

Huish Episcopi Parish Council

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7 Bishops Drive
Huish Episcopi
Langport
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Mr D Mears
Town Clerk
Langport Town Council

28 November 2017

Dear Mr Mears

re: POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF THE HANGING CHAPEL

Huish Episcopi Parish Council objects most strongly to another proposal to close the Hanging Chapel to all traffic and makes the following observations:

- Any damage to this historic building is to be deplored, but the Council believes this has been caused by careless HGV/large van drivers not car drivers. Local car drivers and passing traffic should not be penalised by the actions of bad drivers.
- Diversion of traffic from the Hanging Chapel would put major pressure on Field Road to the roundabout and Somerton Road, especially at peak Academy times, adding to the existing HGV route traffic.
- The impact of this proposal would mean that the additional traffic would primarily affect Huish Episcopi, rather than Langport, residents particularly those exiting from a number of estates – St. Mary's Park, Brookland Road, Huish Lea, the Trial Ground when developed, Bartlett's Elm, Old Kelways, Garden City, Meadow Close, The Beeches and the Shire's Garage junction.
- This historic asset should be available to locals and passing travellers alike, not just a few neighbours and pedestrians.
- Lack of access to this unique building could have an adverse effect on local tourism.

It seems most likely that previous damage has been caused by HGV/large van drivers mainly entering from the Huish Episcopi side of the Chapel. Possible options to solve the problem include:

- Amend the present signage at the War Memorial, and similarly at Post Office Corner, to include both width and height restriction, maybe at 4x4 level.
- Exclude all HGVs.
- Install CCTV as a disincentive with signage reading for example: ONLY CARS PERMITTED THROUGH THE HANGING CHAPEL CCTV IN OPERATION.
- Add two white lines under the Chapel delineating a central route through.
- Add speed humps in the approach to the Chapel from both directions.
- Install a height bar before the Chapel.

Huish Episcopi Parish Council remains very disappointed not to have been consulted earlier by either Langport Town Council, Somerset Highways or Somerset Heritage on this proposal. The Hanging Chapel may be in Langport Parish, but the major impact of this proposal has far greater consequences for Huish Episcopi Parish roads and its residents. The Council certainly does not dismiss the concerns about serious damage to the iconic Hanging Chapel, but it also does not believe closure to all traffic to be, in any way, the best solution.

Yours sincerely

JANE REDFEARN (Mrs)
Clerk to the Parish Council

Copy to:
Somerset Highways
Somerset Heritage
Cllr C Aparicio Paul
Cllr G Tucker