

Nether Whitacre Parish Council



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16th June 2025

Mr. K.J. Kirkland
Director,
Land and Water Group,
Weston Yard,
The Street,
Albury,
Guildford,
GU5 9AF

Dear Mr. Kirkland,

We held our Parish Council meeting on Monday 19th May when we once again discussed traffic and speeding issues. It is one of our main concerns. We agreed that we needed to bring to your attention the effect that Land and Water transports are having on our village.

In March 2021 we were advised by WCC that the Coton Road bridge is no longer able to safely carry unrestricted vehicle loads of 40t and an 18t weight restriction was implemented

A diversion was put in place directing traffic through the village from Coleshill for all those over 18t needing access to the Cedars. Let's not forget the effect that HS2 and its transport is having also.

The introduction of the weight restriction has been devastating for residents and our rural roads which are not built to withstand the level of HGVs that are now passing through the village. They are defined as 7.5t

Road surfaces and pavements have deteriorated more quickly, sunken drains and potholes need regular attention, noise, vibration and air pollution increased, roadside trees have been damaged along with traffic signs being knocked flat or on a tilt. Our County Council locality officer admits our roads are not designed to cater for this amount and type of traffic. We continually lobby our County Council and our MP for support; funding remains a huge issue with them saying the replacement bridge is estimated at £7 million.

Residents enjoy(ed) the benefits of living in a rural village, we have walking groups, dog walkers, horse riders and form part of a national cycling route. Warwickshire is renowned for its countryside and scenic walking routes, people come from far and wide to use them and residents have paid a premium to live in the area. The Assistant Crime Commissioner has walked the route, so he is aware of the issue, as are the Police. We are hamstrung it appears.

We have tackled many issues since 2021 when the weight reduction was implemented.

However recently we have seen an increase in Land and Water transports some with huge wide loads and police escort for example, which struggle to negotiate their way through the centre of the village, people knocking on doors, needing residents to move their vehicles as they make their way through the village. At some point they must return. If these transports block the routes how can emergency vehicles have access?

When researching your Land and Waters website, the environmental policy states that " we have a living breathing environmental commitment to put people and planet before profit".

We feel that you are unaware of our difficulties and that our residents have been overlooked. In our view, bringing huge barges along Station Road and Coton Road is unacceptable in any situation and should not happen at all.

We have brought this to your attention so that your good self and your management team are aware about the effect this is having on our residents and if there are any measures you will consider to reduce the impact on our community.

We would welcome your support.

Kind regards

JR Thompson
Chair

Below are a few comments and photos we have received from our residents. We appreciate not all the reports are solely down to Land and Water Vehicles.

1. Just wanted to report the fact that last Tuesday 6th May 2025 I was driving down Watery Lane from Shustoke to Whitacre when I was stopped at the end of the lane by a police car with blue flashing lights, the Police officer advised that it would be two minutes before the road was clear. I sat there and, in the meantime, many other cars came up behind me and of course in Watery Lane, no-one was able to turn round, anyway after about 15 minutes of sitting there I got out of my car to ask had there been an accident etc., I was told no it was a wide load coming from the Cedars. another 5 minutes went by and eventually the load appeared it was a Land and Water vehicle which was huge and completely filled the road. I believe I counted 6 police cars escorting this vehicle and apparently, they had been forced to knock on the doors of the cottages in station Road for them to move their cars so the load could get through. The inhabitants of this village and I are absolutely fed up and very worried about the size and frequency of these enormous vehicles passing through our village roads and that there is a weight limit of 7.5 tons throughout which seems to be constantly ignored.
2. When we moved to live on Station Road 15 years ago we moved there because it was a quiet, rural location. The road had little traffic and the speed restriction was 30mph. After making a home there, my children were born and have/are attending local schools. Part of living here was to allow them a rural setting to grow up, with green areas and unpolluted environments. We have instead had to contend with increased traffic as the road has become a 'rat run' for commuters avoiding delays on the M42 etc. and making a diversion cross-country. In addition to this, the traffic seems to feel it is exempt from following the highway code and tear past at 40-50mph making it too scary to allow my children to even potter along on the drive/pavement in case an accident should occur (which does-frequently!). However, one saving grace has been the fact that lorries/HGV's don't generally use the route, the vehicles heading to The Cedars are guided in via Coton Road Bridge. Then suddenly, without any warning I see a sign at the junction of Blythe Road and Station Road pointing out The Cedars, then without warning huge HGV's carrying enormous trailers are trying to get down our road. Vehicles that literally dwarf any passing cars let alone people. Our road is not designed to carry these vehicles, and we certainly didn't move to the area to have these monstrosities causing potential accidents, pollution and noise outside our houses.

3. I am sure you are aware of the problems of parking in Station Road. The Parish Council has arranged for residents to use the Church Hall car park but not all residents are willing to do so. The footpaths along this road are for the benefit of pedestrians, many of whom are elderly or walking with dogs or children. To get a large lorry past the parked cars (and delivery vehicles of all sizes, ambulances etc.) lorries frequently must drive onto the pavements. This is also unsafe.
4. I own a cottage built in 1902 on Station Road in Whitacre Heath. The building shakes every time a large wagon goes past. As these now go past multiple times an hour it's becoming unbearable and causing considerable damage. The visible damage on my own property caused by traffic vibrations is cracks in walls and ceilings, separation of masonry blocks, and the movement of roof tiles etc. However, there could easily be far worse damage on foundations and drainage / pipe work that is not easily viewed. Not only are buildings being damaged, but air quality pollution is also increasing, and people's safety are being put at risk by heavy lorries travelling backwards and forwards as they can't access via the bridge.
5. Lives are being made a misery by heavy goods vehicles travelling through station and coton road (which were in a poor state of repair anyway) and are not wide enough to sustain heavy vehicles safely. Traffic is regularly (multiple times a day) having to mount the pavements in the village to allow oncoming traffic to pass. This incredibly dangerous for pedestrians and all road users, many a time you see pedestrians, dog walkers or cyclists having to dodge on traffic trying to squeeze past the large vehicles. This is neither safe nor acceptable. Additionally, the size and weight of vehicles passing through is having a damaging effect on the older buildings and walls, mine included. My property can be felt to shake when heavy vehicles are passing, particularly if they are travelling fast or mounting and dismounting the kerb or where areas where the surface of the road is in disrepair. Many 'near misses' and many cars have been damaged and lost wing mirrors due to the vehicles clipping them or having to reverse back or squeeze round parked vehicles. There is undoubtedly potential for a serious incident.
6. Yesterday a totally unsuitable oversized vehicle was struggling to get through the village. Driver had to ask for parked cars to move as the vehicle was too large to get through the village.
7. I have lived at 54 Station Road for 4 years now and I can confidently say this type of traffic has increased hugely in the past year. I understand there is a weight and height restriction at different bridges near Coton Road entering through the village. This stops the HGVs to my knowledge going down a different route. However, I feel strongly that this needs looking in to as it is dangerous in the residential area of Station Road. Unfortunately, we are selling our house now and the buyers for our house dropped out due to this traffic. They disclosed it is of fear that if their infant grandson visited, he risks being injured or worse when crossing the road. We are also only moving due to this traffic, which is causing us many issues to sleep during our shift work. My husband is a commercial pilot and I also have a very responsible job protecting large numbers of the community. If we cannot sleep adequately due to this type of distribution, it will also impact many other people's lives that we are responsible for. This is impacting our future, especially as there have been many near misses of crashes and road traffic incidents that we regularly witness. This is not the first-time reporting this to the local MP and I feel extremely let down. As a previous Police Constable with West Midlands Police, I feel I have contributed greatly to Neighbourhood Policing, and I have made a positive impact in society. However, mine and many others hard work in society is not rewarded or reciprocated from the local council for issues such as this. I am fearful that it will need to take someone becoming seriously injured for anything to be done on a 30 mph residential road. Furthermore, as attached in the photo, the pavement is wearing away. This is due to the traffic driving on the pavement. This demonstrates the road was not made or built for the size of traffic passing through. Therefore, the pavement will soon cease to be of use for pedestrians, making this a much more unsafe place to walk. There is yellow road marking that were placed down by the council in Autumn of 2024 to fix the pavements. However, you can now see the markings are wearing away, and the gentleman who came to make the markings had informed us that he does not believe the any actual works to rectify this will be conducted anytime soon. Please can we have some

help, as this issue has persisted for over a year now of worsening conditions. I never complain as I had faith in my local council. I really want to feel I can live with peace outside of my home, but I really do not enjoy living here anymore due to the noise pollution in what is supposed to be, a rural area. I hope you can understand my frustration, and I am happy to discuss this further and collect more evidence where required. I would love to collaborate on this issue to make Nether Whitacre more enjoyable to live in.

Pavement which is wearing away due to lorries frequently mounting the kerb.



