

Letter from Mr C F Lucas to Dorking Urban District Council in March 1914

"May I ask you to consider the dangerous way the Dorking Brick Company's engine is driven along our roads, and at such early hours of the morning. It is a nuisance to everyone. I was driving the mail van along the Guildford Road, and saw the engine being driven along in the direction of Guildford. This was about a quarter to five in the morning. The engine was then almost opposite Bury Hill-road, leading from Milton Heath. I was just passing Mr Broom's farm. I had to go to Westcott and then go on to Abinger Hammer Post Office being due there at 5.20am. I did not catch up to the traction engine until I got to Crossways Farm, where the road are very narrow. The chap in the back truck put his hand up for me to come past them. This I tried to do, but found, when I had passed the two back trucks, that I could not pass the engine, which was not stopped, as it should have been. My horse became frightened, and almost took me up the bank, and as soon as I could pass the engine my horse galloped nearly to Abinger Hammer before I could stop it. Why not pass a by-law to stop heavy traffic of this sort passing through our streets. Another person who passed remarked to me how fast the traction engine was traveling. He said it was going about six or eight miles an hour and when I went to the brickyard to complain I was sauced by a fellow whom I took to be the engine driver. "

In discussion a member of the Council thought it was a disgrace to have a machine like this coming through the streets:

"For some reason the drivers would not hear others who wanted to pass them. They thought they were knights of the road and they only paid £1 a ton. At all hours their houses were shaken and the drivers had no respect for anyone else who wanted a portion of the road"

The Council agreed to write to the authorities at Kingston, who licensed the engine, expressing their concerns about road safety.

A few years' earlier, On 29 June 1909, another steam traction engine with a load of bricks had caused concern, but on that occasion it was because it had shed its load on Coast Hill

