



Derek Whiteway, Clerk to the Council
122 North Wing, The Residence
Kershaw Drive
Lancaster
LA1 3TF

Tel: 01524 64908
Email: clerk@aldcliffewithstoddaypc.org

Website: www.aldcliffewithstoddaypc.org

To:

Councillor Warren Goldsworthy, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Lancashire County Council;

Campbell Robb, Chief Executive Officer, Canal & River Trust;

Matt Townsend, Director of Highways and Transport, Lancashire County Council.

Copy to Councillor Gina Dowding, Progressive Lancashire Group, Lancashire County Council.

Sent by email to warren.goldsworthy@lancashire.gov.uk;
customer.feedback@canalrivertrust.org.uk; matt.townsend@lancashire.gov.uk;
cc to gina.dowding@lancashire.gov.uk

2nd June 2026

Dear Councillor Goldsworthy, Mr Robb and Mr Townsend,

Aldcliffe Road Parking – Lancaster

At Aldcliffe with Stodday Parish Council the matter which concerns our parishioners the most – and has done ever since the PC was founded in 2017 – is the informal parking along the east side of a stretch of Aldcliffe Road that runs alongside Lancaster Canal. What is unusual about this stretch of road is that the highway abuts land owned by the Canal and River Trust (CRT). Vehicles park, without restriction, partly on CRT land and partly on the highway, constricting two-way traffic for a length of about 0.17 mile (270 metres), between SD 4705 6063 and SD 4694 6042. The parking along this stretch causes frequent traffic problems and leads to damage to cars and is seriously dangerous for cyclists to negotiate.

- The land owned by CRT between the highway and the fence along the towpath is of earth with some shingle and in very poor condition with frequent, large potholes. It is on this land that vehicles try to park but along much of the stretch it is not wide enough to contain a vehicle, particularly as the road narrows about two thirds of the way south.
- Vehicles park partly on the highway so that there is not enough room for two cars to pass and at its narrowest point there is only enough room for one vehicle. Because of the curves in the road as it follows the canal, this creates a chicane just over a quarter of a kilometre long. See appended images 1 and 2.

- At times the entire length of this stretch is full of parked cars so that it becomes impossible for southbound vehicles to pull into the east side to allow north bound vehicles through. This means that at least one vehicle must reverse a substantial way. When there are two or more vehicles trying to proceed in either direction, the reversing manoeuvre becomes very difficult. Even when there are gaps in the parked cars there is often insufficient room for southbound vehicles to pull into the left.
- The route is regularly used by tractors towing slurring tanks or grass trailer bins. These vehicles take up the whole width of the road and are unable to reverse practically and safely.
- The edge of the highway is breaking down in a number of the places along this stretch, revealing the cobbles underneath. At these points the potholes on the CRT land extend into the highway. This is particularly dangerous for cyclists going southwards on the east side of the road when vehicles are coming northwards with a reasonable expectation of right of way. See appended image 3.
- This stretch of Aldcliffe Road has become attractive to camper vans that are large and so extend onto the highway and their height impairs visibility. There are sometimes five or more large vans parked on the chicane. See appended image 2.
- The west side of the road has vegetation growing from the foot of the wall that includes several self-seeded sycamore trees, bushes, shrubs and brambles that reduce the width of available road, impair visibility and scratch cars trying to squeeze through. Clearing the vegetation would improve sight lines and give traffic more space to manoeuvre.
- Because of the curve of the road and the length of the obstruction by parked vehicles, visibility from each end of the single lane section becomes very important. If a southbound vehicle could see a north bound vehicle entering what is in effect a chicane, it could wait. But the distance and the impairments to vision mean that it is very difficult for vehicles entering the narrowed section from either end to see what is in, or entering, from the other end. Which is why traffic becomes jammed and needs to reverse. This is particularly dangerous for cyclists if they are in the middle of such manoeuvres – it is a regular cycle route to and from Lancaster University.
- The County Council has recently put H-bars on the road where there is a gap in the fence and pedestrians cross to enter the Pony Wood reservation. The H-bars will discourage parking that would obstruct pedestrians but they will do nothing to help the flow of traffic, even though they are at the narrowest pinch point in the chicane. This is because they are too small to enable even a small southbound car to use the one on the east side as a pull-in to give way to north bound vehicles. Unfortunately the H-bar on the east side is quite a bit shorter than that on the west side (where no one tries to park). It is barely long enough for a cyclist to take refuge.

Local residents have been making representations to their City, County and Aldcliffe with Stodday Parish Councillors over many years about this situation. They see the solution as

simple; restrict parking along the east side of this quarter of a kilometre of road. But we have heard that because there is no curb marking the edge of the highway, yellow lines and controlled parking spaces (which work well on the northern section of Aldcliffe Road) cannot be installed. Moreover, because the Highways authority does not own the land between the highway and the towpath fence, they have no responsibility for its surface. The CRT accept responsibility to manage the towpath and the way that the canal is used but the rough ground between the fence and the highway has been ignored for years. Occasionally a County Highways vehicle returning from pothole filling will leave some spare material in the worst potholes along the chicane. And recently a member of the public has filled a large one with some aggregate and a small amount of cement.

What is needed is for the County Council and the Canal and River Trust to work together to find a solution to enable safe traffic flow in both directions. Proper pull in places without parking are what is needed. Introducing parking charges for other than disabled vehicles could pay for the work. The residents of Aldcliffe and Stodday are regular users of Aldcliffe Road to access the facilities of Lancaster and the northbound motorway. There is increasing 'rat running' through Aldcliffe Road to avoid the jams and blockages on the A6. At certain times of the year the chicane will see a series of tractors and trailers passing along it, sometimes travelling in both directions.

Chicanes can be a useful traffic calming measure but the chicane along Aldcliffe Road has not been designed to reduce the traffic from the 30mph speed limit and is anyway too long without sightlines or traffic control to be safe and effective. Aldcliffe with Stodday Parish Council hopes that the Canal and River Trust will work with Lancashire County Highways to improve this short stretch of road. We would be pleased to join a site meeting to discuss ways forward.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Derek Whiteway". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Derek Whiteway, Parish Clerk

Appendix – Images

Image 1 - Vehicles parked half on highway and half on CRT land.



Image 2 - Large camper type vans parked on narrowest part obscuring sightlines.



Image 3 - Edge of highway breaking down:

