

Paul Gadd County Councillor Update

Saffron Walden Town Council – Planning and Transport Committee

10/4/25

[*Note, items in italics are repeats from last month, still unresolved*]

1. Flooding and drainage issues:
  - a. Thaxted Rd – I believe that the main outstanding is for UDC to clear the drainage ditch, and I'm aware that UDC councillors are following up on this;
  - b. Thaxted Rd / Radwinter Rd junction – the gully at the junction is blocked again, and was flooded when there was heavy rain 2 weeks ago. ECC are arranging for it to be jetted again
2. LHP schemes. I've given an update in this paragraph, and in the next one retained the record of schemes as a place holder, although I don't think there has been any progress on any of them. In terms of the LHP generally:
  - a. As I reported previously, I have raised the poor performance of the LHPs with the ECC Place Services Scrutiny Committee and that finally came to the Scrutiny Committee on 20 March 2025. I had submitted in advance a list of general questions and a detailed paper, but Essex Highways flatly refused to answer any of the questions about the LHPs and their performance! I have complained to the Democratic Services function at ECC, and Essex Highways should be coming back in May 2025. I fear however that ultimately ECC have no interest in scrutiny, and that the Conservative majority will be happy to do nothing;
  - b. As part of that process, I prepared a fairly detailed paper setting out the progress, and lack of progress, on the schemes I had requested, and am attaching that fyi. It covers the whole of the Saffron Walden division, so goes further than just the Saffron Walden Town;
  - c. There was due to be another LHP meeting in April, but we have recently been told that all future LHP meetings across the county have been cancelled – the reason is as yet unknown
3. *Summary of LHP Schemes as at February 2025:*
  - a. *the TRO for the market square regularisation – Terry, Georgia and I met with ECC on 11/10/24, and then went back with follow up information, but have received nothing further from Essex Highway. Georgia chased on 15/11 and I have chased again on 2/12 – still no response. At the LHP meeting, there was a new note that officers (without any prior consultation with me) want to shelve the scheme so that it is paid for from unspecified s.106 contributions, which would presumably put it back yet further. I have asked for it to continue as requested;*
  - b. *On market square pedestrianisation – as for the TRO.*
  - c. *Street clutter – in theory this will still happen at the end of this financial year; design work is apparently under way!*
  - d. *On the other scheme validations, which have now been awaited since October 2021, particularly the pedestrian crossings, I had been told that after 3 years they had finally reached the top of the pile and should be looked at in December 2024. Instead, at the*

*last LHP meeting we had I was told by officers that they were now planning not to pursue the validation because the crossings didn't meet their criteria (even though we have known this for 2 years, and the previous officer had started preparing a derogation request). I will keep chasing;*

- e. *Ross Close measures – as you know, the request for a zebra crossing was refused. I therefore instead applied for some traffic calming / chicane measures (on 14/11/23), but still no progress. I hope that they will be dealt with with the other validations;*
  - f. *Borough Lane / Debden Rd junction – I have included it on the LHP request list, but no other progress;*
  - g. *Borough Lane – as you know, the LHP application for an island at the London Rd junction was rejected. Given the weight of pedestrian traffic crossing Borough Lane, particularly with the lack of pavement on the south side, I have asked the LHP to resurrect that scheme, but with the island further away from the junction, and would be grateful for your comments;*
  - h. *I have had various emails from residents of Beeches Close, which a number of the Committee have been copied in on, asking for a safe crossing for Newport Road.*
4. Highways generally:
- a. I've forwarded to Georgia notifications from Essex Highways of:
    - i. *“the intended closure of South Road, due to commence on 3rd June 2025 for 4 nights (20:00 - 05:00). The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes machine surfacing”;*
    - ii. *“the intended closure of West Road, due to commence on 18th June 2025 for 2 nights (19:00-05:00). The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes machine surfacing”;*
    - iii. *“the intended closure of Borough Lane, due to commence on 16th June 2025 for 2 nights (19:00 - 05:00). The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes machine surfacing.”*
5. ECC matters: nothing significant