

# **Freshford Parish Council**

## **Rosemary Lane Traffic Concerns**

### **Introduction**

At the December meeting of Freshford PC, a deputation of residents from Rosemary Lane addressed the meeting in the Open Forum. They expressed the views that the forthcoming opening of Phase 1 of Freshford Mill would lead to significant increased traffic volumes in Rosemary Lane from the new occupants of Freshford Mill development seeking the most direct route to the A36.

I was asked by John Adler to write a report setting out some options to improve the situation.

### **Consultation**

As part of my investigations, I have consulted with the following:

Phil Affleck – on behalf of Rosemary Road residents. Neil Butters – Ward Councillor

Nick Stevens – previous Transport representative

Stefan Chiffers – BANES

Chris Griggs-Trevarthen – BANES Planning Officer

### **List of Options**

Here is my list of options of the way forward, which are not mutually exclusive:

- A Close the road at the bridge over the River Frome, in a manner that allow emergency vehicles access, via a key.
- B Make Rosemary Lane One-Way.
- C Physical or legal constraints at the exit of Freshford Mill.
- D Introduce a facility for the village for internet deliveries to be left at The Galleries, like an Amazon locker.
- E Monitoring of traffic flows at three points; a) top of Rosemary Lane; b) bottom of Rosemary Lane; c) at the entrance of Sharpstone.
- F There is anecdotal evidence that some residents of Westwood use Rosemary Lane as a short-cut from the A36.
- G Hold a village-wide consultative exercise
- H Do nothing.

## Evaluation of the Options

A Close the road at Dunkirk Mill Bridge. This is the option favoured by some of the residents of Rosemary Lane. There are several of concerns with this option:

- It would direct the traffic to Freshford Lane, some part of which are very narrow, and go past Freshford School.
- Closing a road requires a Traffic Road Order process (TRO) which costs £5,000 and would involve a formal consultative period, followed by Cabinet Officer decision (by Cllr Neil Butters).
- There would be concerns for access for emergency vehicles – police ambulance and fire. Their views would be considered as part of the TRO process.
- We could assist with the informal consultation, as a pre-requisite of the TRO process, via a consultation exercise (G Above).

B Introduce a One-Way restriction.

Introducing a one way system for part or all of Rosemary Lane is a possibility. It would be difficult to devise, impossible to police and encourage motorists to speed in the knowledge they would not meet oncoming traffic. My view is that this is an idea not worth pursuing, but I am happy to be guided by the PC.

C Physical or legal constraints at the exit of Freshford Mill. See attached SiteEntrance.pdf. BANES Planning has a new plan for the Mill exit road that seeks to revise the build out and bollard arrangement to make it less easy to swing right.

One option that may help would be to make the exit from Freshford Mill Right-Turn Only. BANES Planning Officer advises that this requires a TRO. This would not be policed but may deter some residents from deliberately flouting the law.

D Central Hub for On-Line Deliveries. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a lot of commercial vehicles using Rosemary Lane are on-line deliveries, some of which are likely to be generated by residents. One option would be for The Galleries to provide a central hub for all Freshford residents on-line deliveries. View of councillors are sought to this suggestion.

E Monitoring. The PC in January agreed to take this proposal forward. I have consulted with BANES & Neil Butters who agree it would make a lot of sense to have a period of monitoring the traffic up & down Rosemary Lane and through Sharpstone to the Tynning. The facts of the monitoring are as follows:

- It would tell us the split of the traffic is between residential and commercial
- How much of the residential traffic is stopping in the Lane (by the difference between the volumes at top & bottom).
- The monitoring would last for between 7 and 9 days. Any extension would incur further costs (to replace the batteries in the equipment).
- The lead time from a decision is 2-4 weeks.

The cost of 3 monitoring sites would be £510. (The PC previously approved two sites = £340). Cllr Neil Butters is willing to contribute £255 from his Ward fund. Please advise funding sources for the remaining amount. I can then organise via BANES for this to happen next month.

- F Westwood residents. I have contacted Westwood Parish Council asking for a meeting to discuss the possible use of Rosemary Lane as short-cut to the A36 by Westwood residents. I have suggested a joint communication exercise from the two PCs. This would be more a matter of gentle persuasion rather than sanction but probably worth investigating.
- G Village consultation. Ultimately the PC must seek a solution that right for the whole village not just one group of residents. Any proposed change to traffic flows within the village must be subject to normal legal consultation. I seek the views of the PC for a village-wide consultative survey, via paper and on-line variants, for their views. The paper survey could be via the Bulletin or simply by copies left at the Café at the Galleries. Options A, C and D could be offered, along with opportunity for other ideas. This could form the 'Informal Consultation' as a pre-requisite for Option A (Road Closure). If significant objections are received, then it would be a matter for the PC to decide.
- H Do nothing. I feel that the PC must actively seek to move this issue forward. There is clearly a risk of accident with the amount of traffic using Rosemary Lane, along with the current examples of property damage and conflict between motorists. We are surely duty bound to respond to the Rosemary Lane residents to address their legitimate concerns.

Your views are welcome.

**Julian Carpenter**

**Freshford Parish Council**