

They don't like bypass plan

Christchurch Herald May 10, 1968

Many objections were raised at a Ministry of Transport public inquiry at Christchurch Town Hall into Christchurch Town Council's proposal to close the intersection on the central reservation at the Burton-road junction with the town's by-pass.

The council is asking the Minister to confirm an order to close the intersection in the interests of safety.

Among the objectors were the Hants and Dorset and Wilts and Dorset bus companies, Ringwood Rural Council, Christchurch East Parish Council, Burton and Winkton Residents' Association, and several residents in the Burton and Bransgore areas.

The closure is part of a safety scheme which includes a £10,000 pedestrian footbridge to span the by-pass at the Burton-road junction—to be erected shortly—and in conjunction with the already constructed roundabout at Stony-lane.

HIGHER FARES

If the order is confirmed, vehicles wanting to cross the by-pass at the junction will have to drive down the dual carriageway and turn round at either the Stony-lane roundabout or the one at Somerford.

The bus companies say this will upset schedules and could lead to higher fares.

Ald. W. E. Morgan, chairman of the town council's highways committee, told the inquiry that although the closure would clearly inconvenience people, especially those living near Burton, there was no alternative.

Several other schemes had been put forward for making the by-pass and its crossings safe such as traffic lights and a speed limit, but these had been rejected by the Minister

His committee had some hesitation in making the order from the point of view of pedestrian safety as they thought the elimination of crossing traffic at the junction might encourage motorists to travel past this point faster than they now did.

The only safe method for pedestrians was by footbridge, and this would be built soon.

MAXIMUM SAFETY

Mr. A. N. Crowther, assistant county surveyor, said to achieve maximum safety and to remove the hazard of 3,245 vehicles a day attempting to find gaps in the almost continuous by-pass traffic it was considered essential to close the gaps in the central reservation and divert traffic to the Stony Lane and Somerford roundabouts.

Mr. F. R. C. Hart, Christchurch deputy borough surveyor, said up to December 1966 there had been 84 accidents, including eight fatalities and 17 serious injuries, at the crossing since the by-pass was opened in 1959.

Capt. J. E. N. Coope, of Ringwood RDC, said the RDC had taken up the question of traffic lights at the junction, but had been told the Minister would not contemplate lights or a speed limit.

Mrs. M. B. McLeish, a Bransgore member on Christchurch East Parish Council, said the closure would involve a long detour for Bransgore people. It would cut off the direct route from Salisbury via Ringwood to Mundeford.

The Inspector conducting the inquiry was Mr. J. R. Wallis. The Minister's decision will be made known later.

Bridge job will close by-pass

Christchurch Herald May 24, 1968

Christchurch by-pass will be closed to traffic from 6 am until 12 noon on Sunday for the erection of, a footbridge at the Burton-road junction.

The preparatory works have already been carried out for the town's £10,500 prefabricated bridge which is being paid for by Hampshire, Christchurch and Ringwood councils.

The Ministry of Transport refused to take a share because it believes it will be little used.

Pedestrians mostly using the crossing are schoolchildren from the Burton area who attend the Somerford Schools. At present there are crossing patrols.

Pedestrians can by-pass the Burton-rd. Bridge

Christchurch Herald May 31, 1968

Although the new Burton-road footbridge was due to come into use later this week, pedestrians can still cross Christchurch by-pass in the path of fast-moving traffic. The bridge approaches will have safety barrier around them under the present scheme, but there is no plan for a barrier on the central reservation to make people use the bridge.

A central barrier has been considered, said a Hampshire county council spokesman this week, but it has been left until the Minister of Transport has made his decision on whether to close the intersection or not.

A public inquiry was held in Christchurch recently into objections to the closure.

The prefabricated bridge was placed in position in just five hours on Sunday morning. The by-pass was closed and traffic diverted through the town between 6 am and 12 noon.

The £10,500 bill is being shared by Hampshire, Christchurch and Ringwood councils. The crossing is mainly used by Burton children going to Somerford schools, and a school crossing patrol has been operating.

BRIDGE CAUSES WORRY

Christchurch Herald June 28, 1968

That new Burton-road footbridge over Christchurch by-pass is already causing trouble—from youngsters dropping stones on to cars and to mothers pushing prams.

Police have warned children at Somerford schools of the dangers following reports of stone-dropping.

And complaints were made at Christchurch Council Tenants' Association meeting on Monday that the steps made heavy work for women with prams.

Coun. Tom Staniforth said the council had been assured that it was the kind of bridge that prams and bicycles could cross.

But opinions differed, one woman saying that it was easy to cross with light folding prams, and the chairman, Mr. J. Bolt, said the committee would look into it.

A petition handed into the meeting had been signed by residents living near the entrance to the Somerford Estate opposite Henley's Garage and alleged that the road was dangerous.

VISION OBSCURED

The petition drew the council's attention to the fact that shrubs obscured the vision of motorists coming from either direction.

Mr. Bolt said an accident had recently occurred at the spot. The matter would be considered by the committee.

Highcliffe Citizens' Association's refusal to admit the association to the joint committee of residents' organisations in Christchurch led one member to ask, "Is it snobbery?"

Another member declared, "In Highcliffe they are 'toffee-nosed'."

To which Mr. Bolt replied: "I am under that impression myself. There is still a feeling that we are subsidised in our housing, and I feel sure there are a lot of private residents who don't think we pay rates.

"Their objection to us joining was that we would only be speaking for a small sector of the community. Be that as it may, they are surely in the same position."

Mr. Bolt wondered why the association did not get letters from the Town Clerk like the other residents' associations, asking their opinions on various matters.

Bridge needs no height notice

Christchurch Herald November 1, 1968

A request is being made to Christchurch Town Council's highways committee to consider erecting a sign along the town's by-pass warning of the height of the newly built pedestrian footbridge at the Burton-road junction.

Asking for the sign is the executive committee of Christchurch Chamber of Trade, who feel that such a warning might avoid a serious accident should an exceptionally large vehicle go along the by-pass.



KENT ACCIDENT

The executive, at its meeting on Monday, was quoted an accident somewhere in Kent where a large vehicle was reported to have crashed into a footbridge while pedestrians were crossing.

Borough surveyor Mr. E. B. Wise said the by-pass footbridge was 16ft. high, which was the standard height. It was outside the regulations governing low bridges for which warning signs had to be erected.