

# CHESTERTON PARISH COUNCIL

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FAO: Mr Andrew Lewis  
Planning & Development  
Cherwell District Council  
Bodicote House  
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Banbury OX15 4AA

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020

Dear Andrew,

**RE: Planning Application Ref: F/00825/HYBRID - DORSET LIVING LTD – A4095 Traffic Implications**

Further to our recent email correspondence, as promised please find below Chesterton Parish Council's thoughts on mitigation measures.

Firstly, the Parish Council objects most strongly to the imposition of any mitigation procedures and would advocate that the B4030 is the best and only viable route for HGVs to proceed towards Bicester, especially given the warehousing on this road adjacent to the roundabout where Vendee Drive joins the B4030. The very idea of increasing the HGV traffic on this stretch of the A4095 is at best entirely unworkable and totally incomprehensible to Chesterton Parish Council, all of whom have an excellent day-to-day working knowledge of this road through their village. Environmental issues such as a substantial increase in road noise and a definite decrease in air quality will affect the village. All this proposal appears to offer is the opportunity to move the existing problem from one village to another.!

However, if mitigation measures have to be considered then the following issues must be addressed without fail:-

**(i) Specific measures on the A4095**

Due to the dangerous nature of the blind approach to this right-angled bend at the junction with The Hale, it proves to be a constant and harrowing problem with HGVs in the main unable to avoid transgressing on to the opposite side of the road and endangering oncoming traffic. Sadly, the tragic fact must not be ignored that more than one fatal accident has occurred on the approach to this bend in the past.

**Mitigating measures could include traffic lights, mirrors and warning signs but these measures would at best only serve to minimise the existing serious problem and most certainly would not alleviate the insoluble problem.**

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Please note that under the current May 2020 'Assessment of Safety of Walked Route to School – Chesterton to Bicester' Report, produced by OCC's Road Safety Team's Principal Officer in the company of a School Admissions Officer, it is proposed that pupils from as young as five years of age should walk this very route along a narrow footpath to access local schools. **If this plan were to be adopted it would necessitate the creation of two pedestrian crossings on the A4095 to create an access from the village to the footpath by the Chesterton Hotel, albeit rendering their journey even more perilous.** It must be remembered that the BSA, despite numerous attempts during their application failed to succeed in addressing this crucial issue!

The chicane and speed hump on the A4095 were quoted specifically by OCC Highways as part of their judgement on the non-accessibility to the recently proposed Great Wolf Lodge development. To propose now that the A4095 could accommodate increased HGV traffic seems incongruous to say the very least?

**(ii) The Hale & Akeman Street**

Since the proposed weight restrictions on HGV traffic at the Middleton Stoney A34 junction would result in such traffic on the B430 then taking the 'short cut' via Akeman Street followed by a left turn into The Hale to access the A4095 at the dangerous 90 degree bend and subsequently on to Vendee Drive, this would create considerable problems. We are already investigating a 20mph limit along with other speed reductions on The Hale and throughout the village at great financial cost. To therefore allow a 60mph limit on Akeman Street (a relatively narrow and country road) is absolutely nonsensical. The Hale generally is not much more than a wide 'single lane' road in width, used as part of the 'rat run' to avoid Junction 9 on the M40 and carries a heavy volume of traffic at peak times. The rejection of the recent BSA application on Akeman Street was in part due to the limited access to this site via these roads. Therefore, plans that would only serve to increase the volume of HGV traffic on these relatively narrow roads seem yet again incongruous. **The Hale is already signed as unsuitable for HGV's.** However, to the detriment of the village and its residents, its usage remains unmonitored!

**To mitigate on these two roads would require any number of procedures such as reducing speed limits, full width speed humps and rumble strips, etc or signs prohibiting HGVs on the Akeman Street/The Hale route, which would require full enforcement by OCC.**

It is also very important to point out that the crossroad junction of Akeman Street/Green Lane, The Hale and the Little Chesterton road has been the site of several collisions due to its poor visibility and lack of appropriate signage. Only recently a serious accident occurred, necessitating an extraction of a casualty by air ambulance. **Effective mitigation measures would need to be considered here.**

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**Green Lane, leading from Akeman Street into the Village Centre and Alchester Rd** are also currently undergoing 20mph speed restriction assessments and OCC have agreed that such measures as buildouts or full width speed humps are necessary, to manage the serious increase in volume and speed of traffic along this very straight but built up road. **Costs recently explored by OCC would require to be included as part of positive mitigation measures.**

- (iii) **The Hale** has no footpath for two thirds of its length, and is consistently walked by residents, children and dog walkers as well as employees at the adjacent Bicester Hotel Golf & Spa in addition to users of the existing BSA facilities on Akeman Street. At only 4.2M width at one end, it is already precarious for vehicles to pass by pedestrians and each other in safety. Indeed, two HGV vehicles would find it impossible to pass each other.

**Mitigation measures here, for the safety of all residents and drivers, would need to include a 20mph speed limit, widening of the road (which the PC has long been pressing for) and a pedestrian footpath from the access to Audley Gardens along its entire length to the Little Chesterton crossroads on Akeman Street – if HGV traffic was not prohibited.**

- (iv) **A Footpath from Audley Gardens across the Allotments to Alchester Rd**

At present residents and young school children on the recently completed Audley Gardens Estate have to walk along The Hale to the A4095, then along the very busy A4095, turning into Alchester Road to negotiate many driveways and parked cars in order to access the School & the Play Group locations. Under an earlier S106 Agreement with OCC and the estate developer, a vital pedestrian footpath was to be constructed to create a much safer and shorter pedestrian route to the village centre and school, by securing access to Alchester Road directly from the new estate via the village allotments. Audley Garden residents currently feel extremely let down and abandoned by the authorities as this vital footpath has failed to materialise due to OCC's apparent failure to accurately budget for its cost. **If HGV traffic continues to be allowed access on to The Hale, or indeed is encouraged to increase as a result of the Dorchester Living Ltd application, it would become absolutely imperative, as mitigation, that the commitment to this footpath is honoured by those who have currently failed our village and its residents.**

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## **Recommendations**

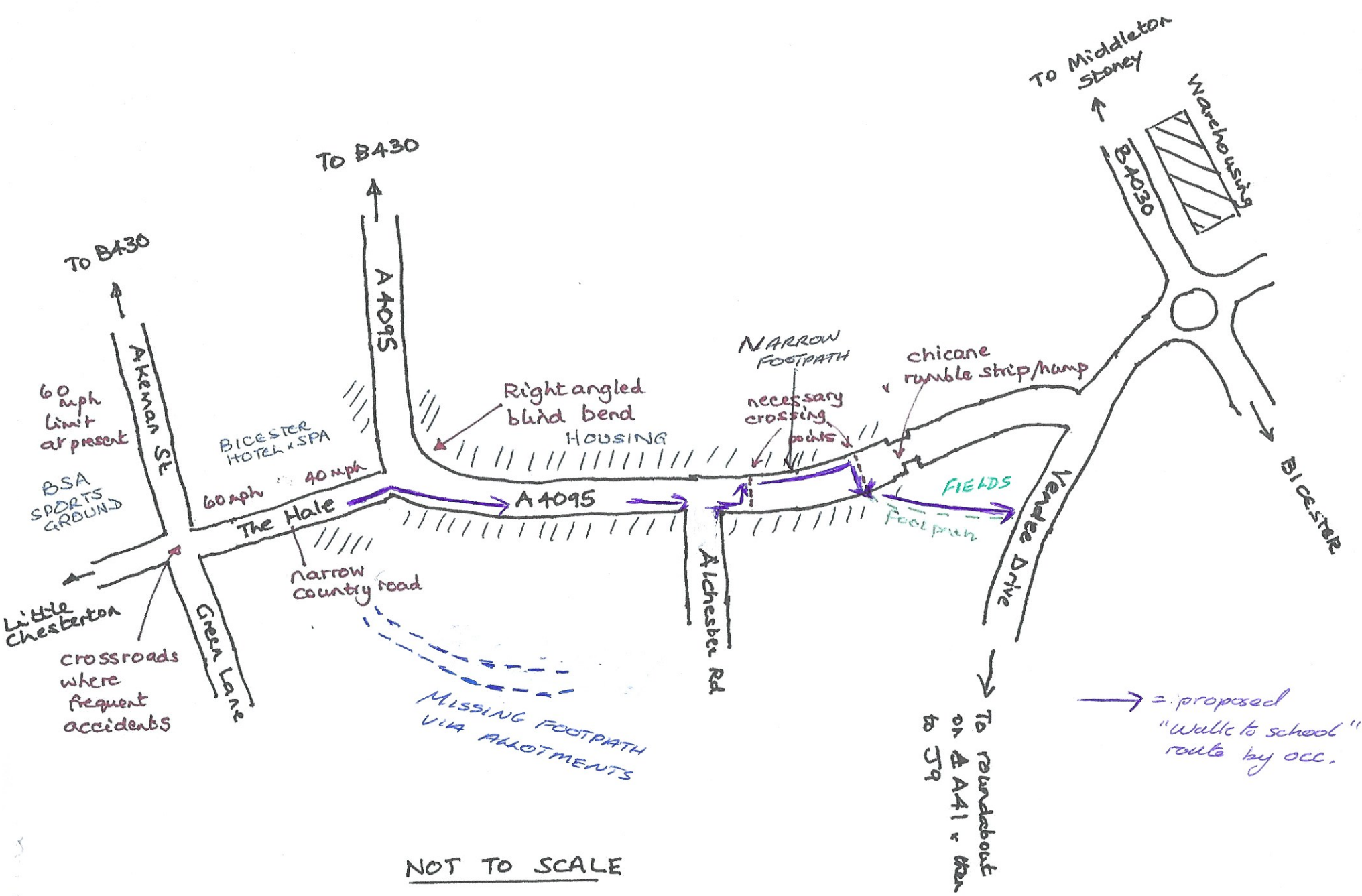
- a) The proposed weight limits on the B4030 are not implemented.
- b) Between Junction 9 and Junction 10 there are three routes into Bicester; two come through Chesterton and one through Bucknell. Signage should strongly advise HGVs to use Junction 9 and not Junction 10 to access Bicester from the North.
- c) If implementation does follow, then we would like to insist as a matter of priority on being fully involved in discussions with OCC Highways pursuant to securing mitigation measures on our village roads (on which we, as residents, undeniably have the most relevant day to day experience and knowledge). Indeed, there would be widespread, heartfelt and deep opposition to the proposals as they stand.

We look forward to your response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

*Jackie Williams*

**Jackie Williams**  
**Clerk, Chesterton Parish Council**  
**Tel: 07935 221885**



NOT TO SCALE

→ = proposed  
 "walk to school" route by occ.