

PETITION TO REDESIGN THE JUNCTION OF SHORTLANDS AND HAROLD ROAD, SITTINGBOURNE

I write in response to the petition that was passed to Kent County Council via the Joint Transportation Board. I am sorry to hear of residents' concerns about road safety at this junction.

In accordance with our 'Petition Service' as your letter contains less than 1,000 signatures I have investigated & reviewed your concerns in my role as the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transportation & Waste.

A detail review and investigation has been undertaken on the layout and design of this junction. It would not be possible to prevent or even discourage car drivers from making the banned manoeuvre without preventing the passage of larger vehicles, such as refuse vehicles and emergency response vehicles, through the junction. In order to discourage drivers, most of whom will be doing so intentionally rather than by accident, would require more substantial changes to the road layout in this area and would inconvenience many residents themselves.

We receive many requests to make roads safer and as such all requests are reviewed and prioritised by using an evidence-based approach to determine if there is a pattern of incidents that could be eased by improvements to the road. We have looked at the crash record over the last three years and we have not been able to find a pattern of incidents that demonstrates this site could benefit from our intervention. To date, we have collision data to the end of June 2019 so some of those collisions that you have mentioned may not have been reported to us yet and still may be under investigation by Kent Police. Currently, it is therefore very difficult to prioritise this location against a number of sites across the county where a pattern of incidents is occurring, and our intervention could help reduce crashes. For your reference, the data we consider can be viewed for free on Crash Map at www.crashmap.co.uk.

I would like to reassure you that Kent County Council (KCC) takes seriously all concerns about road traffic dangers and as such we will continue to monitor this site. We are continually assessing the risks and casualty records of sites across the County, liaising with Parish Councils, elected Members and the Police to help prioritise our future programme of improvements.

If you believe that drivers are driving at excess speed and without due care, then this is a matter for the Police using their existing powers. Such concerns can be reported to them on their non-emergency number 101.

Thank you for taking the time to raise a petition and bringing your concerns to my attention. I really value a community voice to flag up local concerns based on your knowledge and experience of the roads and footways in your area.

I hope that my review has clarified our position on this matter. If however, you feel we have not dealt with your petition properly, please do contact me again