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Dear Sirs

Surface of M20 motorway north of Junction 9

For over 25 years, residents in the vicinity of the M20, north of Junction 9, have endured the very high levels of traffic noise generated by the concrete surface of the motorway. In the area of Sandyhurst Lane, Ashford, there are almost 200 existing dwellings within 500 metres of the motorway, housing around 600 individuals. Furthermore, the latest version of the draft Ashford Local Plan includes proposals for additional development sites which would add a further 75 properties, potentially a further 200 residents in our area, living within 500m of the M20, with estimated noise levels in excess of 62dB(A), day and night.

In a survey carried out to gather evidence for our consultation response to the draft Local Plan, Sandyhurst Lane Residents' Association found 93% of respondents (current residents in the affected area) felt that noise mitigation measures on the adjoining M20 were essential or important for both their comfort and for that of new residents.

In October 2014, the surface of the concrete was 'grooved' to increase skid resistance and this, together with the inexorable rise in traffic volumes (in particular heavy lorries) has exacerbated the problem to a level where the noise intrusion has become almost intolerable and is blighting the lives of residents.

Part of the M20 carriageway between junctions 10 and 9 was resurfaced with 'quiet' tarmac about four years ago. Recently, several short stretches between junctions 9 and 8 have similarly been resurfaced. This resurfacing results in a spectacular reduction in traffic noise and leaves our residents frustrated that they still have to endure unbearable levels of noise when the solution is so clearly displayed on other nearby stretches of the M20.

We appreciate that budgets are tight, but could we at least have recognition that this problem is acute and an estimate of the timescale in which it will be solved?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Tony Bartlett
Chair SLRA

cc: Rt Hon Damian Green MP, Kent County Council Highways, Ashford Borough Council, KCC & ABC councillors.