



Richard Arrowsmith
Romsley Parish Council
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25th June 2017

To: *John Hobbs – Director of Economy and Infrastructure*
Marcus Hart - Cabinet Member for Highways

CC: *Simon Geraghty - Leader of Worcestershire County Council*
Worcestershire County Council Cabinet members
Karen May - County Councillor (Clent Hills Division)
Chris Allen-Jones - District Councillor (Belbroughton & Romsley Ward)
Sajid Javid - Member of Parliament (Bromsgrove)
Rod Lake - West Mercia Police
David Perridge – West Mercia Police

Dear John and Marcus,

I am writing to you both following the death of a cyclist on the morning of Thursday 15th June on the B4551, Bromsgrove Road, in the village of Romsley, North Worcestershire.

This tragic incident has shocked many of our residents, but sadly few are surprised given the large volume of dangerous traffic related issues they experience on a daily basis and the many Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) they have witnessed on this section of road during recent years. These include:

- **June 2017** – a fatal accident involving a cyclist.
- **May 2017** – a car left the road at speed and causing serious damage to Council property opposite the Sun Public House.
- **Spring 2017** – Several near misses reported involving vehicles mounting and driving on the pavement in close proximity to children and their parents.
- **May 2016** – a car left the road and crashed through a fence into a garden.
- **April 2016** – a cyclist received serious injuries after being forced off the road by a car outside the Co-op village shop.
- **April 2015** – a car left the road at speed and crashed through a hedge.
- **February 2014** – a pupil from St Kenelm's School was struck and injured by a vehicle whilst crossing the road outside the school.

These incidents are all spread over an 850 metre section of the B4551 that passes through the Parish or on roads in its immediate vicinity. I have provided a map showing the approximate location of these incidents as an appendix to this letter.

Over the past few years, concerns about the safety of this section of road and the need for improvements, have been repeatedly raised with the County Council through our Highways Liaison Officer, as well as our former County Councillor, Rachel Jenkins.

Frustratingly little manifest improvement has been made and there is now a great deal of anger and resentment in our community about the apparent disinterest that has been shown in the safety of this road and the Romsley residents who use it. As such I urge the County Council to take rapid and meaningful action to improve safety on this section of road before there is another serious RTC and fatality.

This is clearly a complex section of road with several safety problems along the route in question which include:

- *Excessive speeds along the full length of the B4551 through the Parish.*
- *Blind bends at the top and bottom entry points in to the village.*
- *Poor demarcation for drivers from the rural to semi-urban village environments.*
- *High speed "rat runs" along Dark Lane, St Kenelm's Road and Dayhouse Bank.*
- *A lack of a marked crossing and sufficient traffic calming around the entrance to St Kenelms School.*
- *School related parking issues that result in vehicles mounting and driving along the pavement during school drop off and collection periods.*
- *Parking and road geometry issues in front of the village shop leading to traffic blockages, unsafe driving and confrontation between drivers.*
- *Inappropriate speed limit on Dayhouse Bank exposing residents to 40mph traffic despite the close proximity of some houses to the road and there being no pavement.*

I believe that each one of these problems is of sufficient importance to justify appropriate examination and an engineering solution produced by your department. However, it must also be recognised that, because of the close proximity of these problems to each other, there is a compounding effect in which they reinforce and amplify each other, so the overall hazard level on this section of road is multiplied many times.

I therefore believe that a comprehensive assessment, looking at all the problems on this section of road collectively, must be carried out. Only by undertaking a combined assessment can the most effective, integrated and best value engineering solutions be identified and delivered. It is also my hope that you will fully involve the Parish Council in this work to ensure the community position is fully considered and any solution is fully sustainable to us.

Despite my demands for appropriating engineering solutions, I also fully recognise that improving traffic safety requires additional efforts. You have my assurance that the Parish Council will work with you and the Police constructively on education and enforcement solutions to ensure the community is playing its part in making this road safer.

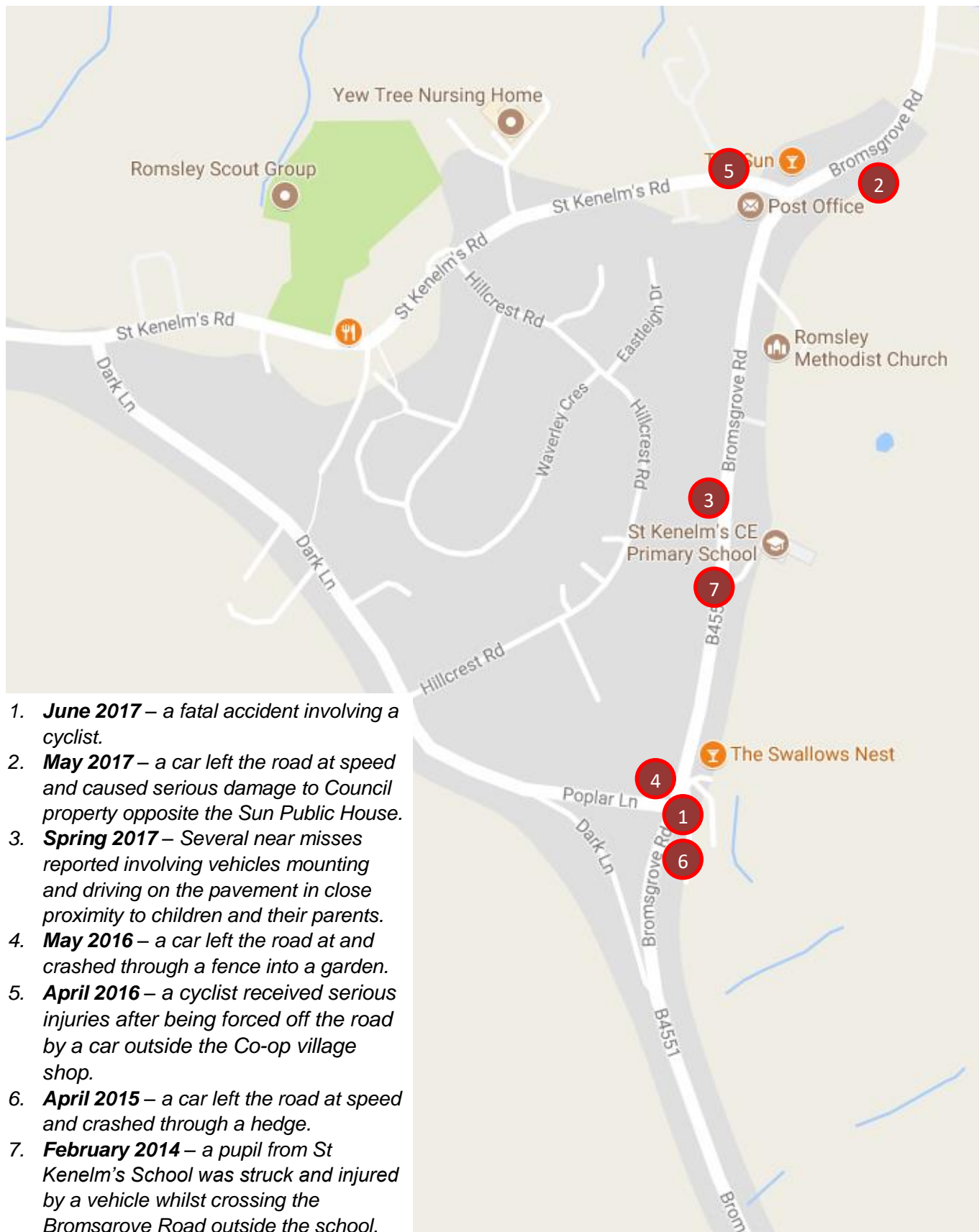
Finally, I would once again urge you to consider this matter as quickly as possible as the frequency of dangerous incidents on this road appears to be increasing, as are the concerns of our community who must not continue to be exposed to further avoidable risk.

I look forward to receiving your response within the next 14 days and I hope this will lead to an early meeting between the County Council, Parish Council and our County and District Councillors to agree an effective way forward.

Kind Regards,



Richard Arrowsmith,
Romsley Parish Council Chairperson.



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