

Session 12 - Transport & Infrastructure 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016 Traffic & Infrastructure.  
Responder Cheryl Taylor Maggio Q12.11 What is the likely first date by which any Leeds-Langley Bypass/Relief road could become operational and if a route (and funding) were agreed such that it could be included in the first Local Plan Review, could it realistically be implemented before the end of the Local Plan period?

Given the cost, £50m+ at **current** land prices, according to KCC, and the time involved to find an acceptable route for a Langley/Leeds Bypass/Relief Road, buy the land/settle legal matters regarding compulsory purchases, listed buildings issues etc., (much of the land is owned by Leeds Castle, who oppose routes through or adjacent to their land), it is doubtful that it will ever be completed.

Anyone who believes that a Langley Leeds bypass is going to solve Maidstone's traffic problems is mistaken; in fact, it could create **additional problems by attracting more traffic to our area**. Given a new road in an area without Highways constraint or (1.) **environmental protection**, where every field has been offered for development in the Borough's four Calls for Sites, the Local Plan housing number for Maidstone would rise to 30,000 homes (60,000 residents) as further building could not be restricted. With all the additional traffic this would generate, we would need another bypass/relief road to bypass the bypass within 10 years!

A new road through our area would trigger the development of all the sites put forward in the Borough's Call for Sites in Langley, Leeds and Otham, including the 5,000 Golding Homes scheme, which would soon be back on the table if the Highways constraint is removed. This is an issue which will determine the future quality of life for all Maidstone residents, not just Langley. Such irresponsible development bringing massive population growth would impact exponentially on the Borough's water supply, sewerage system, schools, hospitals and emergency not just roads. **Such essential services are already struggling to cope with the demands of the current population.**

The Parish Council is very concerned that a bypass route through the middle of Langley would act as a magnet for further development along its length, destroy the accessible countryside it seeks to preserve and engulf Langley Heath and adjoining areas of Otham, Leeds and Sutton Valance. It would join rural Langley to urban Maidstone, which we have opposed in our Parish Plan and in our Neighbourhood Plan and will continue to oppose.

According to KCC, any LLbypass/relief road would not fully mitigate traffic congestion on the Leeds Road or the A274 Sutton Road, as it would redirect even more traffic to our area and the infill development would create even more traffic. Most of the traffic comes from the south and west and would still use the Leeds Road at the Five Wents crossroads to reach the M20, rather than drive on through Langley to reach the any new road crossing the countryside north of Horseshoes Lane.

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Traffic that would be generated by the proposed large Sutton Road sites cannot be fully mitigated because of the severe traffic constraint at the Wheatsheaf Junction, short of a flyover, tunnel or monorail! It is the main route into town from the south, fed by several main roads not only the A274 Sutton Road. More sustainable locations along the **A20 towards Ashford, which has a relatively new and underused road system**, have been identified and sites have come forward for development, which should be considered. KCC has already indicated that a new exit onto the M20 at this point is feasible.

Langley already has two major roads running through it, the A274 Sutton Road and the Leeds Road, creating considerable traffic noise and air pollution for residents. Adding a third major road through the middle of our Parish would turn Langley Heath into a traffic island, bringing even more traffic noise and air pollution for residents and its precious fields, woods and orchards would be in-filled with housing. Without highways constraint and environmental protection, Langley and the surrounding rural area **would become a town within 10 years, without the benefit of town planning.**

The solution is to use the **severe traffic constraint to mitigate Maidstone's inflated housing number**, the largest for any Borough in Kent, apart from Medway, which is three times the size of Maidstone. The proposed additional sites on the Sutton Road, including H1 10 and Bicknor Farm, which will have the most impact, should be deleted from the Local Plan and no further building agreed in the area. Planning Consent has not yet been granted for H1 10 and there is evidence for a Judicial Review.

(i.)The Parish objects to the omission of any Landscape of Local Value notation from Langley Parish Council. The Parish Council wishes see an extension of the Len Valley Landscape Value Area to include Langley Fruit Plateau and areas of Leeds and Otham not already protected.