

Dear Dr Moir

Though I appreciate the prompt reply given by your colleague Mr Frank Jordan over the dire situation concerning the Ralph Butcher Causeway, he appears to have politely omitted the main issues I had raised. I therefore kindly request that this email is dealt with by whomever you deem appropriate to do so. I thank you in advance for your help and cooperation thus far.

Mr Jordan stated that there was a coordinated effort to reduce the impact of the situation of one lane only open on the Ralph Butcher Causeway, by recently repairing part of the B1040 going into Whittlesey, which also only had one lane open with traffic lights. May I remind Mr Jordan that the situation with the B1040 was prevalent from April of this year following intense flooding at the beginning of the year, till the repair was finished at the end of October. Therefore between June and October this year, there was not even one main route working properly into Whittlesey, via either the B1040 or the Ralph Butcher Causeway which begs the question, as the problems of the Ralph Butcher Causeway were already known in the beginning of June, why wasn't the repair to the B1040 carried out with much more urgency? I would also like to remind Mr Jordan, as stated in my previous email, that due to recent flooding the B1040 has yet once again been impassable for most of the previous 2 months. That means that the bulk of all traffic heading in and out of Whittlesey is being massively affected by this unacceptable situation, with huge queues at peak times mounting beyond Stanground going in, and equally on the Whittlesey side coming out.

Mr Jordan states that the intrusive tests carried out by Jones Bros in November should hopefully be known soon. My problem with this, as again I put in my previous email, is why has it taken Jones Bros from June until November to have carried out these tests in the first place. They had full knowledge of what the issues were at the beginning of June. They have full knowledge of the huge negative impact on residents and businesses, yet they are still taking a ridiculous amount of time to even get the facts together for any sort of action plan or resolution, even though the onus falls squarely on their shoulders as any initial tests before the build that were done by them should have flagged up any engineering issues from the start. Particularly when the previous prospective builder KIER had highlighted issues regarding increased piling costs due to an issue with a particular part of the build with an area known as Star Pit, and which was reported by the Wisbech Standard back on July 18th 2019. (Please see attached segment below).

The bottom line is this, someone, or a number of people, have made a huge mistake. A mistake where in any other scenario, would have resulted in immediate dismissal of all those involved and most likely, criminal proceedings. Yet we have a situation where we are seeing no real urgency to resolve the huge detrimental effect that this problem is having with the entire area of Whittlesey and beyond, bringing unnecessary misery to thousands of people every single day. It maybe worth noting that earlier this year, an entire rail bridge section was replaced across part of the M62 near Rochdale, over just two weekend closures. It is not insurmountable to apply the same logic to the problem at the Ralph Butcher Causeway so long as those responsible are prepared to put things right, and at a £32 Million pound bill to the taxpayer, we shouldn't expect anything less.

Yours faithfully

Mr D.S.



That figure could now be subject to upwards revision depending on which contractor finally wins the contract to build the replacement bridge and crossing that Kier designed.

A special investigation earlier this week by this newspaper suggested that Kier had encountered issues over Star Pit, Whittlesey, which is on the edge of the proposed new crossing and where piling costs could be considerably higher than anticipated.

The company was given a two stage design and build contract, with the expectation the former would lead to the latter.

However key figures within the county council indicated in recent months that Kier, facing pressures nationwide on several fronts, no longer felt able to deliver a realistic price to build the bridge they had designed.

Mayor James Palmer is angling, not always behind the scenes, to invest