

Swale Joint Transportation Board

6th September 2010

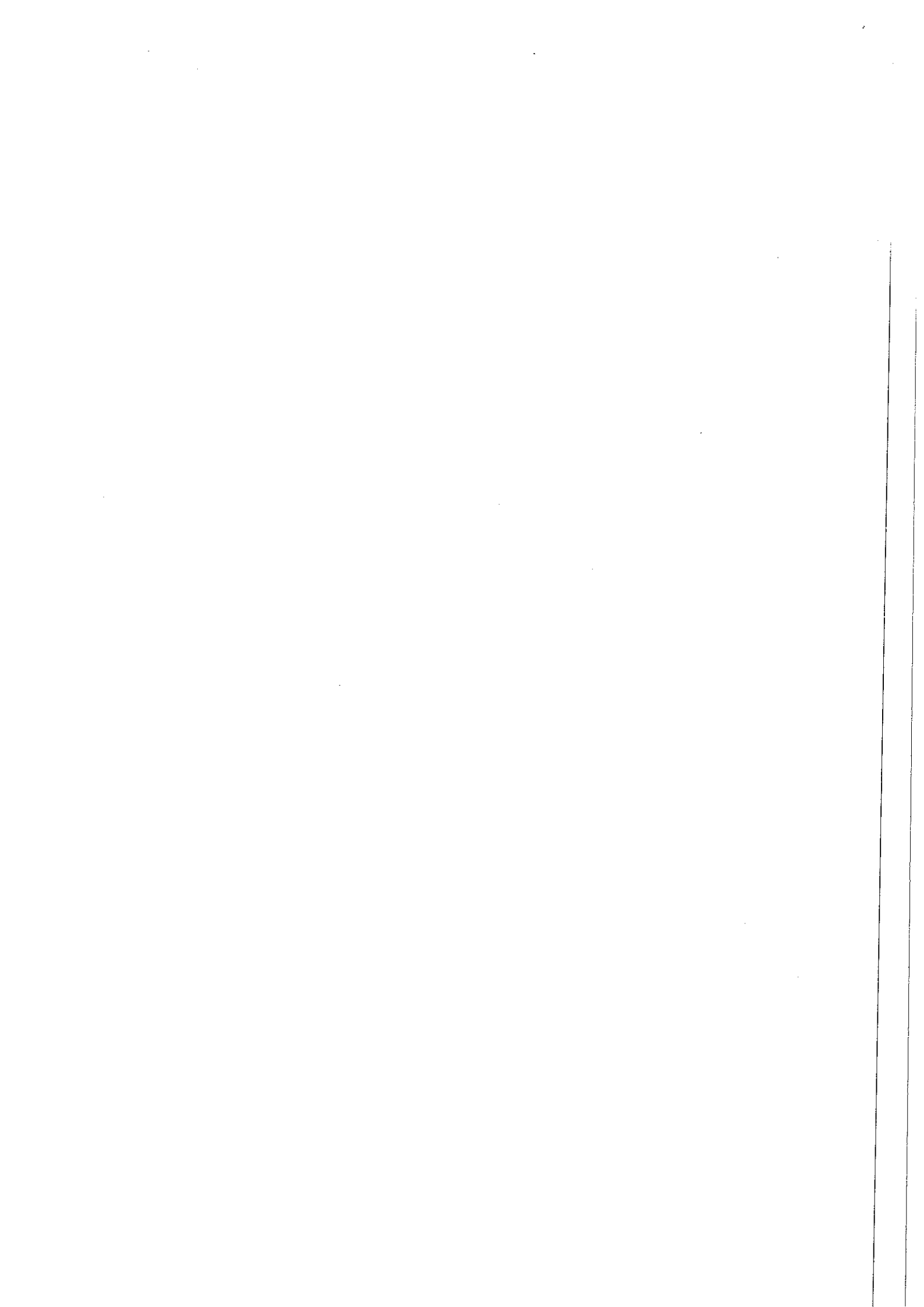
Tabled Items - Correspondence received for agenda items:

7. **FAVERSHAM TOWN CENTRE TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS**

To consider a request from Faversham Town Council to close Faversham Town Centre to traffic between 10am and 4pm Monday to Saturday.

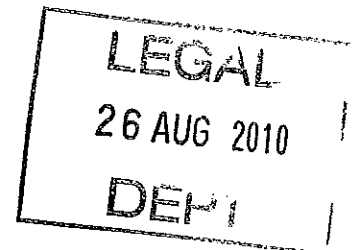
10. **BYSING WOOD ROAD OFF ROAD SEGREGATED FOOTWAY/CYCLEWAY**

To note the report and to support Kent Highway Services in proposing no further action to remove this cycle route.



Item 7

Mr. M Whiting
Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board
Democratic Services
Swale Borough Council
East Street
Sittingbourne



24 August 2010

Dear Mr. Whiting,

I understand the Joint Transport Committee will be meeting on the 6th September to discuss the recent proposal by Faversham Town Council to close Faversham Town centre to traffic. As a resident of the town, I wish to raise my objection to this suggestion.

We use the town on a regular basis and try to support our local shops as much as is practical. One of the attractions of the town is the fact it is accessible to everyone. Whilst I appreciate there is a traffic order restricting access that may not be adhered to, the current arrangements allow for the cross section of Faversham's population to access the shops, for the residents to reach their homes and for the traders to receive their deliveries. It is a lovely working town for all to enjoy.

I would simply ask that the current arrangements are left unaltered. By all means enforce the current traffic order but please don't waste tax payers' money at a time when public spending is tight on an unnecessary survey that could potentially affect a perfectly good arrangement.

Thank-you for considering our comments,

Yours faithfully

Emma Girling & Jeremy Graham

egirling@

Dear Sirs,

I understand that the latest Faversham Town Council proposal on traffic flow in the town centre is due for discussion on 6th September 2010. I am a resident of the Town Centre and live in Court Street.

The purpose of this letter is not to go into all the details on this issue but rather to set out some relevant issues for consideration by the Board:

1. The relevant Town Plan for Faversham requires the Council to encourage mixed use - residential use in the Town Centre. This encompasses all the benefits of a 'living' town centre (in particular bearing in mind the historical layout of Faversham and the number of people living in the center of town) as opposed to the current growing problem of 'ghost town centres' and the problems they create. Any proposal would need to avoid any restrictions on people getting to and from their homes during the day. As a pre-condition of any further discussions the council would need to make an immediate and clear declaration to avoid any concerns of town centre residents that any future proposals would allow for their continued access to their homes at all times.
2. It appears this traffic issue has been considered by the council in detail recently and the traffic flow proposal adopted by the JTB in June 2007 considered the best solution. This still appears to be the case. The current proposal does not have many of the benefits of the traffic flow solution i.e. stopping through traffic, massively cutting all traffic entering the town centre and Court Street in particular etc. but creates significant problems the traffic flow solution avoids (access for businesses/legal right of way access issues). As it seems the matter has only recently been properly and fully aired and where there has been no substantive changes, particularly in the current climate, should the council use public funds to re-review the issue so soon?

Kind regards

Campbell Forsyth

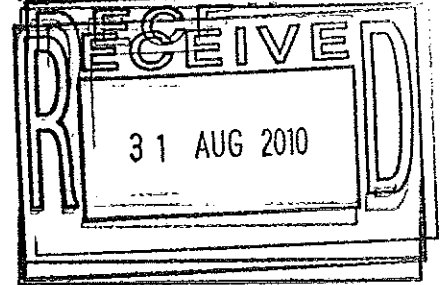
Item 7

C.J. Brown
FAVERSHAM CARPETS LTD.

VAI Reg. NO. 100 3072 01

Company NO. 04452420

14th August 2010



Mr M Whiting
Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board
Democratic Services
Swale Borough Council
East Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 8NY

Dear Mr Whiting

Closure of Faversham Town Council to Traffic

For ten years now I have traded in Preston Street, very successfully dealing mainly with local people living in Faversham and the surrounding villages. Their prevailing approach to shopping is to get it locally if at all possible. To achieve this I have tried to provide high quality products and services and have been rewarded with enough recommendation work that I no longer need to advertise. These customers are always very sad to see a small business close and are very considerate as to the cause and effect when this happens.

Following this I decided on an expansion of my business and subsequently began a new ten year lease, which I intend to extend, at No.6 East Street. In doing so I have invested £12,000 refurbishing the new premises and also more than doubled my monthly rent to that which I have paid in Preston Street. I purposely chose the bigger shop because it has all the storage potential I need as well as its prominent position in town. I tell you all this in an effort to show my commitment to the future of Faversham town centre, not only for my own financial gain but the community as a whole.

It was against this background that I was recently informed of yet another attempt at closing the town centre to traffic. I sometimes have several deliveries a day and my suppliers are unable to give times other than between usual working hours. These deliveries are large heavy items that cannot be transported from some mythical loading bay in another part of town. If the proposal to close the town to traffic on 6 days a week goes ahead I will be unable to trade. Not because of customer access but because the carpets, vinyl's and wood floorings cannot reach me as is the case with many other traders in the town centre.

Having said all the above I do agree that something must be done to alter the shambolic traffic management. There was a much vaunted plan 2 years ago whereby the traffic flow would be reversed down Preston Street and leave via East Street therefore servicing all delivering requirements in those areas. The premises in that area in the main have no rear access and need front of shop deliveries. This would mean that the gate at Court Street could still be closed daily giving Court Street, Market Square and West Street the pedestrians status it requires. This is the most attractive part of the town and is where most of the coffee shops, restaurants and of course the market are situated. The majority of these premises either have rear access or in the case of most restaurants can carry urgent deliveries from a car park. These businesses would benefit greatly from this closure but not at the expense of other traders in the town. I can't help thinking either for the sake of a few new road signs it would be a reasonably cheap option and would avoid sacrificing the future of many businesses such as my own, surely the main idea of these proposals is to build on what we have, and not let more traders go out of business.

Turning finally to what is now quite an old survey (2004) it would be interesting to see what section of the public it was based on. Who are the 70% of people who say the closure should go ahead? If this sort of work is done it should be controlled so that all interested parties are questioned who may be affected. This includes mothers with prams, disabled drivers, shop keepers, restaurateurs, elderly residents etc. Never has a member of the council entered my shop and asked for my opinion. I pay council tax and business rates, road tax, corporation VAT and income tax. It is very unfair that I as well as others am not heard.

I trust that you will give my comments your attention and will help you appreciate how these proposals will affect me and others. Finally, a note from your good self would be appreciated confirming receipt of my letter which will mean I have not just wasted my time.

Yours sincerely

C J BROWN

Item 7

The Alexander Centre Trust Limited

The Alexander Centre, Preston Street, Faversham, Kent. ME13 8NZ

Company Reg No: 7281634

Mr. M Whiting
Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board
Democratic Services
Swale Borough Council
East Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 8NY

September 6 2010

Dear Mr Whiting,

It is understood that following the Annual Meeting of Faversham Town Council a proposal was sent to Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council for the closure of Faversham town centre to traffic between 1000hrs – 1600hrs. As Chair of The Alexander Trust (TACT) I am writing to object to this proposal on behalf of the Trust.

TACT is a new project supported by Faversham Town Council and working in partnership with Swale Borough Council in order to secure a long term future for the building as part of the Asset Transfer Policy. Our Trust is now in the process of raising awareness, support and funding to improve the appearance of the building and make it an accessible and desirable venue for local individuals, businesses and community groups.

Following consultations with users and non users, a key factor against the hiring of the building is access. Along with many of the businesses on the east side of Preston Street, The Alexander Centre has no rear access or parking. In order for us to deliver an appropriate service level to hirers we need to provide access for our services. Our centre is used for a wide number of events including Blood Donor Service, Public Consultations, conferences and training, parties and weddings. We require access for caterers, deliveries, coach drop offs, bridal cars, and the disabled 7 days a week including market days.

We recognise the needs of the market and the necessity of the closure of Market Place and therefore we strongly support the proposal to reverse traffic flow in Preston St or East St together with a system of approved access as a solution to this problem. We note that funding has been available towards achieving this aim from County Councillor Gates and from Section 106 monies. We find it deplorable that such an important issue for townspeople and traders continues to be bogged down in bureaucracy and inertia and ask you to provide some stimulus for action rather than bouncing it back for yet more costly rounds of consultation or consultancy.

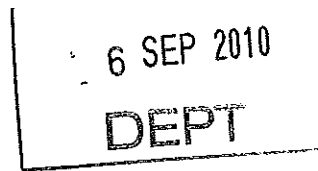
Yours sincerely,



Hilary Riva OBE

Received 6/9/10

M Whiting, Esq
Chairman, Joint Transportation Board
Democratic Services
Swale Borough Council
East Street
Sittingbourne
Kent ME10 8NY



Dear Mr Whiting

I'm writing to you concerning the proposed traffic restrictions in Faversham Town Centre. I'm not aware of the full extent of these proposals but it's my understanding that they involve closure of the market place to all traffic, potentially preventing access to a large number of businesses (both retail and commercial) in the town centre as a whole.

I've previously written to the local newspaper about this proposal and an extract from the (published) letter will, I trust, suffice to apprise you of my objection to what I understand is proposed:

"I'm one of those "inconsiderate" people who will occasionally drive through the market place - I've even done it on market days before now, although I have to confess I've not once seen a guide dog in training that's been inconvenienced by my actions. Doubtless my thoughtless actions have also offended people who feel it's their right to sit outside a coffee shop on a narrow pavement alongside a road and not be confronted by cars!

I get so frustrated at the way in which bureaucrats try to rule every aspect of our lives under the pretence of acting in either the public's interest or that of the population as a whole. Yes, I'm sure there are people who would like to see the entire town centre closed to traffic, but I would question whether they were made aware of the broader implications of such a scheme when they were asked that question. It's been made very clear by opponents of the scheme that these proposals would seriously impact business in the area and, to be honest, I'm amazed that proponents of the scheme have not foreseen these issues.

I can cite three very good 'personal' reasons why closure of the market place would almost certainly result in loss of business for local traders:

- 1. I purchase large 15kg to 20kg bags of dog food from Paul's Pet Essentials on a regular basis. I'm a loyal customer, I like their prices and I like their service. I would not welcome the prospect of humping one or two heavy bags of dog food all the way to the Tesco car park, or further. Parking in the main town centre car park (behind the old Woolworths) would result in a longer, more inconvenient car journey.*
- 2. On occasion I've bought large numbers of plants from the market stall, sometimes large plants. Again, I like their prices and their service. And again, I would not welcome the prospect of several trips to and from a car park carrying bags of plants.*
- 3. On a couple of occasions I've had to take a large, heavy computer into the PC shop in the market place - again, something that would be unviable if I were obliged to park a distance away.*

The net result is that I would almost certainly end up taking my trade elsewhere in all three instances.

Doubtless there are numerous other shoppers who can provide similar examples."

I did attend a meeting of the Faversham Town Council on 2nd August, at which I raised questions regarding this proposal and also expressed my objection. I'm afraid that I was unable to gain any clear comprehension as to whether there was any justification for implementing the proposed traffic plan - one member of the Town Council claimed that there had been "strong support" for the proposal, but was completely unable (or unwilling) to provide any clarification as to what constituted "strong support".

Yours faithfully



Kerry Kenton-Clarke

Item 10

Dear Sir/Madam

As a resident of Bysingwood Road for 33 years, we believe the cycle lane is a very good thing to have. It makes it safe for cyclists but most of all it slows down the traffic, and on a road that has two popular children's play areas and leads to 2 primary schools, slowing down the busy traffic can only be a good thing. Living directly on the cycle path, I witness children and adults using the cycle path on a daily basis. I myself and my family have used the cycle path ever since it's been built. The traffic on the Bysingwood Road, we only see to increase when the new Sainsbury's supermarket arrives.

What we could do with is a zebra crossing near the play park at Giraud Drive, to make crossing the busy Bysingwood Road safer for every body.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Lawrence and Margret Goldsmith

27th August 2010

Joint Transport Board
Swale Borough Council
Swale House
East Street
Sittingbourne ME13 3HT

To Whom It May Concern

We are writing in response to your note regarding the removal of the cycle lane in Bysing Wood Road.

The benefits of the cycle lane far out way any marginal gains for drivers if the intention is to widen the carriageway. At present cyclists of all ages, especially children, enjoy the benefit of being separated from the traffic flow which often exceeds the 30 MPH speed limit and would therefore be faced with the choice between risking the traffic on the road, or riding on a relatively narrow pavement, neither of which provide a safe solution.

The only occasional traffic problem occurs when an HGV driver turns into Bysing Wood Road from the Western Link Road and subsequently has to make a U turn due to the width restrictions between Dark Hill and West Street. The only other time there is an increase in traffic is when the A2 is impassable through Faversham.

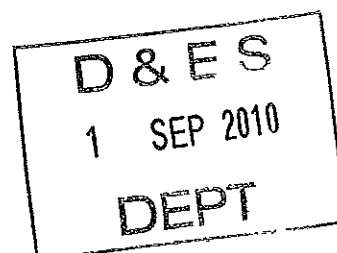
If it is the Councils intention to widen Bysing Wood Road we are unable to see the benefits this would achieve except to encourage further speeding on what is a 30 MPH zone, and we feel that the money would be better spent on repairing the pot holes in Everhard Way and Wells Way rather than the costly scheme suggested.

Safety is paramount and removal of the cycle lane would be detrimental to the safety of cyclists.

Yours faithfully



Mr & Mrs R A Padgett



Item 10

Dear Sirs

We would like to add our support for the removal of the cycle path in Bysing Wood Road.

It is very rarely used

It is an eyesore

It causes congestion from Wildish Road to the Western Link, because of the cars parked on the side of the road.

Calming the traffic will only be achieved by the use of speed signs such as that sometimes used near the entrance to Cobham Avenue. That should become permanent.

John and Diane Griffin
Bysing Wood Road
Faversham

For the members of the Swale Joint Transportation Board:

Re item 10 of the agenda, Bysing Wood Road cycle path.

As one of the two town councillors for Davington Ward, I have been aware of the depth of feeling amongst residents regarding the overall value of this cycle lane since being elected. Cllr. Jane Hawkins, with support from concerned councillors and residents, has done a great job in garnering evidence of public opinion on the matter.

I note that part of the justification for the existence of the cycle lane is "to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport, to reduce reliance on the motor car."

I would suggest that so far as Faversham residents are concerned, this noble intention has failed completely.

In the 12 years I lived in Faversham, I have never seen more than a few people using the cycle lane; and absolutely no sign of the eager hordes of "converts to pedal power" that might have been envisaged back in 1996.

Personally I believe many more people cycled **before there were any dedicated cycle lanes**. It is the changes in social mobility which has made car ownership almost mandatory. **(I believe this has also been encouraged by successive governments over the years.)**

The real value of cycle lanes is in areas of heavy urban traffic, where they afford cyclists a degree of unimpeded progress and protection.

I am all for cycling, and for the encouragement of tourism in our historic town. That this cycle lane stirs up so much strong feeling amongst the residents of Bysing Wood Road and Priory Road is an indication that the original idea, though laudable in its intention, was wrong.

As regards danger, this cycle lane does cause problems, particularly along Priory Road; where conscientious motorists have to exercise great care along its sharp bends because the cycle lane inclines them towards the middle of the road, and increases the danger of a collision with oncoming traffic.

There is indeed genuine concern about traffic speed increasing along Bysing Wood Road if the lane were removed. However, all over Faversham where speed restrictions are clearly signed, they are regularly flouted. This is not to say that we condone breaking the law, but the reality is there are not enough police personnel available to regularly patrol the town's roads and help enforce the laws.

Hence we have problems with "joy riders" along the Western Link and even through the town centre. Three councillors once witnessed a car speed along Market Street and shoot **through the arch between the Nat West Bank and the shoe shop!** And that despite a camera mounted above the bank premises.

Bysing Wood Road is a major cross town route, along with the A2 and Oare Rd/Priory Row. Parking is becoming an increasing problem in all areas of Faversham, and I think the residents affected by this cycle lane are right to question the value of a cycle lane which is so little used, but takes up valuable space on an important carriage way to the heart of the town.

Regards,
Cllr John Winlow
Davington Ward.

