

**Lindfield Parish Council (LPC)  
Traffic Study Working Group Conclusions for  
Planning & Traffic Committee (P&TC)**

Committee	P&TC
Date	30.10.18
Item	8

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- In the light of resident's concerns relating to traffic volumes, speed and safety, a Traffic Study was commissioned in 2015 to identify issues and assess potential improvements.
- The completed study provides the basis for discussions with, and ultimately applications to, the Highways Authority and potential future developers as to desired improvement schemes.
- It was clear from residents' feedback that support for improvements exists, however views were mixed over the appropriateness and likely effectiveness of the schemes proposed.
- There remain seven sites where there is a desire for improvements and the Working Group recommends that a Community Highways Scheme (CHS) Application is submitted West Sussex Highways Authority with the support of Andrew Lea, District Councillor.
- The Working Group also recommends that Mid Sussex District Council be asked to add the schemes to its Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) for consideration as part of the Planning Application deliberations for sites in Lindfield Village and nearby which are likely to impact upon the highway infrastructure.

Consequently, at the present time, it is not envisaged that any further expenditure should be incurred on Traffic Study activity. This position may of course need to be reconsidered in the light of future housebuilding or other construction, or if necessary to support a scheme which is received positively under the CHS or IDP.

The Working Group considers that the study and public consultation has proved to be a useful and productive exercise, coming some 20 years after the last detailed study. It has captured the current views of residents and their concerns, updated traffic data and provided detailed proposals for highway enhancements. The Working Group considers that the proposals should remain under review by the Council's P&TC recognising the dynamic changing planning environment.

Furthermore, activities detailed below should assist in addressing some of the identified traffic issues and will potentially provide enhanced data to support highways improvements to the benefit of residents and accessibility for cyclists and pedestrians.

**ONGOING ACTIVITIES**

- Speed Indicator Devices (SIDS) – two units are being purchased by the Parish Council. Whilst the Traffic Study did not identify speeding as a significant issue across the village, there was some evidence of speeding and there is a clear perception amongst residents that this can be a problem. These units will be utilised at various sites around the village, helping to educate drivers as to their speed and collecting data on speed, size and numbers of vehicles, which may support future highways enhancements
- Cycleway – initial investigations are being undertaken in conjunction with surrounding parishes to consider enhanced cycle access both to and in the village
- Considering whether a recommended route can be identified for HGV's away from the High Street (the 'Petworth model')
- Separately, there are initial proposals by a developer in respect of Haywards Heath Golf Club. If these are taken forward, they will have a significant impact on Lindfield Village, as well as the potential to deliver road and infrastructure improvements.

**BACKGROUND**

LPC commissioned a Traffic Study in 2015 with a view to identifying material issues in the village.

- Nine potential sites were specified recognising known 'hot spots' and feedback received from residents. Underpinning the study was a desire to achieve both traffic calming and support the Neighbourhood Plan's aim "to encourage greater use of public transport, cycling and walking."
- Following the 1996 Traffic Study various measures had been implemented, there had been no village wide review in nearly 20 years, despite significant increases in the volume and usage of vehicles.

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- During the 11 years preceding the study, there had been 64 reported collisions involving personal injury resulting in 15 serious and 60 slight casualties. No fatalities have been identified as a result of traffic related incidents during this period.

**CONSTRAINTS**

- Both LPC and the Traffic Consultant recognised that changes in a historic village such as Lindfield would be challenging due to several, potentially opposing, factors:
  - physical restraints; most of the roads are narrow and unsuited to modern traffic volumes
  - historic property; several properties in the village are located close by roads and footways, limiting scope for widening or amending pathways or indeed highways
  - visual impact; modern signage requirements can result in additional street furniture and ‘clutter’, potentially impacting negatively on the village street scene
  - any scheme to divert traffic or parking away from a location is particularly challenging, as understanding the impact of where that activity will be borne after such changes is key
  - the Highways Authorities ongoing resistance to permanent Traffic Restriction Orders (e.g. HGV bans) reflecting (a) the lack of suitable roads within the region and (b) that diverting such traffic to the benefit of one location will impact negatively elsewhere
- Cost has become an increasing challenge to all Councils and whilst there is the availability of Section 106 funding from previous developments, some of this is restricted to specific uses and where it is available for highway enhancement, such expenditure must pass hurdles set by the Highways Authority.
- The Highways Authority (HA) considers that if there is a material identified need, due to accident rates or economic impact and an identifiable practical solution, then it is highly likely that they would have already identified the scheme and, depending on its assessed importance, that it will be on their required capital expenditure programme. Consequently, the Highways Authority has developed a set of criteria by which it judges proposed schemes. These criteria incorporate several factors:
  - the requirements for change; including accident data, economic benefits, environmental impact, level of stakeholder (including public) support
  - the likelihood of the proposed scheme achieving its goals or its potential to create new or further difficulties; *in extremis* whether the scheme could create a potential legal liability for the Highways Authority because of the works undertaken
  - whether the expenditure involved represents value for money or could more usefully be employed in another scheme
- In summary, the HA is the ‘arbiter’ is deciding whether a scheme should be allowed to spend S106 or potentially gain capital funding. The level of detail required to seek its view is beyond the resources of many and consequently the use of an appropriate Traffic Consultant is key.

**APPROACH**

- In the light of the Parish Council’s brief, the Traffic Consultant produced an initial interim report in September 2016 and a summary in June 2017, which was published on the Council’s website.
  - Following the feedback received, the Traffic Consultant refined his report and produced a Consultation Report in December 2017.
  - In January 2018 a four-week Public Consultation was undertaken and resulted in ~350 attendees at the initial open day and written responses from 259 individuals. These evidenced support for improvements at seven of the nine sites considered (see Appendix One). Below the headline numbers, the comments received (see Appendix Two) ranged from fully supportive to others less convinced that the proposed solution was correct for the identified site.
  - Following collation of the feedback, the Council’s Traffic Consultant pulled together a summary of his conclusions and this was discussed by the P&TC’s Traffic Study Working Group.