Presentation

TRAFFIC NIGHTMARE ON WINCHEAP

Wincheap Ward Councillor
Nick Eden-Green

Wincheap Society AGM
13th July 2018

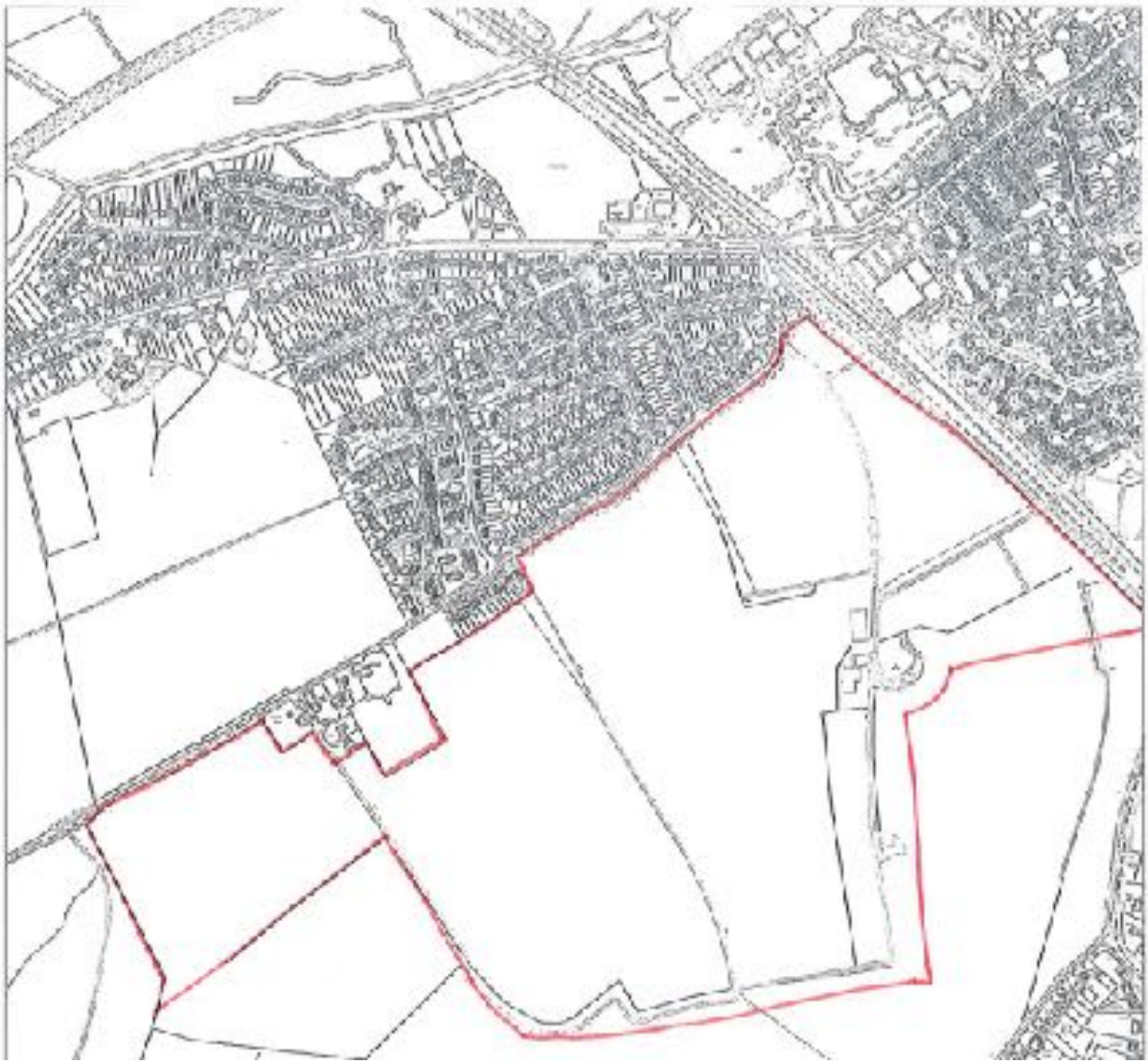
Slide 1 Why is this a nightmare? More importantly why haven't we woken up from it yet? I hope this talk will allow you to judge whether or not it is a nightmare and, perhaps, help you to try to make people wake up to it.

Slide 2: All Wincheap



Slide 2 This shows an early Peter Brett Associates' plan which was an attempt to address the problem. PBA are the traffic planners employed by the Thanington developers who are charged with improving traffic flows, congestion and pollution. It shows the 4th slip road with its hairpin bend bringing motorway standard traffic into the Wincheap retail estate. The 360* turn at the roundabout for Ashford bound traffic. The series of 90* turns HGVs are expected to negotiate to access the city centre and the ongoing problem of the Simmonds Road Maidens Head junction. It fails to show the access to the houses to be built at Thanington.

Slide 3: Pentland Properties Ltd's site at Thanington



Slide 3 Shows in red outline the Pentland site at Thanington. This is for 750 houses plus some industrial and other use classes of land. This site was granted planning consent in January 2016.

Note that the Quinn Estates Ltd's site is partly shown to the north west of this site.

Slide 4: Pentland's Part in restructuring north and south of the A28



Slide 4 Shows in more detail the 4th slip road off the A2 which is to be funded by Pentland. However, much of the cost will now be funded by central government so the Pentland money will be used on other so called improvements which I will come to. However, it fails to show where the traffic goes:

1 to the Wincheap relief road;

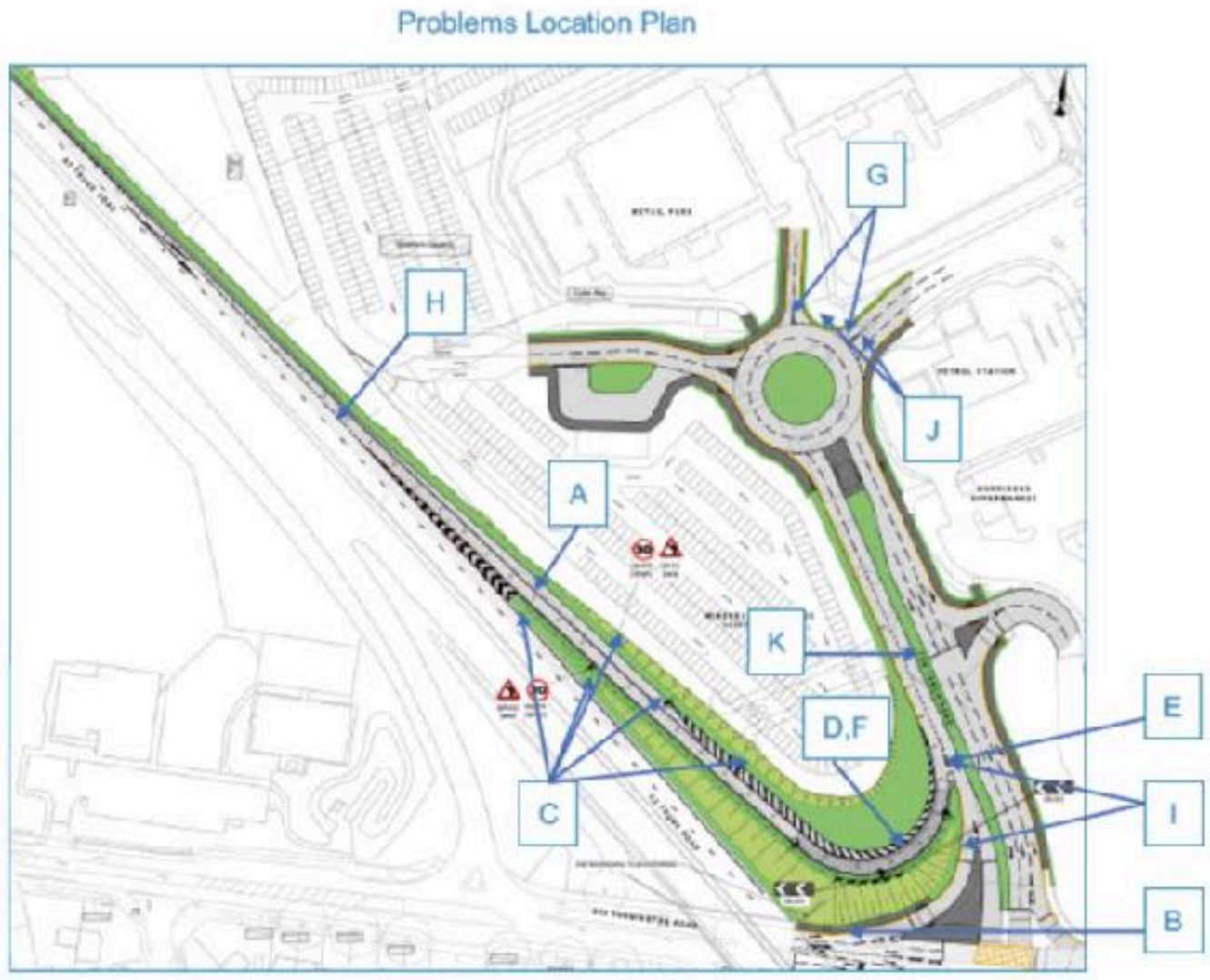
2 city bound to Wincheap which will become one way exiting the city;

3 how residents in the Homersham, Martyrs Field and Hollow Lane areas will access their houses; or

4 how the Pentland site access will join up with this.

Despite these failings this slip road has also been given planning consent.

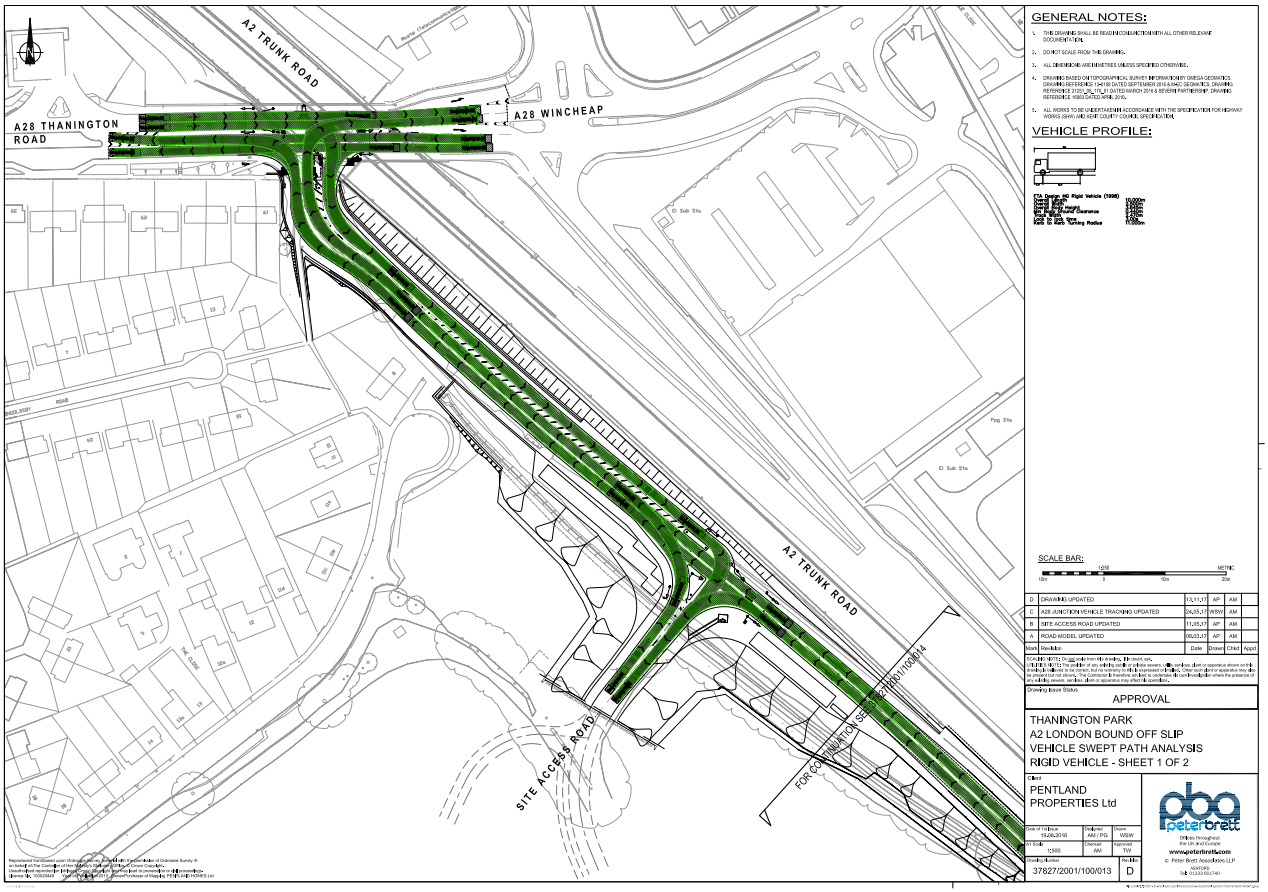
Slide 5: Slip Road and Park & Ride extension.



Slide 5 Shows the park and ride site, part of which will be lost to the slip road, extended over the allotments beside B&M. But it's only for 900 spaces. The current P&R is often full and has 600 spaces. In 2003 a traffic study for a Harbledown P&R showed the need for 600 spaces there. Given the popularity of P&R, the increase in traffic over the intervening 15 years and the proposed reductions in city centre parking, we think the Wincheap park and ride should be at least 1200 spaces.

The slide also shows a number of traffic lanes, but not where the traffic goes. Nor does it get into the crucial details on how traffic exiting Morrisons can get into the queuing traffic lane Ashford bound, how pedestrians and cyclists will cope, how the lights at the A2/A28 junction will operate, etc.

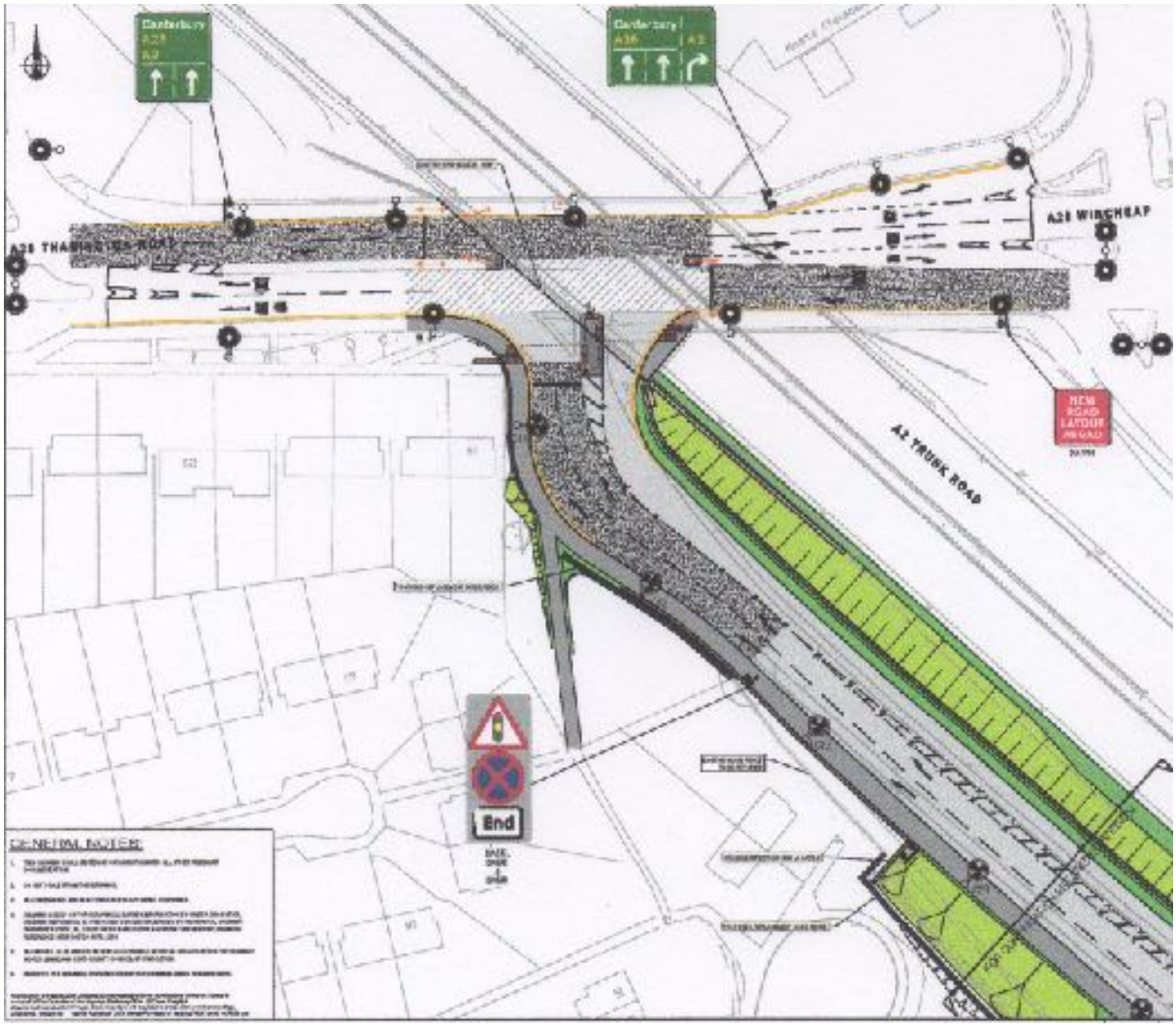
Slide 6: Contraflow access to “Thanington Park”



Slide 6 Shows the slip road from Dover to the A28 modified to accommodate 2-way traffic over part of its length allowing traffic to access the Pentland site. However, until this is constructed the first phase of the site will be accessed via St Nicholas Road including all heavy earth moving equipment.

Let’s look at this in a bit more detail.

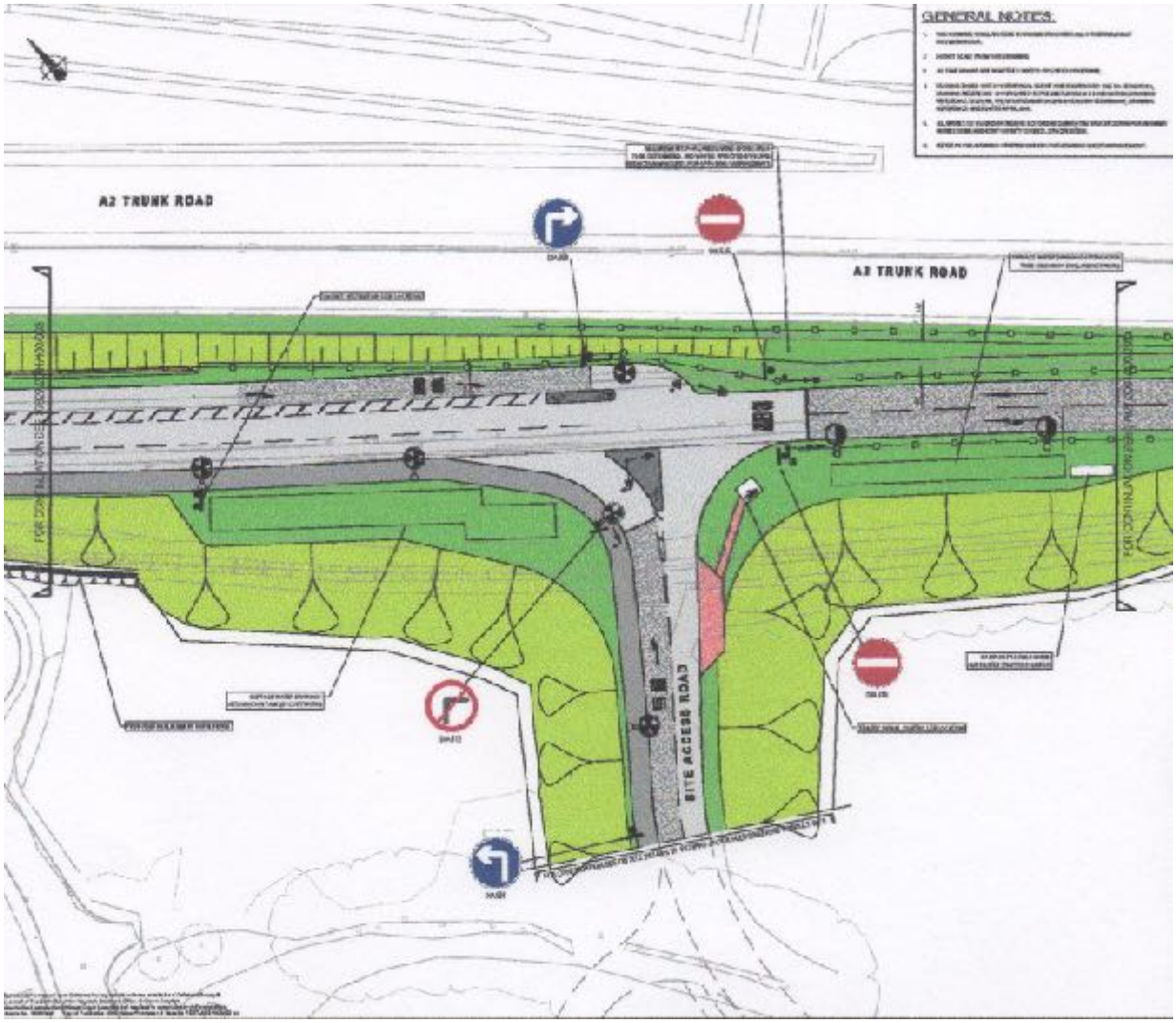
Slide 7: the "bell-mouth" exit and entrance from and to the contra-flow



Slide 7 Shows city bound traffic in two lanes on the A28 as at the moment, but no right turn lane into the Pentland site. If traffic queues here it will block traffic from Dover turning right towards Canterbury. Equally, how will HGVs coming off at the new 4th slip road, and wishing to access the new industrial area on the Pentland site, negotiate the very tight left turn down the two way slip road? As far as we can judge the new larger articulated lorries will not be able to negotiate a safe left turn down the Pentland site access road.

Note also that Canterbury bound traffic on the A28 continues to be directed down Wincheap. But Wincheap is to become 1-way in the other direction so all this traffic will have to turn left at Cow Lane and then somehow merge into the Wincheap relief road. We will come to that.

Slide 8: 90 degree turn into “Thanington Park” across the exit lanes



Slide 8 Shows the 90* access into the Pentland site across the 2 traffic lanes coming up the slip road from Dover. This slip road will be extended, but given the lie of the land, we are sceptical that there are adequate plans for an extension of adequate length.

Traffic from Dover will hit 2 sets of lights: one half way up the slip road, and the existing ones at the A28.

Slide 9: the St Nicholas Road junction



Slide 9 Shows the proposed new lights at St Nicholas Road. St Nicholas is a road on a housing estate where the children play. It is totally unsuitable for through traffic and was never designed for it. Yet the Quinn site for 400 houses relies on it for access. Remember from slide 3, the Quinn site is to the north and west of the Pentland site and, as we will see, fails to link with the specially constructed Pentland access. I am given to understand that this is because the A2/A28 junction newly designed to take the Pentland site traffic cannot cope with the Quinn site traffic as well.

Slide 10: Traffic leaving the A2 via the “keyhole” road layout



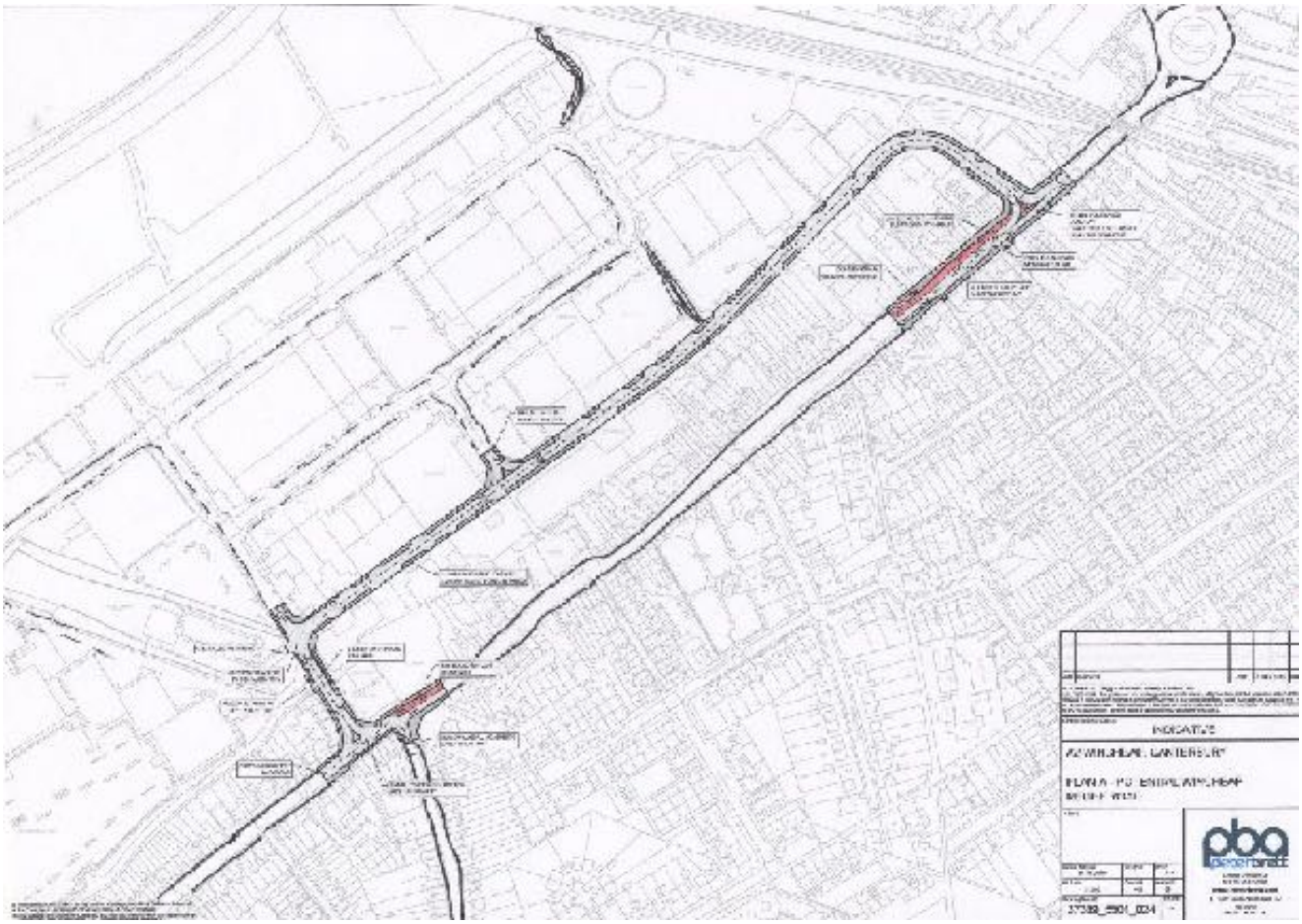
Slide 10 Shows the convoluted routes the traffic will take. Follow the orange arrows if you were coming off the A2 at the new slip road and wishing to access the Pentland site. Just ponder it for a minute. How will the traffic lanes on Ten Perch Road work? How will traffic exit Morrisons? How will the traffic lights work when priority has to be given to traffic exiting the A2 to prevent it backing up? How will HGVs negotiate this slalom? Can you imagine the pollution when this lot gums up?

Slide 11: Quinn's development site: red dots are the only access points for vehicles



Slide 11 Shows the Quinn site for 400 houses. It has not yet been approved by the planning committee. The Pentland site is to the south east of the Quinn site. Note that Quinns propose a new access onto Milton Manor Road to the west, but the eastern and city bound access is onto Cockering Road with no defined linkage to the Pentland site so traffic is most likely to use Strangers Lane and St Nicholas Road. This will be the busiest access as more traffic will be city bound than Ashford bound. It will also be the preferred route to and from the A2.

Slide 12: plan for Wincheap relief road



Slide 12 Shows the plan for the Wincheap relief Road. Simmonds Road will become one way city bound. It is still unclear if this will be built before or after the 4th slip road is built. Or if the new Park and Ride will be built first. It is also uncertain if there is the money to build it.

The order of build is, in my view, crucial. We must have the relief road, properly connected to the ring road, first. Then an adequate Park & Ride. Only then should the 4th slip road be built. Please look at, and sign, the petition at the back. Your views on this would be particularly helpful.

It shows Wincheap for most of its length being one way exiting the city with a contraflow bus lane. The Simmonds Road/Wincheap junction at the Maidens Head remains except Park and Ride buses won't turn left there but articulated lorries will instead. The Cow Lane junction is shown in more detail on the next slide.

I've barely mentioned pollution yet. Wincheap has exceeded European pollution limits for over 7 years. Will bringing more traffic into Wincheap from the 4th slip road, even with a relief road, really reduce pollution?

Slide 13: Cow Lane / WIncheap junction



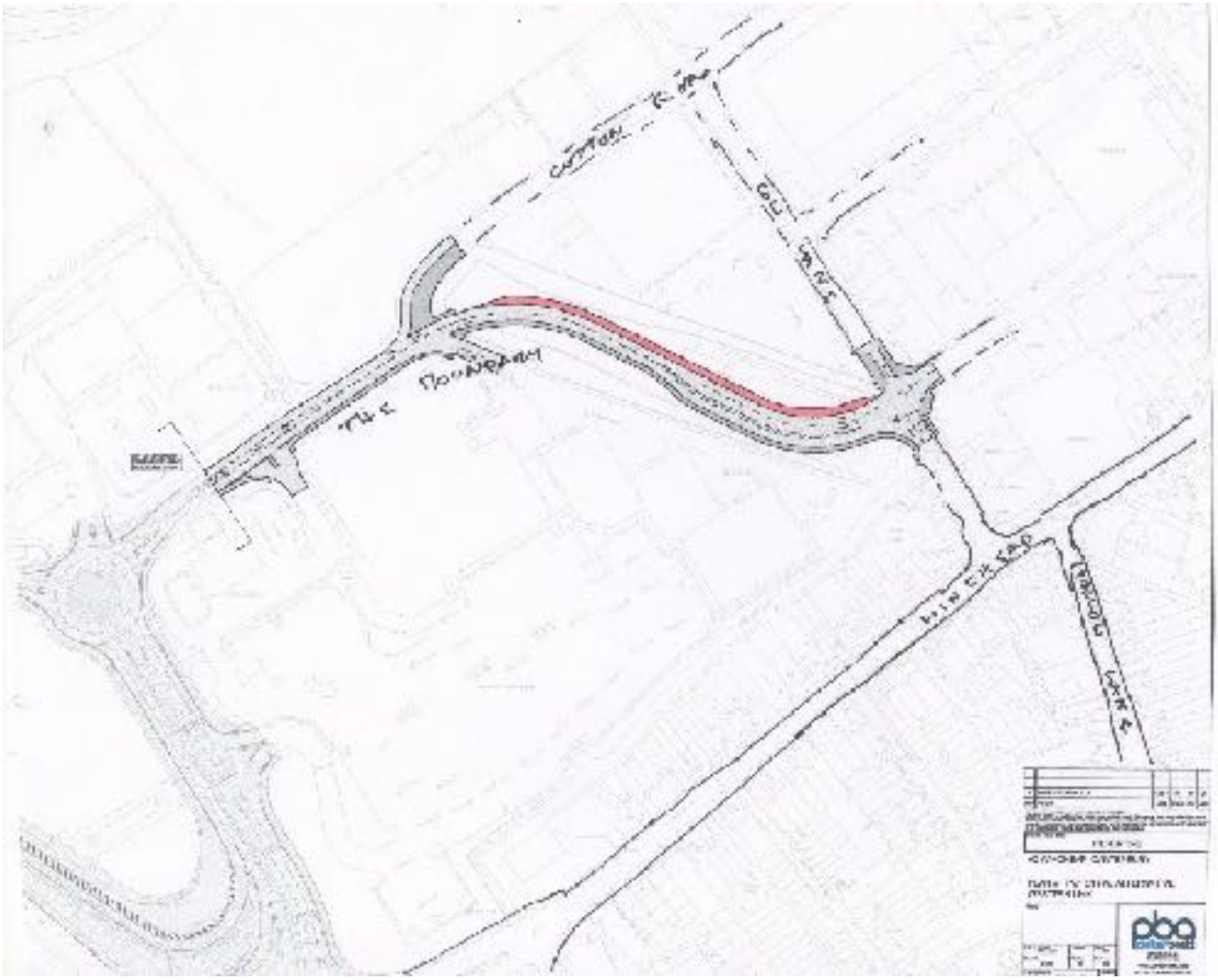
Slide 13 Shows the start of the bus lane in red. All traffic from Ashford city bound will have to turn left into Cow Lane and then turn right into Simmonds Road, merging with traffic from the new 4th slip road. Traffic from Hollow Lane city bound will have to go down Cow Lane but I suspect it will use the rat run via Hollowmede past Wincheap School. Just what one wants to avoid.

Slide 14: Maidens Head junction



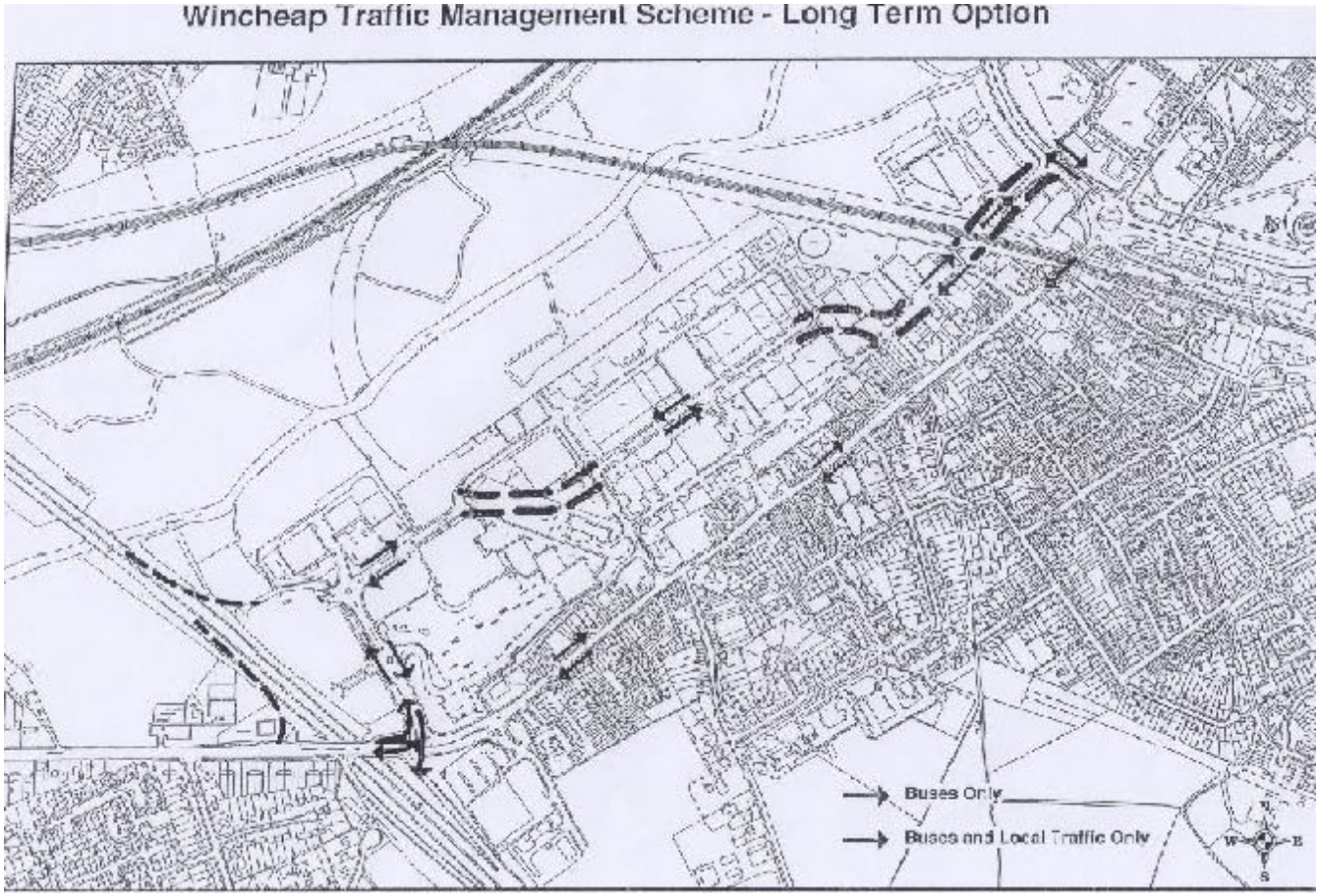
Slide 14 Shows the Maidens Head junction. It appears to show a perfect left turn lane city bound. Yet there are no plans for road widening or the purchase of any extra land so I'm baffled as to how HGVs will navigate it other than by swinging into another traffic lane. Of course, pedestrians and cyclists are conveniently forgotten in all these plans despite the reliance on the Local Plan for 'modal shift' from car to walking and cycling.

Slide 15: The Boundary extended to Cow Lane



Slide 15 Shows a later plan from Quinn's traffic consultants showing a new connecting road for traffic exiting on the 4th slip road and city bound for the Wincheap Relief Road. It takes out the crazy 90* turns they first proposed on slide 2. We are still unclear where Pentland's and Quinns' responsibilities begin and end. Given the lack of joined up thinking between them over the eastern access to the Quinn site, we think this needs to be made very clear.

Slide 16: 2003 Babtie Group proposed solution to the pinchpoint under the railway bridge



Slide 16 Shows an extract from a 2003 traffic plan produced by Babtie Consultants for Wincheap. This was 15 years ago and indicated a Wincheap relief Road going under the railway and exiting via St Andrews Close by the Aldi supermarket. It shows the 4th slip road bypassing most of the retail estate. Traffic on Wincheap would have been for buses and local traffic only. It would have given a new gyratory system on the ring road incorporating the existing Wincheap roundabout and have dealt with the pinch point at the Wincheap railway bridge. This shows how far backwards we have gone in 15 years. These plans have been 'disappeared' as being too expensive.

Slide 17: existing cycle routes



Slide 17 Shows the existing cycle routes. As I said earlier, the Local Plan relies on people switching from cars to cycles and walking. Everything you have seen to date not only ignores cyclists and pedestrians but it actually makes things more difficult for them, compromising existing routes. Can you imagine the cycle route on Ten Perch Road working with HGVs thundering off the A2 or using Simmonds Road to access the Horses and Goats tunnel or walking to and from the city along Wincheap past Simmonds Road?

So this is why we think it's a nightmare. It's a set of disjointed plans that don't appear to work.

It introduces new traffic via a 4th slip road from London and 1150 houses (plus the 50+ behind Wincheap School) with no clarity of the effect on the ring road.

It makes life for pedestrians and cyclists worse.

It will increase pollution.

750 houses and the 4th slip road have planning consent. 400 houses, the Wincheap relief road and the park and ride do not. We find it extraordinary that the only two positive measures to improve traffic and pollution, the park and ride and the relief road, have not been considered first. Nor are we clear that they are fully funded.

Personally, I have had endless meetings with planners and traffic engineers from KCC and CCC. I have met with the developers. I have voted against the planning applications which have been voted through by councillors from the other Parties who, I think, don't really understand the complexity and the gravity of our situation.

The good thing about nightmares is you wake up from them. This is what you can do to help other key players to wake up to our nightmare.

Contacts in Local Government

County Cllr: Ida Linfield KCC

County Cllr: Michael Northey KCC

County Cllr: Mike Whiting Transport Portfolio holder KCC

Richard Moore: Transportation Manager Canterbury City Council

Austin Mackie: Senior Planning Officer Canterbury City Council