to discuss with the Parish Council what options are possible for the traffic calming and that it is possible to carry out surveys and investigations etc on the existing traffic calming measures but to do so his reasons must be justified. The history of the chicanes at Cuddesdon Road is that they were designed by a consultant, paid for by the Parish Council and then adopted by OCC. This chicane has a history of accidents, therefore a solution is needed. Mr Ronald stated that this chicane is the wrong traffic calming measure at this location and suggested that the chicane be completely removed, but this would not be done by OCC without the permission of the Parish Council.

Mr Turnbull stated that before the chicane is completely removed, the Parish Council would need evidence on previous accidents and speed etc to prove that the chicane was the problem.

Mr Horsley stated that the chicane was installed to stop motorists entering the village at 60/70mph. Mr Ronald stated that any traffic calming measure only caters for 80% of motorists and the other 20% can not be catered for. Mr Ronald then suggested that half of the chicane be removed and then carry out a speed survey and then assess the results. The other option is to remove the chicane completely and start from scratch by carrying out a speed survey 24/7 for a week and then decide on further measures from the results. If the results show that there is a speed problem then the Parish Council will have to find the budget to correct the scheme by using speed cushions or humps, which are ideal to reduce the speed of motorists. An approximate cost for speed humps is £800.00 per pair, which would be approximately £6000.00 to complete the scheme. Mr Ronald stated that OCC has funds available to remove the chicanes but not to replace them. OCC would produce a draft design and if the Parish Council supports the design they will commence the process, however the Parish Council would need to canvas the residents living in the Cuddesdon Road area.

Mr Horsley stated that by doing this it just moves the problem with speeding down towards the affordable housing site.

Mr Harris stated that the Parish Council went ahead and funded the chicanes that OCC recommended as the best solution. OCC then adopted the scheme when it was completed. The white gates that were installed are not clearly visible and the Parish Council would like OCC to maintain the speed limits in the area.

Mr Ronald stated that it is the responsibility of the Police to maintain speed limits and not OCC.

Mr Harris commented that it is not the responsibility of the Parish Council to design/install traffic calming measures on a public road.

Mr Ronald stated that as budgets have been halved his proposal is the only option.

Mr Turnbull commented that no reports are yet available on the recent accident. If OCC remove the complete chicane then it is likely not to be replaced until there is another fatality. Mr Turnbull stressed that he cannot support the whole chicane being removed without another measure installed to replace it.

Mr Horsley stated that the Parish Council is not responsible for making the decision on whether to remove the chicanes, it is down to OCC Highways and the Police. Mr Horsley asked Mr Ronald out of the 9 recorded accidents at this location how many of them involved other cars.

Mr Ronald stated that 3 of the accidents involved 2 cars.

Mr Horsley asked Mr Ronald if the Parish Council were to support removing half of the chicane, would OCC substantially increase the signage approaching the traffic calming that is currently hidden by trees. Mr Ronald agreed to inspect the signage but feels that the existing signage is adequate. Mr Ronald stated that OCC is trying to replace signage by increasing road markings.

Mrs Woodcock commented that the decision on the existing and future traffic calming measures at Cuddesdon Road should be taken by OCC Road Safety experts.

Mr Madden stated that the chicanes should be replaced with speed humps.

Mr Gray stated that a lot of residents would be in support for speed humps along this road, but this should be funded by OCC. Mr Gray commented that Oxfordshire is bringing back speed cameras to this area, maybe this is an alternative option to be considered.

Mr Clarke commented that it is possible to drive through the chicanes at 60mph even though it is a 30mph speed limit. The speed humps at Gidley Way are not effective as vehicles can drive straight over them.

Mr Ronald stated that Garsington have the same speed humps that are in Gidley Way and they are happy with them.

Mr Morton stated that he has lived in his property for 40 years and before the chicanes were installed there had never been an accident at this location. Since the chicanes have been installed there have been at least 20 accidents. Mr Morton sees the full extent of the accidents as most motorists end up in the ditch outside of his property. If half of the chicane is removed this will help the problem.

Mr Wilcox stated that before the chicanes were installed there were no accidents just speeding motorists. If the chicanes are left in place there will be another fatality. Mr Wilcox stated that the whole of the chicane should be removed and then OCC decide what measures will replace it.

Mr Horsley stated that if the chicanes are removed then it moves the problem 500metres down the road to the affordable housing site where there are several children playing in gardens.

Mrs Carr commented that this is a very difficult problem to deal with. The biggest problem is speeding motorists.

Mrs Purse commented that most people think that by installing the humps in Gidley Way the speeding issue has improved. Mrs Purse would like to see OCC take responsibility for the traffic calming measures and act on what ever they think is necessary.

Councillors all agreed that the decision and responsibility of the traffic calming measures is down to OCC road safety experts.

Mr Ronald recommended that half of the chicane be removed and then to see what effect this has.

Councillors all agreed to support this decision on condition that the signage and lighting in this area is substantially improved.