

Badgeworth Parish Council

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Badgeworth Lane – The need for Traffic Management Improvements

This paper details the concerns of Badgeworth Parish Council regarding the present and future use of Badgeworth Lane and, as such, has been circulated to key elected members and officers at County and District Council levels (Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury) responsible for housing and business/commercial developments and highway improvements.

The paper seeks to justify the consideration and approval of funding, principally through developer contributions (Section 106 and CIL agreements), for traffic management improvements to Badgeworth Lane.

Description of the route of Badgeworth Lane and the current speed limits.

Badgeworth Lane runs from its junction with the A46 on the southern side of Shurdington, past Shurdington School and out through a residential area under a 30mph limit (apart from a 20mph zone controlled by flashing lights outside the school). As the Lane exits the Shurdington residential area, the speed limit increases to 50mph, passing more residential houses and the entrance to a farm with industrial units. Badgeworth Lane then winds through a number of blind bends before reaching the outskirts of Badgeworth, where the speed limit reduces to 40mph. Passing through Badgeworth the Lane crosses the junction with Cold Pool Lane and Church lane and then exits the residential area meeting the junction with Brookfield Road, a major route in and out of Churchdown. Immediately past this junction the speed limit increases to 50mph as Badgeworth Lane ends and becomes Badgeworth Road.

It is worth noting that a significant volume of traffic approaching the Badgeworth cross roads travels via Cold Pool Lane to Up Hatherley and Cheltenham which, as a narrow winding lane, presents further issues.

Why are we concerned?

Badgeworth Lane has seen a steady increase in traffic over the past decade and the Parish Council has become increasingly concerned about both the volume of traffic and the

suitability of the current speed limits along this stretch of highway. Residents who live along the length of Badgeworth Lane have raised serious concerns about their own personal safety when using the Lane or simply attempting to cross the road. They have also expressed anxieties about the safety of other users including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

Badgeworth Lane has become a principal link for vehicles travelling along the A46 who wish to cut across to the west of Cheltenham feeding into the Arle Court Roundabout/Golden Valley/M5 junctions. It is relevant to note that the only sign to the Gloucestershire Airport along the A46 is the one located at the junction with Badgeworth Lane.

The increasing volume of traffic occurs across a wide range of times, but it is at its peak during the morning and evening commutes. The risks to pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders increases over the weekend when the road is also used for leisure purposes. Also, there is a particular issue with the combination of traffic volumes and parked cars outside Shurdington Primary School at the times of pupils arriving and departing.

The Parish Council has engaged with County Highways on a number of occasions over the last 3 years and traffic surveys have been conducted. The Highways department have confirmed an increase in traffic volumes for both motor vehicles and cyclists but have explained that there is no funding available to address the traffic management issues. Additionally, the Police mobile speed cameras have been regularly deployed in the 30mph zone as traffic leaves Shurdington. The Police data has shown that on average, over multiple occasions, they detected a vehicle speeding every 2 minutes.

The Parish Council is extremely concerned that the situation will get worse as more developments take place in the areas at either end of Badgeworth Lane. At present we are aware of:

- a significant increase in residential housing (1500 homes) to the north of Brockworth (currently under development),
- a TBC local plan for housing development at the Shurdington end of Badgeworth lane for 50 homes
- growth in Shurdington Primary School population with resultant major traffic congestion and parking problems
- a proposed £1.9m development of a new business Park at the Gloucestershire Airport with a potential 1750 jobs
- the further development of the BMW/Mini site on Grovefield Way

- the West Cheltenham Cyber Central and garden community. A £400m development with 3000 homes. A cabinet member for Cheltenham Borough Council stated that this development would be an “economic boost felt across the whole town and beyond”.

The combination of the above will be compounded by the existing high volumes of traffic using the A46 in and out of Cheltenham which frequently leads to slow moving or static traffic through Shurdington. A direct consequence of this is that road users seek to find alternative routes, and in this case Badgeworth Lane becomes the easiest option and the default “Southern Ring Road” around Cheltenham

Next Steps

Badgeworth Parish Council believes that it has become critical that a plan be developed that recognises the increasing demands on Badgeworth Lane and examines the strategies that can potentially reduce the risk to road users and residents

Without improvements to the Lane, residents and commuters face deteriorating safety levels which put lives at risk.

The Parish Council believes that Badgeworth Lane will need more than simple cosmetic changes to improve safety. It may require a combination of:

- consideration of weight restrictions,
- improvements to the junction with the A46,
- speeding alert signals,
- improvements to reduce some of the difficult/ blind bends in the Lane
- changes to the various speed limits
- use of gateways to emphasise that drivers are entering a built-up area
- a footpath/cycle way to protect pedestrians /cyclists

It is understood that some of these changes are expensive and it seems appropriate that developers should be asked to make contributions to introduce improvements - it may not be immediately obvious that some of the developments described above have a direct impact on Badgeworth Lane but geographical distances do not remove the fact that

the Lane will continue to be increasingly used by commuters travelling to from these residential developments and new industrial/commercial enterprises.

Badgeworth Parish Council is very keen to engage with all the relevant local authorities and to open discussion on this important topic. We feel it is important that the local authorities understand the issues affecting our Parish and can incorporate them into the local traffic planning and funding processes.