

LRAG Interim News Update - 16 November 2023

Design, Traffic Management and Modelling Workshop

There were several disappointments about the workshop on 14th November. Firstly, that it should have, but hadn't, taken place before the start of the engagement period. As a policeman might state in a witness box, "from notes that I made at the time", LRAG, too, has notes made at the meeting on 26th July. A statement was made by Surrey CC that "detailed workshops on the design and implementation would take place at the end of August".

Secondly, of the invitees to this workshop, the following were absent: Guildford Borough Council, George Abbot School, Guildford High School, Surrey Climate Commission, Surrey Chamber of Commerce, Surrey Coalition of Disabled People, Stagecoach Bus company, Clock House Retirement Home, and Surrey Youth Parliament. There has never been any attendance from any of the emergency services, because SCC have steadfastly refused to enable any interaction. They have preferred to report their views second-hand, which of course cannot be corroborated.

All-in-all it seems that few now take an interest in the outcome, as if they have accepted, as a *fait accompli*, that the Scheme was inevitable. Present were an SCC councillor LRAG, GRA, BCA, BPRA (representing Kingpost businesses as well), and 2 from G-BUG.

If all of the foregoing was not sufficiently frustrating, the SCC team proceeded to perform a type of filibuster, using up more than half of the time allotted, by making an unnecessary set of presentations about the designs. Given the known pre-existing knowledge of those who were in attendance, this was a total waste of time. No new information was forthcoming.

Stakeholders had been asked to provide questions in advance, some of which had received written answers, but many had not and were on topics that needed discussion by all participants. For example:

- why was there, in the letter to residents, a statement that "the road will remain the same width as it is currently"?
- how does the required Road Safety Audit assess many of the questionable design options, (enforced because of the limited space available)?
- does the Scheme comprehensively create a more coherent, direct, safe and comfortable route for cyclists and pedestrians alike?

There was no time made for any contemplation of the daytime constraints necessary during construction, whilst protecting incomplete overnight work.

As with the guillotining of reviews of the survey questionnaire prior to publication (many stakeholders were totally dissatisfied with the content and positive bias inherent), this very short workshop was also ineffectual. Any subsequent suggestion that stakeholders had participated in such, and had been allowed to raise matters of concern and clarification, should be immediately dismissed – they have not.