
Meeting: Traffic Management Meeting
Date: 9th December 2010
Subject: Long Close and Station Road, Lower Stondon -
Resolution of an objection to the proposed Prohibition of Waiting
Report of: Basil Jackson, Assistant Director of Highways and Transportation.
Summary: To report to the Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities the receipt of two objections to proposals for waiting restrictions in Long Close and Station Road, Lower Stondon and seek approval for the implementation of this scheme.

Contact Officer: Gary Baldwin – Traffic Engineer
gary.baldwin@amey.co.uk
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Silsoe and Shillington
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

To improve highway safety and facilitate the free flow of traffic.

Financial:

Implementation of this scheme will cost £2k which is available within existing budgets

Legal:

None as part of this report

Risk Management:

None as part of this report

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None as part of this report

Equalities/Human Rights:

None as part of this report

Community Safety:

The proposal will improve road safety

Sustainability:

None as part of this report

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1.

- (a) **That the proposal to introduce No Waiting At Any Time Restriction at the junction of Long Close and Station Road, Lower Stondon be implemented as set out in this report.**

Background and Information

1. The Council has received complaints over a period of several years about parked vehicles at the junction of Station Road and Long Close. At the present time parking restrictions are not in place around this junction and therefore vehicles are frequently parked very close to the junction. Particular difficulties occur when vehicles are parked on Station Road near to Long Close as they obstruct visibility for drivers attempting to emerge from Long Close. The situation is exacerbated by the alignment of Station Road and the uphill gradient on Long Close on the immediate approach to Station Road.
2. The matter was investigated and it was considered that a prohibition of waiting at any time should be introduced on a length of Station Road covering both sides of Long Close. In addition, it was felt that a short length of no waiting at any time should extend into Long Close to ensure that the whole junction would be kept clear of parked cars. This would also counter any transference of parking should restrictions in Station Road be introduced in isolation.
3. In advance of the statutory public notice stage, an informal consultation exercise was undertaken in August 2010. The main purpose of this was to determine local opinion on the proposals.
4. In response to the consultation, several residents of Station Road expressed concern about the proposed restrictions. This was mainly on the grounds that they had no off-road parking and would have difficulty finding convenient on-street parking close to their homes. As a result the proposal was re-examined and the restrictions were shortened slightly to allow space for an additional two vehicles to be parked on Station Road.
5. A revised proposal was drawn up and this was formally advertised by public notice in October 2010. Consultations were also carried out with the emergency services and other statutory bodies, the Town Council and Elected Members. Residents were consulted again to give them a further opportunity to comment.

6. As a result, two objections have been received from residents of Station Road. Copies of relevant correspondence are contained in Appendix C, including a letter from the second objector that was received during the informal consultation stage.
7. The first objector is of the view the proposal will do nothing to relieve the problem that they have. He states that visibility to the north is very difficult and to make any sort of improvement at least another car length (of yellow line) would be required. He goes on to acknowledge that this would affect the residents of Station Road, but there is a safety issue and a real opportunity to address the risk.
8. The second objector does not believe that the proposal is the best solution to the problem and raises a number of concerns about parking and road safety in the area. The specific points received during the statutory objection period were:-
 - (a) If this is such a dangerous road for drivers to pull out on, why aren't the Council or the Police doing something about it?
 - (b) If double yellow lines are painted, where is the Council going to be able to provide alternative safe parking for us? This would effectively mean that we have to cross our children over this dangerous road to get to our cars.
 - (c) Could we please have some way of ensuring that the parking space outside our houses is reserved for the residents of our houses only?
9. Bedfordshire Police accept the proposal and have raised no objection.

Conclusion and the Way Forward

10. In response to the first objector's comments; it is accepted that parking is heavy on this length of road, particularly during the evenings and weekends, because there are a number of properties in the area with no off-road parking. As a result, parked vehicles on Station Road are often positioned very close to the Long Close junction and this does significantly affect visibility for drivers leaving Long Close. Due to the curvature of Station Road, visibility to the south-west is good for drivers emerging from Long Close, so the yellow lines extend only a short length along Station Road. However, to the north-east visibility is significantly worse, so the objector's comments on this particular point are accepted. It is acknowledged that if there was less demand for on-street parking, the proposals would probably have included a longer length of no waiting particularly extending north-eastwards from Long Close. However, it was clear from the initial consultation exercise that some residents considered the original proposal to be unacceptable. Consequently, if we had continued with that scheme, it is highly likely that a number of objections would have been received. Hence, the proposal was amended in an attempt to accommodate local wishes.

11. In response to the second objector's comments; the waiting restriction proposal is simply intended to improve visibility for drivers emerging from Long Close into Station Road. It was never anticipated that the imposition of double yellow lines around the junction would have any wider road safety benefits.
- (a) The proposed restrictions will cover a very short length of road and are not expected to result in an increase in vehicle speeds or have any other significant effects on road safety. It has been suggested to the objector that these concerns be pursued as a separate matter in conjunction with the Parish Council and Bedfordshire Police.
 - (b) It is not the role of the Council to provide parking facilities in residential areas. Essentially the onus rests with individual car owners to identify a safe and suitable place to keep their vehicle. The revised proposal is expected to displace only 2 or 3 cars and they are often parked close to the junction in contravention of guidance contained in the Highway Code. Observations would suggest that parking spaces could be found without the need to cross Station Road.
 - (c) The only way of reserving parking spaces for the exclusive use of specific residents would be to introduce a residents' permit parking scheme. These are mainly used in larger urban areas where non-locals, typically rail commuters, park in residential streets throughout the working day, thereby denying space for residents. Virtually all of the parking that takes place on Station Road is by residents, albeit some may be from Long Close. A permit parking scheme is not considered to be viable at this location. It has been suggested that the available parking space in Station Road be marked into individual bays. However, this would still entail the imposition of yellow lines to clearly show where drivers may not park. In addition, the marking of separate spaces is considered inflexible because it does not take account of different vehicle lengths.
12. In summary, the proposal is specifically intended to address the very localised safety issue of poor visibility for drivers emerging from Long Close onto Station Road. The restrictions would displace only 2 or 3 vehicles. It is felt that the advertised proposal represents a reasonable compromise between improving visibility for emerging drivers, whilst not unduly inconveniencing local residents. Consequently, it is recommended that the restrictions proceed as advertised.

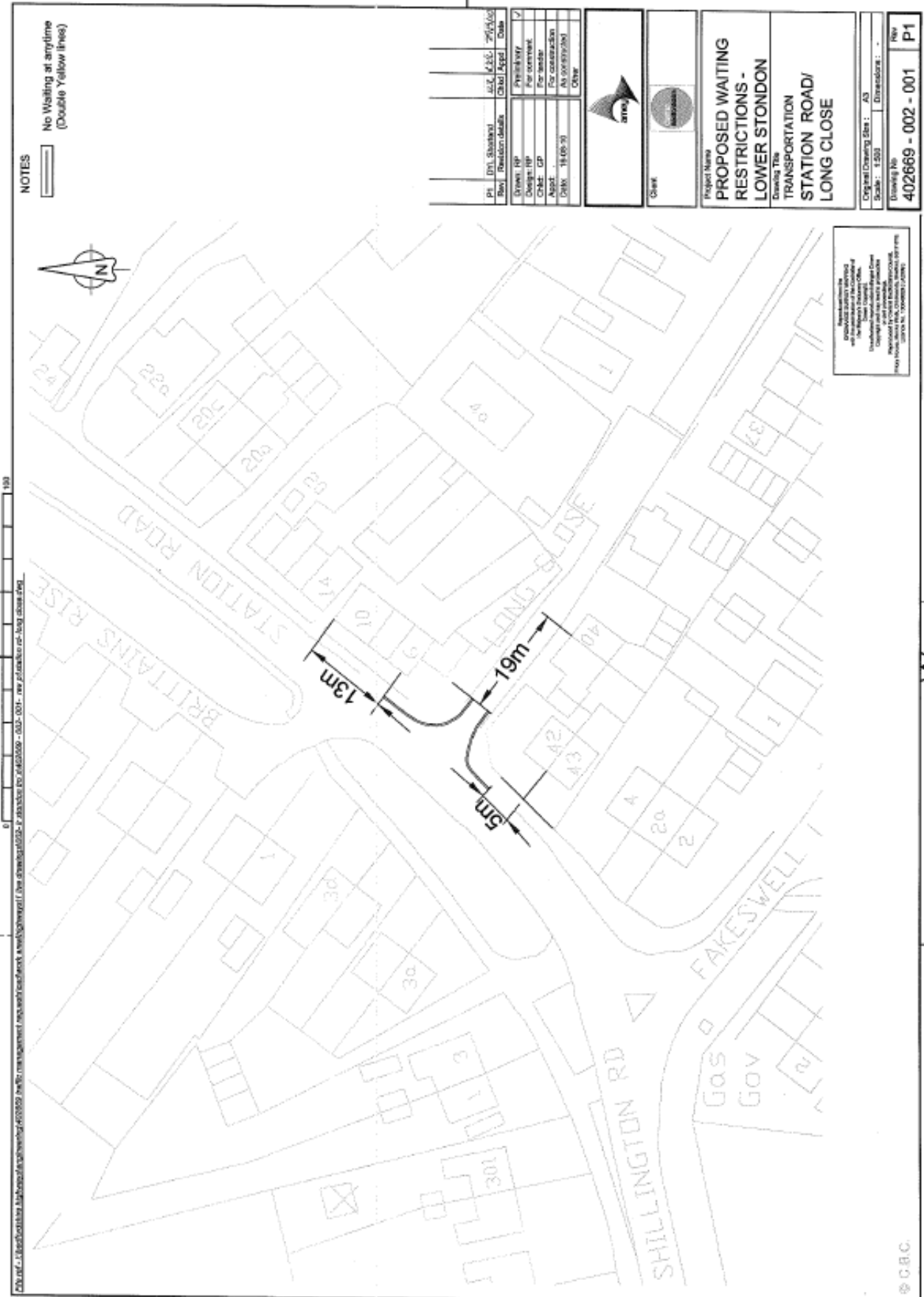
Appendices:

Appendix A – Location plan

Appendix B – Public notice

Appendix C – Objections to proposal

APPENDIX A



NOTES

No Waiting at anytime (Double Yellow lines)

All dimensions are based on the centre of the road unless otherwise stated. All dimensions are in metres unless otherwise stated. All dimensions are rounded to the nearest millimetre. All dimensions are based on the centre of the road unless otherwise stated.



Plotted	27/05/2023	27/05/2023
Drawn	27/05/2023	27/05/2023
Checked	27/05/2023	27/05/2023
Approved	27/05/2023	27/05/2023
Other		



Project Name
PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS - LOWER STONDON

Drawing Title
TRANSPORTATION STATION ROAD/ LOWER STONDON LONG CLOSE

Original Drawing Size	A3	Dimensions	
Drawing No	402669 - 002 - 001		
Revision	P1		

All dimensions are based on the centre of the road unless otherwise stated. All dimensions are in metres unless otherwise stated. All dimensions are rounded to the nearest millimetre. All dimensions are based on the centre of the road unless otherwise stated.

PUBLIC NOTICE

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PROPOSES TO INTRODUCE NO WAITING RESTRICTIONS IN STATION ROAD AND LONG CLOSE, LOWER STONDON

Reason for proposal: The proposed order is considered necessary on the grounds of promoting road safety. The waiting restrictions are specifically aimed at keeping the area around the junction of Station Road and Long Close, Lower Stondon free of parked vehicles. It will also aid the free flow of traffic in this vicinity.

Therefore, Central Bedfordshire Council proposes to make a Traffic Regulation Order as follows:

Effect of the Order:

To introduce No Waiting at Any Time (double yellow lines) on the following lengths of road in Lower Stondon:-

- Station Road, Lower Stondon – South side from a point 5 metres north east of the boundary between 42 and 43 Station Road to a point approximately 13 metres south west of the northern flank wall of 10 Station Road.
- Long Close, Lower Stondon – Both sides from a point 19 metres north west of the boundary of 40 and 41 Long Close in a north east direction to the junction with Station Road.

Further Details: of the proposed order and a plan may be examined during normal office hours at the office below and normal opening hours at Shefford Library 1 High Street, Shefford SG17 5DD. These documents will be placed on deposit until 6 weeks after the Order is made or, until it is decided not to continue with the proposal. Phone Ron Phelvin on 08453 656009 for further details.

Objections: should be sent in writing to the Orders and Commons Registration Officer, Countryside Access Service, Central Bedfordshire Council, Technology House, 239 Ampthill Road, Bedford MK42 9QQ, or (e-mail: chris.heard@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) stating the grounds on which they are made by 15th November 2010.

Order Title: if made will be "Central Bedfordshire Council (Bedfordshire County Council (District of Mid Bedfordshire) (Civil Enforcement Area and Special Enforcement Area) (Waiting Restrictions and Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2008) (Variation No *) Order 201*".

Technology House
239 Ampthill Road
Bedford MK42 9QQ

Basil Jackson
Assistant Director for Highways

22nd October 2010

APPENDIX C

From: Xxxxx Xxxxx
Sent: 27 October 2010 10:41
To: 'ronald.phelvin@amey.co.uk'
Cc: 'nick.chapman@amey.co.uk'
Subject: Waiting restriction, Station Road junction with Long Close, Lower Stondon

Good morning Mr Phelvin,

I left a message for you to call me back earlier on in the week but you may not have received the message.

The reason for the call was to discuss the new proposal for the road markings received this week.

To be honest, the new layout will do nothing to relieve the problem that we have.

The south side is OK as visibility is OK when leaving Long Close.

However, visibility to the north is very difficult and to make any sort of improvement at least another car length would be required.

I do understand that this will affect the residents on Station road, but there is a safety issue here and there is a real opportunity to address the risk.

If there is an accident (which is waiting to happen) fingers will be pointed at your department who have the power to relieve the situation.(not after the event)

Yours sincerely.

Xxxxx Xxxxx

X Station Road.
Lower Stondon.

From: XXXXXXXXXXXX
Sent: 14 November 2010 23:31
To: Chris Heard
Subject: Double Yellow lines at the top of Long Close in Lower Stondon

14 / 11 / 2010

Dear Chris Heard,

In response to the letter we have had from Amey with the Public Notice sent with it, I would like to forward you a copy of the letter we sent to Ron Phelvin of Amey in September.

We asked a number of questions and made a number of points in this letter. We received an acknowledgement of receipt of our letter and then after some neighbours and I had spoken to Mr Phelvin and Mr Baldwin of Amey while they were surveying the site outside our houses, we got another letter allowing that it would be at least sensible if we are allowed a whole number of parking spaces outside our houses. We are very pleased that this point was taken up, and we would like to thank whoever made the decision to amend the original plan for the length of the double yellow lines to give us a realistic whole number of parking spaces.

HOWEVER, the rest of our questions have not been answered, nor have our points been acknowledged. SO, if I could summarise:

FIRST and most important:

1. If this is such a dangerous road for drivers to pull out on, WHY AREN'T THE COUNCIL or the POLICE doing something about it?

WHY are drivers allowed to drive too fast along this road?

2. If double yellow lines are painted, where is the Council going to be able to provide alternative safe parking for us, as we were assured at a Parish Council meeting last year that we would be? OR, to put it another way, how come we were assured last year that our parking spaces could not be taken away from us outside our houses unless alternative provision were made?

WHY should we have to cross our children over this dangerous road to get to our cars?

3. Could we please have some way of ensuring that the parking space outside our houses is reserved for the residents of our houses only, especially overnight?

WHY should residents of Long Close and others be allowed to take our parking spaces, greatly inconveniencing us, and then some of them blame us when they can't see to pull out?

If it was Residents Parking only, perhaps there would be few enough cars for the visibility problem to be resolved!

So, please could you answer our questions and consider these points.

Please would you also give some time to read our letter from September, which I have attached, which gives a fuller explanation of our points, and then could someone please REPLY to us, ADDRESSING the points we have made?

We object to the double yellow lines being painted because we don't think they are the best solution to the problem of speeding on Station Road, and we object to them being painted before our questions and points have been answered.

We will be most grateful to hear from you.

We will post you a copy of this email, and look forward to your reply.

Yours faithfully,

Xxxxxx & Xxxxxx Xxxxxxx

XX Station Road,
Lower Stondon,
Beds,
SG16 6JP
3/9/10
Tel:

Your ref: RP/43472/3.12

Dear Mr Phelvin,

We got your letter about the proposed double yellow lines outside our houses here on Station Road, but as it has been the school holidays we have been away and only now have time to respond.

I phoned to speak to you this morning but I had to go out and so missed your call back this afternoon. I hope to speak to you on Monday.

I have been to see my neighbour at number xx, Xxxx Xxxx, and between us, these are the points we would like to make:

1. Residents of Long Close have been complaining about the cars parked outside our houses blocking their view when they are trying to drive out onto Station Road. However, parking places here are oversubscribed partly because residents of Long Close themselves park outside our houses, leaving us with nowhere to park!

We presume the Long Close residents who park outside our houses are not the same ones who are complaining! So we would like to ask if we could meet with the owners / managers of the Long Close parking provision, to ask if there is any way they could provide sufficient parking for their residents, so they don't park outside our houses, blocking the view from Long Close, or causing us, or our visitors, to block their view.

If double yellow lines are put in we presume the residents of Long Close will still want to park outside our houses, but there will be less space.

2. We have very little alternative to parking outside our houses. We do park up Brittain's Rise across the road, but those spaces get filled up, too, and we feel sorry for the residents up there having to put up with a congested road. We know we could park even further away and walk, leaving our cars where we can't keep an eye on them, but where? There is nowhere particularly nearby.

Our real problem here is that four households along this row have young children. We don't mind so much parking one car up Brittain's Rise, but we would like to be able to keep the car we each use for the children outside our houses if at all possible.

We don't want to have to get into the habit of walking our children across the road to and from our cars because of the danger from the speed of the passing traffic. If the

children get used to crossing the road while we are loaded down with bags etc they will start to take risks and will run across without looking. It's human nature, and none of us wants to be the ones to lose a child to prove the road is dangerous.

If it is dangerous to try to pull out onto Station Road in a car, how much more dangerous is it to have to cross with your children regularly to get to your car? Is that not a safety issue of equal importance?

With fewer cars parked outside our houses because of double yellow lines the passing traffic will be able to see better to travel even faster than they already do! We parents are already paranoid about our kids going anywhere near that road, but with even faster traffic it will be even more scary!

3. We attended Parish Council meetings last year when these problems were discussed. Someone attended from 'Highways' and told us that double yellow lines would not be put in unless alternative provision for parking was made for us.

What has happened to that reassurance?

Also we were told the police would gather information about the speed of the passing traffic, to see if the road is dangerous, as we say.

Could we have the feedback from that exercise please? We haven't heard anything, and our local policeman never comes to speak to us, or writes to us with information.

So, we would like to ask for the following suggested provisions to be considered, before double yellow lines are painted outside our houses:

4. Could more safe parking provision be made somewhere, please?
5. Could we have Residents Only parking after 5pm outside our houses, please, so we can ensure one car per household can be parked on our side of the road?
6. As it is so dangerous to pull out of Long Close, which seems to have become an accepted fact, could we have traffic calming along this stretch of road, please? Why on earth should passing traffic be allowed to continue to pass at well over 30 miles per hour, so that the road regularly sounds like a racetrack outside? Asking them to slow down doesn't seem to work with all drivers, so could we please have something physical to slow them down? Then maybe we could continue to park here, AND pull out, safely?
7. Could we have information about the speed of passing traffic? Is it recognised by Beds County Council as dangerous, and if so, what are they, or the police, doing about it?
8. Could we have marked out parking bays outside our houses please? Starting the marking off from outside number 20 and providing us with a whole number of parking spaces, please, before any yellow lines are painted? Despite what the Highway Code says, we have a compact and congested area here, and we ask that some common sense compromise is made so we can park a whole number of cars, not 5 and a half cars, (for example) outside!

If we had marked out bays, it would help to avoid the way some people park their cars leaving huge gaps between them and the other cars, so they take up two parking spaces. It is this type of parking which has often led to other cars being parked too near the road junction in the past.

Interestingly, the residents of this row are very good at tucking their cars in and co-operating with each other to help us all find a parking space. The people who tend to spread out their parking are the residents of Long Close, and others who park here but do not live here.

9. We are concerned that the value of our houses will go down, and they will be harder to sell, if we have double yellow lines outside, because potential purchasers will be put off if there is nowhere to park outside the houses. The little cottages are barely one car wide, certainly not two. This doesn't just affect us at number 10 at the moment. Some of our neighbours are thinking of moving on in the future, and are also concerned. Can you tell us if double yellow lines do cause the value of the affected houses to drop?

10. Finally, if more parking was provided for us up Brittain's Rise, for the sake of safety, would a Pedestrian crossing be provided to get us safely over there? And if so, where could that be placed safely, and without removing still more parking places? In other words, wouldn't traffic calming be the most sensible option here? If the traffic slowed down we could all park and pull out more safely, as we said before!

We have to admit that we are disappointed with the residents of Long Close who complain about our parking, because even when we have tried to talk to them about the problems, they don't want to know or listen to us.

Perhaps if the residents of Long Close would care to consider options which would benefit ALL the local residents of this area, they might agree with us about traffic calming. Even when we told them it is residents of Long Close itself who park up here and block their view, they didn't seem to want to know, or care.

We actually care about not blocking their view, but at the same time we would just like to be able to park our own cars outside our houses, just as they are able to do!

Please consider all our points and suggestions, and answer our questions if you can, and reply to us, if you would, with your comments and any possible solutions to these problems.

We will post you a copy of this letter when we have had a chance to ask if other residents along this row would like to sign it too.

We look forward to being heard and considered, before a decision is made about painting double yellow lines, in the absence of any other measures to solve the problem of the dangerous driving on Station Road.

Yours faithfully

Xxxx and Xxxx Xxxxxx