

BIDDENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs Alison Swannick – Clerk to the Council

Tel: 07783223450 Email: Clerk@Biddenden.gov.uk Website: www.Biddenden.gov.uk



17 June 2021

Biddenden Parish Council's response to the Independent Examiner's Question 6

Biddenden Parish Council believes that the development of East End, Benenden will impact upon the safety of two areas: Castletons Oak crossroads and Woolpack Corner.

Castletons Oak Crossroads

The Castletons Oak crossroads has been a safety concern for many years. There are frequent accidents and sometimes cars have impacted one of the houses on the corner of the crossroads. The Parish Council has been in contact with its County Councillor and Kent Highways many times over Castletons Oak crossroads, trying to find a solution and trying to make it a safe crossroads. A meeting was recently held with the Borough Councillor, Kent Highways and the Parish Council. The crash data regarding the crossroads was discussed and Kent Highways stated that the data showed that more than 50% of crashes involve vehicles from the Benenden direction on Benenden Road and involve collisions with vehicles on the Cranbrook/Tenterden Road. Some collisions involve vehicles travelling from Biddenden on Benenden Road. The scheme introduced in 2018 has not worked and Kent Highways is currently looking at other possibilities, including speed reduction, which will undoubtedly help but speed is not the only cause, or indeed the solution. Visibility is an issue at this crossroads as well. The sustainability issues of the proposed development at East End means that cars will always be on the move, which in turn will increase the current issues at this junction. To-date, new schemes have not solved the problems.

Woolpack Corner

Woolpack Corner is a junction where the speed limits of its connecting roads are 60 mph, both of which the Parish council feels should be reduced to 40 mph. Visibility at this junction is also an issue. Cars travelling at 60 mph on Benenden Road towards the junction frequently have to slam on their brakes to stop safely.

From the Biddenden direction, visibility approaching the junction is poor, and traffic coming from the Tenterden side also face visibility issues when turning down the slip road at the junction from vegetation and when pulling out to go left from that slip road up the Benenden Road. Houses near the junction suffer from vehicles travelling at speed and with some of them having parking bays right on the road, getting out of a car can be a risky business. This will only increase and add to the already busy junction which, apart from being used by residents and businesses in and around Benenden Road and Tenterden Road, but, is also in use by the Turkey Farm and Spill Land Caravan Park which has residential and holiday traffic, and is situated not far from the junction.

Woolpack Corner, is heavily affected by Benenden Road, which will be the main route for potential residents of an East End development to get facilities/amenities. An increase in usage would seriously compromise the safety on this road and at Woolpack Corner itself. Visibility is a major issue along with the speed limit on both A262 and Benenden Road. An increase in traffic will be detrimental to residents in this area.