

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

12 October 2021

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from
Councillors**

Question from Craig Kirk MBE – Station Hill Traffic Lights

**To Councillor Dr Mark McClelland Cabinet Member for Transport,
Waste, Street Scene, and Flooding**

Statement

The traffic lights at the bottom of Station Hill are causing long queues of traffic throughout many parts of the day. Many are questioning why they have been put in, as the previous roundabout seemed ideal to keep traffic moving, safely.

Question 1 – (21-328)

I would appreciate understanding the rationale behind the change, especially given there are numerous better cases across the local roads and highways that require investment in order to improve safety and prevent higher maintenance bills in the future. Are there safety statistics about that junction that the local public are unaware of?

Response:

The changes to traffic controls at Station Hill and Western Arches are identified as a key scheme in the Chippenham Transport Strategy. This document was developed alongside the Chippenham Site Allocation Plan 2017, and it identifies the transport infrastructure required to help deal with the current and anticipated increase in traffic associated with the housing and employment growth outlined in the Plan. Alterations to this junction were also specifically identified as a requirement in the Rawlings Green Transport Assessment.

There are no safety statistics the public should be unaware of. All personal injury statistics for collisions on the highway are accessible to members of the public.

Question 2 – (21-329)

Please consider that this initiative has perhaps been delivered by mistake when reflecting on how the current population feel. We, as tax payers need to be listened to and we also need to listen - so please advise why the public calling to remove the lights and reinstate the roundabout is deemed wrong?

Response:

Monitoring of the junction's operation is ongoing and the authority's consultant Traffic Signal Engineers are regularly reviewing the situation to identify measures which mitigate against the delays being experienced. We have reopened Monkton Hill to motorised vehicles to alleviate some of the pressure on the Station Hill junction and all options remain on the table if the measures we have taken so far are unsuccessful in reducing congestion.

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Question from Mary Parsons – Station Hill Traffic Lights

To Councillor Dr Mark McClelland Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene, and Flooding

Statement:

Picture for context. Bizarrely, patrons of the gym and fast food outlets and most often delivery drivers from the outlets line the T junction as though reasonable parking spaces with no apparent sanctions.



Question 1 – (21-330)

Please ask of the Wiltshire Council cabinet meeting what is being done to address dangerous parking violations at the now-traffic-light-controlled junction at the bottom of Station Hill in Chippenham?

Response:

The Council's Parking Enforcement officers are patrolling this area as part of their routine patrols and have prioritised this area during busier times of the day as resources allow. Vehicles which contravene the various restrictions will be issued with Penalty Charge Notices.

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Question from J Reed - Station Road Traffic Lights Chippenham

**To Councillor Dr Mark McClelland Cabinet Member for Transport,
Waste, Street Scene, and Flooding**

Question 1 – (21-331)

Why do I sit at a red light early Saturday and Sunday coming down from Monkton Park, and wait when there is no traffic anywhere else around.

Response:

The traffic signals controlling both the junctions of New Road and Station Hill, and New Road Marshfield Road are interlinked and synchronised. Both junctions operate a demand system to recognise waiting vehicles and reduce wait times, however, to ensure the linkages are retained, both junctions must operate their full phasing sequentially. During periods of very low demand, this may appear to motorists that no vehicles are present elsewhere in the junction and been held unnecessarily.

Question 2 – (21-332)

Why when coming up to the lights to turn right up station hill we have to wait with no traffic moving for traffic to come from under the arches. Ridiculous situation when traffic is queued back to the bridge centre roundabout.

Response:

Traffic approaching the junction from the town bridge with the intention of turning right is mixed with traffic that intends to continue towards Marshfield Road. Keeping this phase of the junction separate to that which allows traffic approaching from the northern side of the arch is necessary to prevent conflict of turning movements at the Station Hill junction, and to ensure that the carriageway under the arch is kept clear of approaching vehicles.

Question 3 – (21-333)

Why am I dodging more pedestrians crossing at the bottom of station hill than I ever did when there was a roundabout. They don't always cross on their lights.

Response:

The expectation for all road users, be they Motorist, Cyclist or Pedestrians is that they follow the rules and guidance provided in the Highway Code and utilise facilities in the correct manner.

Question 4 – (21-334)

Please let me know what air pollution monitoring on station hill you have carried out since the lights went in and how that compares with air pollution in the same area with the roundabout. Is the monitoring like for like, ie not during rush hour for one, school holidays for the other. If you haven't done any monitoring, why not.

Response:

The Council routinely monitor air quality on Station Hill. It is too soon to compare the site against the previous layout as any data collected requires ratification on a yearly basis against real time monitoring stations.

The council continues to monitor the location and will assess any impact the traffic signals may have at the end of the year.

Question 5 – (21-335)

Why do you consistently feel the need to ignore the wishes of the residents around this matter

Response:

The changes to traffic controls at Station Hill and Western Arches are identified as a key scheme in the Chippenham Transport Strategy. This document was developed alongside the Chippenham Site Allocation Plan 2017 and has previously been consulted upon with local residents and stakeholders.

The Cabinet Member for Transport and the Director of Highways attended an online public meeting on this matter in August hosted by Michelle Donelan MP, fielding questions from local residents who raised their concerns.

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**Statement from Duncan Maclean - Station Road Traffic Lights -
Chippenham**

**Councillor Dr Mark McClelland Cabinet Member for Transport,
Waste, Street Scene, and Flooding**

Statement:

I am writing regarding the ongoing problems we are experiencing here in Chippenham with the traffic lights at the bottom of Station Hill. I am a vehicle user, a cyclist and a pedestrian, and so can speak from all sides of the demographic. I also live in the Monkton Park area, and therefore i have no alternative other than to use the road junction in question; I have lived here for the last 11 years.

I have not spoken out until now as I wanted to allow sufficient time for teething problems to be resolved. However, the problems are ongoing and so here are my thoughts; I'd appreciate it if they are given some consideration. I understand from reading previous statements made by the council in relation to the traffic lights, that one of the main reasons for their installation was to improve the safety of cyclists and pedestrians. From my experience, this is not the case. The fact that the lights have four phases including the pedestrian phase makes for a very long wait for all concerned. I daily witness pedestrians running across the road in face of oncoming traffic, and have witnessed many near misses. I also witness, on a daily basis, cyclists who ride straight through the red lights and put themselves and others at risk. I appreciate these things happen everywhere, but it is more common here due to the incredibly long time everybody has to wait. Therefore I believe this has actually made the junction more dangerous overall to those it was meant to aid. These are all "first world problems" yes, but this is the world we live in. A statement was made previously by the council that efforts were being made to educate pedestrians regarding dashing out in the road. Quite frankly this is nonsense and i have not seen any such efforts. The removal of the central island at the bottom of the hill means people crossing there, whether they are doing so safely or not, have much further to go before reaching the safety of the kerb.

The phasing of the lights has been changed multiple times, and i thank the council for trying to improve the situation. But the traffic situation has been made so much worse than before the lights were installed. Taking into account that not everybody has returned to their place of work yet following the pandemic, the traffic situation can only get worse. I know I do not only speak for myself when I say the whole situation has become extremely miserable for the residents of Monkton Park, where we feel trapped. The recent reopening of Monkton Hill has had a negligible effect on

the queues leaving the estate and of course does not help when returning as it is one way. The previous road layout with a roundabout caused many less problems than we are experiencing now.

A friend from out of town visited recently and stated to me "what's happened to Chippenham!? The traffic is a nightmare. What a mess!". This is a friend from a London borough. That says a lot.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this, and I hope a solution can be found soonest.

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**Question from Mel Boyle – Future Chippenham & Station Road
Traffic Lights**

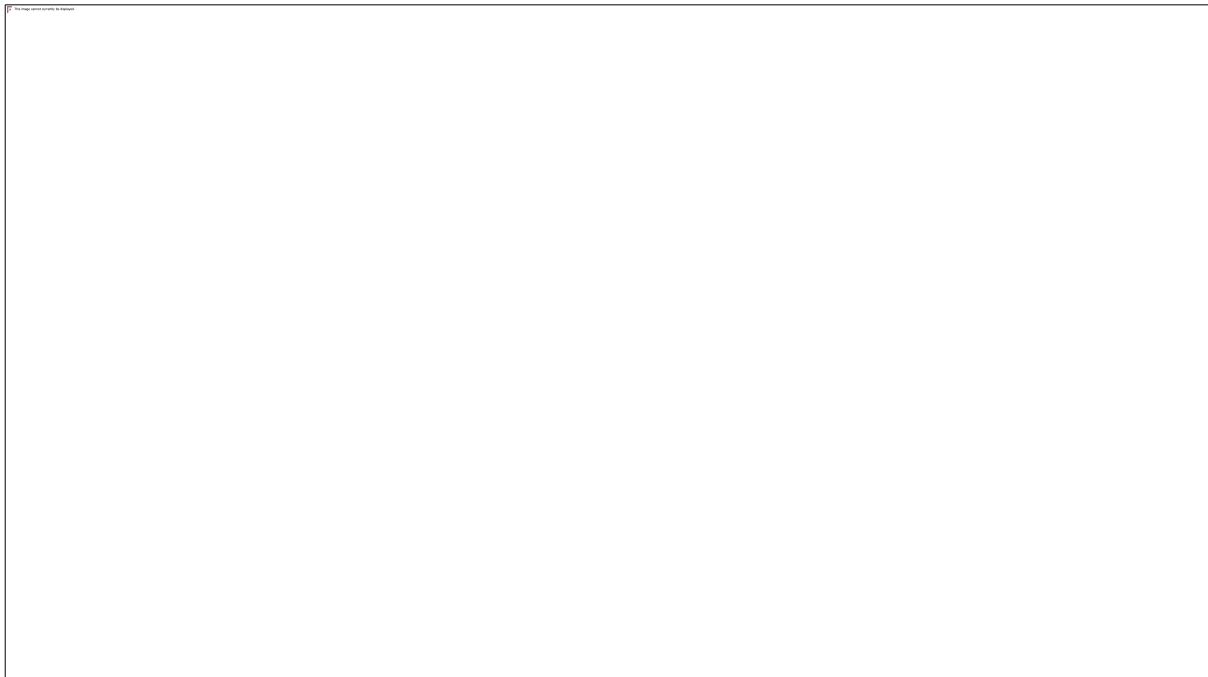
**To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for
MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing**

**Councillor Dr Mark McClelland Cabinet Member for Transport,
Waste, Street Scene, and Flooding**

Statement

The response to my question on 14 September was the below, but on checking the website this information is not available, see screenshot below.

Air quality measurements are taken by diffusion tube monitoring adjacent to Dorothy House. Results are available on the Air Quality website at www.wiltshireairquality.org.uk



Question 1 (21-336)

Following various meetings and requests there is still an issue with the Station Hill Traffic Lights causing congestion. Please can you change them to pedestrian crossings only and paint back a roundabout? We have been told the traffic lights are part of Future Chippenham, on the Future Chippenham Q&A the below is stated which is misleading as we already see added congestion. How can having links to Pewsham Way not increase traffic on already busy roads, isn't this information inaccurate and should be updated? Please can the comments from the July Cabinet meeting be added that it is not a bypass to the Q&As? When we asked these questions at the webinars we were told it was easing congestion for future households not existing households, is this correct and can it be made clear in the below on the Q&As? In any traffic modelling please ensure supermarket and online shopping vehicles are included along with dustbin lorries, care workers, essential journeys and equality for those unable to walk, cycle or use buses?

Will the planned new road increase congestion?

No, the transport modelling used to support the HIF bid and additional modelling currently being carried out has identified improvements in congestion to existing road traffic.

Response:

The traffic lights are not part of the Future Chippenham programme. The revised road route agreed by cabinet on 21/7/21 will be supported by comprehensive traffic modelling and this will take account of future demand and impacts on existing traffic in and around Chippenham

Monitoring of the junction's operation is ongoing and the authority's consultant Traffic Signal Engineers are regularly reviewing the situation to identify measures which mitigate against the delays being experienced. We have reopened Monkton Hill to motorised vehicles to alleviate some of the pressure on the Station Hill junction and all options remain on the table if the measures we have taken so far are unsuccessful in reducing congestion.

Question 2 (21-337)

My second question is how can you say there will be affordable housing when under the current system numbers are reduced due to developer profits, with rising building material costs doesn't this mean it is even more likely that as we have seen with every other development the affordable housing numbers will be tiny, if any? Please can these comments be added to the answer, depending on developer profits?

Will there be a mix of affordable houses?

Yes, there will. The scheme will comply with affordable housing policy.

Response:

An advantage of an infrastructure led master planned scheme is that all planning obligations including affordable housing are built into viability assessments from the outset. The viability assessments that have been undertaken at present are based on a 40% affordable housing obligation split between First Homes, affordable rent and shared ownership so that development is shown to be policy compliant. The sizes and type of affordable housing will be determined based on the need at the time.

Statement:

Trust is limited in Wiltshire Council after you added 5,000 houses onto Government figures and said if they didn't build them the Government would which was inaccurate, they wouldn't as you added 5,000 on. The County Farms are so important in a climate emergency and you cannot create biodiversity net gain for the habitat which the farmland provides, once destroyed it is lost forever.

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Question from Dr Jimmy Walker – Salisbury Central Area Framework

To Councillor Dr Mark McClelland Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene, and Flooding

Statement:

The People Friendly Salisbury scheme was suspended indefinitely following a meeting with the then leader of Salisbury City Council on 19/11/2020. A letter from Cllr Whitehead dated 20/11/2020 commented that “Early evidence proves that the scheme is having a positive impact with equal number of shoppers visiting the centre whilst the traffic is halved. As with other such schemes elsewhere in the UK, more time would have been required to see all the economic, social and environmental benefits. The scheme is also in line with latest national policies for active travel, decarbonisation, healthier living and reduced obesity.”

Salisbury City Council subsequently voted in an Extraordinary Full Council meeting on 14/12/2020 to support the introduction in 2021 of People Friendly Streets in accordance with the Central Area Framework report recommendations.

The Salisbury Central Area Framework (CAF) was recognised by Wiltshire Council at its Strategic Planning Meeting on 26/8/2020 as an evidence-based document to inform the Local Plan Review, emerging Salisbury Neighbourhood Plan and future planning guidance.

Creating people friendly streets was identified as the first of the CAF’s five themes “To make the central area a better place for people to move around safely, comfortably and in a more pleasant environment with reduced noise and air pollution and reduced greenhouse gas emissions; prioritising cycling, walking and public transport.”

Question 1 – (21-338)

Can you confirm that the recommendations of the Salisbury Central Area Framework continue to be supported by Wiltshire Council?

Response:

The Central Area Framework (CAF) was endorsed by Wiltshire Council's Strategic Planning Committee as a material planning consideration and is therefore a document that Members must have regard to in determining planning applications alongside other material considerations. The CAF is an overarching strategic document and there are a wide variety of ways in which it is possible to implement its principles.

Question 2 – (21-339)

Please confirm when there will be further investigations and consultations into how traffic can be reduced in central Salisbury to improve the environment and encourage active travel in accordance with the CAF?

Response:

This will be an issue for Cabinet to consider at a future date.

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Late Question from Fiona Gout – Station Hill Traffic Lights

To Councillor Dr Mark McClelland Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene, and Flooding

Question 1 (21-340)

Please can raise continued concerns about the traffic lights at the bottom of Station Hill in Chippenham. As a resident of Monkton Park, this is a plea to re-instate the roundabout system. Every single time I drive out of and into Monkton Park I get stuck at these lights. Usually for at least 2 light change rounds, and sometimes even 3 times. I notice that people then drive faster and more dangerously after getting frustrated at being in these lights, and I have found myself go from being someone who loves where I live to someone that has started to moan about it. The left turn down towards the police station only helps if you are turning left, so it is not a big improvement. The old roundabout worked so well. It was smooth and there are lots of pedestrian crossings already in case to aid pedestrians.

It takes courage to admit and rectify when you've done something wrong, and whilst I appreciate installing the lights was an expensive error, I do think it about time we admitted error and went back to the old roundabout system.

Response:

Monitoring of the junction's operation is ongoing and the authority's consultant Traffic Signal Engineers are regularly reviewing the situation to identify measures which mitigate against the delays being experienced. We have reopened Monkton Hill to motorised vehicles to alleviate some of the pressure on the Station Hill junction and all options remain on the table if the measures we have taken so far are unsuccessful in reducing congestion.