

Response from Councillor Ian McLennan, Salisbury District Council

Tom

Thanks for the conversation today, clearing up the details and my understanding of the outcome.

My thoughts, which are also directed to the Parish Councillors for information, are below:

The report (apart from twice using the word suburb on page one!) is balanced and allows the alternatives to be evaluated.

When I started the exercise in one of my newsletters, some years ago, it was as part of the process to eliminate school traffic from Laverstock and generally slow the traffic because 2000 school children and all the residents are at risk through speeding traffic or irate school parents and general traffic mounting kerbs as though they don't exist. The measures in the report facilitate major elements of this scheme and the other elements virtually all become available in the near future. I think I am getting excited!

Back to this scheme.

The cycleway originally devised as 'best practice and the only one possible' turns out not to be the best practice. At the time, the real loss was the green verges and the consequent 'urbanisation' of the street scene. The PC (and me) accepted this as an on balance gain.

At the time of the original walk, the road had been resurfaced and the white lines had not been done. We agreed that they could be left 'undone' to see what happened. Unfortunately, Graham Axtell misread my email and thought I was chasing the lines. They were done the very next morning!

The scheme now put forward as best practice is a simple white line with bicycle signs painted at intervals and a vertical signing at each end. The centre white line would be removed. Junctions are to have a green strip so that the cycleway is clearly visible.

The speed of the road would be reduced to 20mph and the whole scheme would be deemed a 'test' for Wiltshire, as this would be unique in the County although favourably implemented in Martlesham, Suffolk. Cars would be expected to drive down the centre lane (at least 3m width) and when confronted by a vehicle coming from the opposite direction, would be able to enter the cycle area...if there is no cyclist or wait, if there is a cyclist. The same would be the case for the other vehicle. This is actually similar to what happens at present but which can be hazardous for the cyclists as motorists think their car is thinner than it is! The clearly defined lines, would make the decision a wiser one!

The question I asked about parking is that residents and their visitors can still park as normal. However, hopefully, they would try and contain themselves in their own drive and not on the pavement (under any circumstances) or road, where practical.

The route takes cyclists along Manor Farm Road and up Milford Hollow, as before. No problem. The people of Laverstock would still very much like a paint job up Laverstock Road to join Milford Hill by Godolphin School. This is not covered in the report but was addressed during the original walk. That would be a marvellous achievement too.

Ever since I have been a councillor and even before, I was asked about the route to the city and also speed is a big issue at both ends of the village.

My view – I fully support this solution and will do everything I can to extend its virtues to the local residents and the PC.

If the public consultation meets with overwhelming approval, this scheme could be in place very swiftly indeed. At worst, it would go to the Joint Transportation Committee in February, to evaluate and decide if the scheme can go ahead (dependant on the public view)

The other issues that arise out of this:

The crossing point, due to be provided at the bus pull in at the Whitebridge Road/Mayfair/Greenwood and Riverside Road stop will be completed before the end of the financial year. This will be greatly appreciated by everyone.

Extending the area of the scheme

The central element of Laverstock is already blessed with a cycleway and link to Bishopdown. However, the shared cycleway stops at the end of St Joseph's school. Thereafter, the traffic calming ends at Bishops Mead with a small roundabout. Many locals complain that the traffic speeds considerably thereafter, on its way to London Road. (Just like the Laverstock Road end already being sorted). The Parish Council have an agenda item re possibly purchasing a speed sign to flash at these motorists, they are so desperate to sort the problem. My suggestion is that the same cycleway process can be extended to this section of the road. In other words **the entire length of the road though Laverstock** Church Road/Riverside Road and Laverstock Road (over the border!) be a cycleway with the advisory white lines, where a proper cycleway does not exist and the speed for the entire road be 20mph. White lines would be removed from the road centre at the cycle lined areas.

The Parish Councillors need to consider this, however, this is my opinion!

London Road Crossing

The plan to eliminate the school traffic from Laverstock has been dependant on ease of access to the Park & Ride site on London Road – where SDC has already given permission for a drop off/pick up arrangement. You tell me that the Toucan Crossing, achieved through the planning gains, will be provided in March (may finish in April) and that design is currently underway. This will facilitate a cycleway from P&R to Laverstock, inc the school campus, using the Laverstock-Bishopdown Footpath & Cycleway.

Given the request above for Church Road to London Road, on a walk a couple of weeks ago, it was practical to walk along London Road to The junction with Church Road and then onwards along Church Road. I noticed a cycle sign on the narrow footpath just past the railway bridge. If this is considered as a cycle route, then this would be a nearer/alternative route to the schools and village.

I ask that a crossing point is considered near the roundabout on London Road by the Church Road/A338 junction.

A complete Network

You are no doubt aware of the massive outcome of this network. I will document it nonetheless!

The cycle route would enable a cyclist to use the Laverstock network and join Green Lane at Hampton Park and ride all the way, through Ford to Old Sarum in the North of the Parish. Given that they are getting bikes as part of the development, they can put them to good use! Laverstock would be accessible from both ends by cycle with crossings in place as necessary. The existing network enables a cyclist to ride along Duck lane bridleway all the way to Petersfinger. When Sustrans complete the Toucan crossing on the A36, the route would link to the national network link Alderbury – Wilton. You can even cycle to Tesco! The entire Parish would be linked for walks and bikes.

For me the final piece of the Jigsaw is to eliminate the school traffic via the drop off, which could be both London Road and Petersfinger P&R's, as both would be linked.

From the end of the financial year, all this could be in place! I have also copied this email to the Heads of the schools, as we have had conversations before about the drop offs. I do believe we are on the edge of success! The schools would need to be involved and engaged by WCC re a new Green Travel Plan. They could do with some funding to aid the bike take up.

WCC also need to be involved in the 'How best to eliminate the school traffic from Laverstock' and I believe they have been considering this already. You are no doubt in constant contact with all these folk.

I do know that a lot of money will be saved by painting rather than construction. Perhaps that could be used to facilitate the entire project!

Many thanks Tom...100% support +

Cllr Ian McLennan
Laverstock & Clarendon Park Ward