

One of the issues that constantly fills the proverbial postbag is transport. I often feel that just as we take a step forward on transport related issues we then end up taking two steps back and the dreadful traffic around the A20 corridor, particularly Hermitage Lane, is a classic example.

The development on the corner of Hermitage Lane is causing much grief for those that regularly use that particular route and negatively affecting businesses in Barming and beyond tremendously. I see the problems of it myself and only last week it took me an hour to get back from Maidstone Hospital to Aylesford Village, a distance I could have walked quicker.

The frustrating thing is that this chaos was predicted. Looking back at correspondence from constituents or users of Hermitage Lane made it clear that the proposed traffic layout, with lights so close to the three-way A20 junction, would cause jams but those concerns were dismissed with derisory statements suggesting that the "expert planners" had looked at the layout and it would work fine. Well it doesn't. And now authorities are blaming each other for the problems. However instead of portioning blame constituents, businesses, hospital patients, and general users want to know what can be done? Can it be altered? Can the lights be phased differently?

It feels just as we get to a better (but not perfect) place on the Quarry Wood junction, a nightmare has emerged less than a quarter of a mile up the road. And it will only get worse when the proposed housing developments are finished.

Perhaps if concerns hadn't been dismissed so readily then maybe we wouldn't all be suffering these lengthy jams but now is an opportunity to right this wrong and consider what can be done to solve this problem for the benefit of all.