

Silk Willoughby Parish Council
c/o Mrs R Boden

E: silkwillpc@gmail.com

5th August 2022.

Dear,

I am writing to ask for your support and advice regarding an ongoing evolving problem we are facing in our small village of Silk Willoughby.

Whilst we celebrate the growth of Sleaford, as this is where some of our community work and/or shop, our parish feels like it is taking the full force of the construction vehicle impact from the Handley Chase development construction site on London Rd in Sleaford and the Park Hill construction site in Quarrington. This mainly consists of aggregate and construction HGVs moving 'spoil' from those sites, approx. 2500 tonnes a day!

We already have Mountains fleet of Skip Hire & Recycling HGVs coming through the village at all hours (as early as 01.30am) with chains rattling, plus Pennells have just had an extension planning application approved to enlarge their site. Most of this traffic comes off the A15 and through our village.

In 2018, our previous Chairman wrote to NKDC, LCC and spoke to the local newspaper regarding concerns over the construction HGVs passing through our village. Fast forward to today and the village has suffered enormously in 5 years, and it is getting worse all the time.

The building of Handley Chase is not due to end until 2032, ANOTHER 10 years and the residents are already at their wits end as they have written with detailed reports to NKDC and LCC with little or no reply and certainly no active help or advice.

So, as the Chairman of Silk Willoughby Parish Council I am asking for your support **please** so the residents can move forward and hopefully we can resolve these issues or at least alleviate them to some degree.

In this I am including:

- A massive Increase in HGVs to an unbearable level at all hours of the day and night, the noise, clatter, dirt, road noise and damage to our main road is having a detrimental impact on people, buildings, and wildlife
- The mental, physical and psychological health of some residents is deteriorating because of this ongoing stress. Lack of sleep, being scared as the HGVs rumble past,

being woken early by the relentless noise and vibrations or waking because your body is now expecting the noise and vibration. The residents who have jobs are now finding this is impacting on their ability to work properly, so their livelihoods are compromised and in this uncertain world of debt, job cuts, higher bills that is an added worry that no one needs. Those that are retired and are at home cannot get away from the relentless stress and anxiety from the constant noise.

- The wildlife is suffering as this vast increase in rumbling HGVs goes directly past our beautiful village pond, which has nesting birds. There are large amounts of dirt and debris frequently landing in the pond from the passing lorries. You can or could frequently see foxes and deer around the village, the village prides itself on its beautiful natural features, the pond, wildlife and the open fields which unfortunately now are not so evident. The Village won 'Best Kept Village for a number of years.
- We have a listed building on the main road (The Rectory) and we are in a conservation area. The NKDC Conservation Guide for Residents states 'Conservation areas are designed by the District Council to protect parts of towns or villages that have special architectural or historical character' it also states 'The designation of a conservation area shows a positive commitment to preserve and enhance the quality of the local environment'

So how can this level of disruption be allowed to continue?

- The village has a vehicle activated speed sign as you enter from Sleaford but nothing from the A15 direction. When traffic is coming from the A15 through the village and towards the pond they gain momentum due to the downhill gradient all the way to the 30 sign and are quite clearly speeding.
- There is a staggered crossroads in the village, with extremely poor visibility as you exit from both Church Lane and School Lane, with the lorries thundering past it is an accident waiting to happen (enc. photos)
- The path from Sleaford to Silk Willoughby was massively improved last year and this has increased the number of joggers, dog walkers, families walking and cyclists all heading to our beautiful village. This itself is raising a huge health & safety concern as these HGVs are literally feet away and one lapse of concentration could be fatal.
- Mountain Skip Hire & Recycling HGVs (full and empty, with clanging chains) are going and returning to their yard which is in between Silk Willoughby and Quarrington. Approx. 120 of these per day through our tiny village. Start time recorded at 01.30am and 04.30am. The truck yard itself will soon be surrounded by housing.
- Pennells Garden Centre have had their planning application approved to further expand and extend their site, which will attract more customers and vehicles. As a parish we support this however, it's not only customers but delivery lorries, waste lorries, more staff and this will only add to the increased traffic impact that our village is already feeling.

- The potential future growth of private traffic through our village as a consequence of some 1800 homes being built (Handley Chase & Quarrington) is enormous. If each house had an average of 2 cars that could be an additional 3600 cars. That's not including servicing vehicles etc.

The residents have been very proactive and have collected data, taken photographs and have video evidence, so we can prove everything is true. To add further insult whilst collecting the data, some residents have had 'stares' 'hand gestures' and even 'horns' sounded at them from the passing HGVs.

A resident has been to see a Senior Site Manager at the Balfe Handley Chase construction site and has been told that they have clear instruction from NKDC Planning to direct all construction traffic to and from their site through Silk Willoughby, this is also evident in the signs that have gone up recently around Sleaford and Quarrington (enc. photos).

Why is this? Who has agreed to this? Can they not go through Sleaford and Quarrington too? Could we please see a copy of this instruction and agreement?

Whilst we appreciate and totally understand that we cannot stop or would indeed not want to stop the need for expansion, business and growth, we do need to eliminate as many negatives about the whole situation as possible, for the wellbeing of our residents, property and wildlife.

The April 2016 Sustainable Urban Extension Joint Delivery Statement, Evidence Topic Paper for Handley Chase Sleaford South Quadrant, states in point 2.1 that it will apply 'appropriate mitigation measures for any adverse transport impacts on Silk Willoughby'.

Surely our concerns are adverse effects?

The key points we, as a parish council would like to discuss with you are:

1. Fixing the dips, bumps, failing utilities trenches, dipped drain covers, and potholes in the roads. I am sure you can imagine that empty HGVs and skip lorries clang and rattle when the roads surface is so poor. Ideally, we need to have London Road resurfaced with a quiet smooth tarmac all the way through the village. The village did at one time have quieter tarmac, but it has been resurfaced with very noisy uneven chippings, which echoes with every sound.
2. Installing permanent average speed cameras to slow the HGVs (and other vehicles) down, as they take little notice of our speed sign. This way at least their employers will face a fine, so they may then advise their drivers accordingly.
3. New road markings and clearer road signs before you get to the village from all directions.

The 3 points above are an easy, fast solution that will start to alleviate some of the residents' issues straightaway. Smooth tarmac will significantly reduce the noise and vibration continuously heard and felt, night and day.

There are obviously more points that we need to discuss such as poor visibility, volume of traffic, sharing the volume of HGVs with Sleaford and Quarrington, building a relief road, however, I feel that these are mid-term solutions, that need to be addressed in the near future.

I would like to arrange a meeting with you if possible, so you can witness our concerns first hand and you could meet some of the residents and hear about their concerns directly.

Would you please be willing to meet me, the Parish Council or/and a small group to discuss this so you can advise us on how to move forward in a positive way please?

I have enclosed as evidence a report from a local resident. This is just 1 report as I have received 10 in the past month. The enclosed report was gathered in just one day and to be honest I was shocked when I saw the level of disruption that some residents are having to cope with day after day, night after night.

With this in mind, the following will all receive a copy of this letter for the reasons stated so each department can see the whole picture and can appreciate the number of issues we are facing. Hopefully each department will be able to highlight the concerns from the whole letter that affect them so we can start to make a plan to improve the situation.

- NKDC Planning Enforcement Team – to ensure Balfe and Mid UK Recycling are not breaching any approved planning application, agreed operating hours or their Operating Licence
- NKDC Planning – to advise us regarding their agreement with Balfe
- NKDC Conservation Area Team – Conservation area, listed building, architectural sites, goes against policy
- NKDC Environmental Health / Impact Teams – impact on pond, pollution, sleep deprivation, stress affecting home and work life
- LCC Highways - Road surface and autumn/winter dangers
- Lincs Road Safety Partnership – dangers to pedestrians, other road users, lower speed limit through village to 20mph, average speed cameras, poor visibility at junctions
- Cllr Caroline Johnson - MP
- Cllr Andrew Hagues - County Councillor
- Cllr Russell Jackson – District Councillor

I would like to thank you for your time and support, and I sincerely hope this is the start of an engaging process so that all our concerns can be looked at in a positive way.

Yours sincerely,
Louise Roberts

Louise Roberts
Chairman
Silk Willoughby Parish Council

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Enclosures:

1. 1. Traffic Report from a local resident
2. 2. School Lane and Church Lane junction photos
3. 3. Construction traffic site signs
4. 4. Resident Report Graphs - Appendix 1