



# Update for Bulbourne Court

March 2017

E-mail: [nickholl1945@btinternet.com](mailto:nickholl1945@btinternet.com)  
Phone: 01442 866650  
web: [www.NickHollinghurst.org](http://www.NickHollinghurst.org)  
web: [www.TringLibDems.org.uk](http://www.TringLibDems.org.uk)  
web: [www.WestHertsLibDems.org](http://www.WestHertsLibDems.org)



County Councillor  
Nick Hollinghurst

## *A Safer Bridge on Tringford Road - Traffic Light Proposals*

### *Dear Residents*

We have not really progressed much beyond the preliminary investigation which I commissioned in June 2015. This concentrated on highway considerations. Though highlighting a number of difficulties it nevertheless recommended the installation of a system of light signal control at the Tringford Road canal bridge.

However, things have not gone at all well and the situation regarding lights on the bridge is still far from clear. I have not yet received the technical report into the practicalities of installation that I was expecting, still less any definite proposals relating to this scheme. We are very close to the end of the financial year and I have had to accept that there will now be a considerable delay to further progress. It may now be many months before a worked up proposal emerges.

Perhaps I should have said in my neighbourhood newsletters that we have had a “commitment in principle”. Although the scheme is to proceed to a technical assessment and then a detailed proposal there are several stages after that:

- A. Allocation of financial resources
- B. An informal consultation
- C. A formal consultation
- D. A final decision

Residents have raised some good points, which I will comment on:

1. No advance warning signs at the roundabout.

In fact there are several problems to the signage in the neighbourhood of the bridge. Certainly there should be advance warnings at the roundabout. These should be (a) road narrows (b) hump bridge and (c) a “pedestrian on the road” – with the distance ahead being indicated.

Near Bulbourne Court there are (a) road narrows and (b) hump bridge signs. Were there advance signs at the roundabout these might be useful as reminders – but they should be supplemented by a pedestrian warning.

There is however no need for a speed restriction sign at the roundabout since the area is already within a 30 mph speed restriction zone at that point and until just past the mill.



2. Pedestrians on bridge.

A very good point and the highway officers are well aware of this. They are also aware that the signs on the north are located too close to the bridge and suggest they are moved to a new position just north of the DBC depot. I have asked for kicker arrows on both sides of the bridge to nudge vehicles to the east and for a white line to be painted on the carriageway to the west side of the bridge sufficiently far from the parapet to accommodate a single file of pedestrians. The line is to be continued on the west for a sufficient distance to indicate that pedestrians should walk within it.

Lights would be set to a default red in both directions and at a sufficient distance from the bridge that an approaching vehicle need not come to a stop if the road is clear on the far side. If a vehicle slows down then the light would have changed to green before it is stationary. If the light remained red because a vehicle was approaching on the far side of the bridge then it would obviously come to a stop and remain stopped. No vehicle would thus approach the bridge at speed and the risk to pedestrians would be reduced.

### 3. Parking in Bulbourne Court

The decanting of cars from parking beside the cottages into Bulbourne Court is something which we are aware might be a problem. I discussed this with county officers some time ago. We will probably need to run double yellow lines round the corners of the junction to preserve sight lines and safety. The Borough Council - who is responsible for parking management schemes, as distinct from safety work, may need to work with you to find a consensus for a suitable scheme to protect Bulbourne Court's quiet child-friendly ambience (as someone put it).

### 4. Pollution from idling engines.

I take pollution very seriously and discussed this with the officers. They say that with sensors placed at the right distance from the bridge then the idling time could be no greater and possibly less than the situation without lights. Warned by the lights drivers will start to slow earlier, perhaps not need to stop at all and are generally less likely to accelerate off quickly after having come to a rapid stop – as they often do at present. This will lead to a slower and smoother movement of vehicles in the vicinity of the bridge and it is slower and smoother driving that reduces pollution.

Pollution is now in any case much reduced in modern lorries and cars – especially hybrids – by engines which automatically cut out when stationary. All-electric cars - like mine - have no internal combustion engine at all. They produce no pollution and draw no power when not moving. Sales of such cars have reached 2%. Once people have tried electric cars, because they are so easy to drive, they would not willingly switch back to petrol or diesel – so numbers are likely to increase.

### 5. Other factors

- a. Signage at the bridge and elsewhere e.g. at the Lower Icknield Way refers to a 17 T restriction. This needs to be changed to 18T.
- b. A marked cycleway along the road also passes over the bridge
- c. The canal towpath used by walkers and cyclists changes sides across the bridge at this point
- d. There is a DBC depot close to one side of the bridge used by large refuse and cleansing vehicles

Finally the 30 mph restriction stops short of the bridge. It was felt after the last accident and the closure of the bridge for repairs that it was most important, independent of any light signal control, that this speed limit should be extended over the bridge to the north past the entrance to the DBC depot. This will have the effect of bringing both approaches to the bridge within a 30 mph restriction.

We are still a very long way from a decision, but I must point out that this is a moderately busy road and the safety of road users is naturally a major factor.

The informal consultation on this speed limit should have taken place recently and you will have been asked to respond. I hope you were able to support this safety measure.

I hope too that this letter reassures you as to both the process being followed and to the detailed consideration that I and the county officers are giving to your concerns regarding the traffic signal proposals.

Yours sincerely,



County Councillor Nick Hollinghurst