

**Subject : Critical Traffic and Safety Concerns on A224 (Orpington Bypass) – Request for KCC Highways Support**

**To:** Director of Highways & Transportation, Kent County Council

**From:** Badgers Mount Parish Council

**Date:** May 18, 2025

Dear Ma'am,

I hope this message finds you well.

Your contact details were kindly passed to me by Richard Morris from Sevenoaks District Council. On behalf of Badgers Mount Parish Council, I am writing to request your urgent assistance in addressing escalating traffic concerns related to developments in our area—specifically, the Fort Halstead (19/05000/HYB) and Chevening Estate (20/03660/FUL) projects—and their disproportionate impact on our village.

While we recognise the importance of progress and development, the cumulative impact of concurrent construction activity, coupled with the ongoing closure of the A21 into Old London Road, has not been properly assessed or mitigated. These factors are combining to create unacceptable risks for residents—particularly along the Orpington Bypass (A224)—in the form of increased congestion, diminished road safety, and environmental degradation.

We are especially concerned that the approved Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) for Fort Halstead, if implemented without urgent revision and safeguards, will cause significant and long-term disruption to the community of Badgers Mount. ***It is vital to note that while the developments lie outside our Parish boundary, all associated traffic flows directly through the middle of Badgers Mount.***

### **Key Concerns**

#### **1. Traffic Congestion and Safety Risks**

- The A224 is already heavily congested during peak hours (7:30–9:00 AM), and delays are exacerbated when incidents occur on the M25.
- Entry and exit from residential driveways (also Badgers Road & Highland Road) onto the A224 have become increasingly dangerous.

- The addition of over 310 daily vehicle movements, a significant proportion of which are HGVs, from Fort Halstead and Chevening Estate will intensify these problems.
- School children crossing the A224 to access bus stops are now at heightened risk, especially due to high-speed HGV traffic at pick up and drop off times.
- The current 50 mph speed limit is inappropriate for such a heavily residential and now construction-impacted corridor.

## **2. Environmental and Public Health Impacts**

- Increased HGV traffic is already worsening air and noise pollution in the area.
- Residents living alongside the A224 report significant declines in quality of life and health due to excessive traffic noise, amplified by poor road surfacing where newer, smoother patches meet older, degraded sections.

## **3. Loss of Active and Public Transport Use**

- Fear of crossing the A224 has led many families to drive children to school rather than letting them walk or take the bus, compounding congestion and emissions.
- Formerly active commuters who walked to Knockholt Station now rely on cars due to the difficulty and danger of crossing the road.

## **Immediate Mitigation Measures Requested**

To protect residents and ensure responsible development, we urge Kent County Council Highways to:

- 1. Implement pedestrian safety improvements**
  - Install Puffin crossings at the junctions of Badgers Road and Highland Road with the A224.
- 2. Reduce the speed limit**
  - Lower the speed limit on the A224 from the village gates close to Nesbit House (Care Home) to the Badgers Mount roundabout from 50 mph to 40 mph (or lower).
- 3. Improve road surfacing**
  - Resurface the A224 in residential sections using low-noise materials to reduce noise pollution.
- 4. Limit HGV activity during peak times**
  - Restrict heavy goods vehicle movements between 7:00–9:00 AM and 4:00–6:00 PM.

## 5. Strengthen monitoring and compliance

- Enforce real-time traffic monitoring and planning conditions, including road cleanliness measures such as tyre washing.

### **Request for a Coordinated Response**

We respectfully ask that Kent County Council Highways:

- ***Convene a joint meeting with Kent Highways, developers, and our Parish Council to discuss and solve the above-mentioned concerns;***
- Advocate for the immediate inclusion of the proposed safety and environmental safeguards.

We make a heartfelt plea on behalf of our community—especially for the safety of our children. The daily fear and stress endured by families due to the hazardous road conditions is growing and cannot be ignored. A coordinated, proactive response is urgently needed to avoid long-term harm to our residents and environment.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We would welcome the opportunity to meet or speak with you further to discuss practical next steps and are happy to provide any additional information you require.

Yours sincerely,

**On behalf of the Badgers Mount Parish Council**

Clerk-Badgers Mount Parish Council

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