

11 Barlaston Old Rd.  
Trentham, Stoke on Trent

December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Highway Asset & Group Coordination  
Highways Department  
Civic Centre, Glebe St.  
Stoke on Trent

Attention: Lyndsey Pajor

Copy: Malcolm Dawson, David Bird, Jack Bereton M.P., Cllr. Jellyman, Cllr. Fallows

Dear Madam,

With reference reply to my complaint SOT63394, concerning the delay in repairing a broken sewage pipe and the subsequent hole in the road on Barlaston Old Road, your reply of 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2017 was discussed at the Trentham South Residents' Association meeting on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and the Residents' Association's observations are as follows:

1. It is disturbing that a complaint about the operation of the Highways Department is investigated by another branch of the same department. And not surprising therefore that the report you have submitted is a reiteration of Senior Engineer Mr. Bird's position, about which we have complained.
2. When you state "the broken pipe is part of Severn Trent's equipment and they are responsible for its maintenance" may we point out that The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 Chapter 2 clearly places responsibility on the local authority to coordinate works on the public's roads.  
"This chapter sets out the statutory basis for co-ordinating works in the street. Section 59(1) of NRSWA requires street authorities to "use their best endeavours to co-ordinate the execution of works of all kinds (including works for road purposes and the carrying out of relevant activities) in streets for which they are responsible....."  
(c) to protect the structure of the street and the integrity of apparatus in it." This duty includes co-ordination with other street authorities if works in one street affect streets for which another authority is responsible.....  
The duty has been extended through the Network Management Duty, which requires a more pro-active approach to the management of the road network and the way authorities should tackle the causes of congestion and disruption.  
2.1.1 These sections form the basis of this Code of Practice and impose a statutory obligation on street authorities and undertakers to have regard for it

in the steps they take to co-ordinate works.”

Leaving a dangerous safety and health issue for five weeks in the hope that the private contractor will effect action, while the community was repeatedly alerting the Highways Department that no action was forthcoming; and leaving it to a Resident to contact the CEO of Severn Trent to finally commence the repairs, begs the question,

How does your department interpret the Act to justify the five week delay and your inaction?

Where was the co-ordination?

3. You state, “The City Council (as Street Authority) currently inspects 30% of such excavations and reinstatements....”

You admit there was no consultation on the seriousness of the situation, or supervision of the private contractor before and during the period of the work; and you have confirmed there has been no inspection of the reinstatement of the road.

Again, our Residents ask, where is your duty of care for the public and their roads when such a dangerous situation was left to go on for soo long? It does demonstrate your lack of knowledge of the history of problems on Barlaston Old Road concerning the volume of traffic on a country lane and the pressure put on the surface by 44 tonne tankers going down it every 7 minutes: and that the road, in the same location had seen a similar repair within the last year.

Where is the monitoring and an examination of the methods of the private contractor? Is the use of clay pipes suitable when put under such pressure?

What auditing role does your department have to supervise the materials used on the public roads especially when the same repair had to be made within a year?

3. Regarding the condition of Barlaston Old Road:

You mention, “its overall condition is now higher than many other roads in the city”

This point is irrelevant to our complaint but also a sad indictment of your department .

- 4.Regarding the Construction Management Plan:

Severn Trent’s development on the Strongford site, down Barlaston Old Road, was objected to strongly by this Residents’ Association over concerns of the traffic effect such a development would have on an already dangerous road. The Construction Management Plan as a result became a condition of the planning application approval. And as would appear to be your department’s preference, the

plan will be monitored by Severn Trent of themselves! Where is the Highway Department's role in safeguarding the community?

The Residents in our Association are far from satisfied by your response and have decided to share your correspondence and our concerns with the wider community on social media.

Barlaston Old Road continues to pose a concern and a problem for all. I expect your department will be hearing more from the community in the future and we can only hope constructive and safe measures will ensue.

Yours sincerely,

Sheila Weightman  
Chair, Trentham South Residents' Association