

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

TRAFFIC STUDY INVITATION TO QUOTE

This document summarises the history of recent traffic calming in Lindfield and forms the basis on which tenders are invited for a further study to propose and justify future traffic management, pedestrian safety, and traffic calming measures throughout the area of the Parish of Lindfield.

BACKGROUND: 1995 - 1999

In 1995-96 West Sussex County Council commissioned the Frank Graham Group to conduct a Traffic Study in Lindfield because of concerns over the amount of extraneous traffic passing through the village and road safety problems at several of its junctions. The final report was published in August 1996.

The objectives of the study were to:

- i. Establish the volume of extraneous traffic which was passing through Lindfield via the C310, B2028 and B2111;
- ii. Identify local 'rat-running' traffic through Lindfield where vehicles were leaving the main routes to circumvent known areas of delay;
- iii. Assess the need for traffic calming in Lindfield taking account of the then recently approved 1995 Local Plan for Haywards Heath [which includes Lindfield] and any traffic calming measures planned for adjoining villages;
- iv. Review pedestrian safety on the B2028 and B2111 within Lindfield;
- v. Assess junction capacity and safety at a number of junctions in Lindfield;
- vi. Identify any specific traffic management and road safety problems and prepare conceptual solutions.

Selected relevant extracts from the Report are appended and are mainly self explanatory.
(Appendix G)

Please note: the Frank Graham Group Report refers to the Eastern Road/Brushes Lane route, as a local 'rat run'. This is slightly misleading: immediately after the turning into Eastern Road from Lewes Road, the road forks, Eastern Road being the right fork and Luxford Road the left. Both of these roads come out onto Newton Road. More through traffic appears to use Luxford Road, which is a more direct route. The 'rat run', used to avoid a difficult right turn into the High Street from Lewes Road, follows the route: - (from Lewes Road) right turn into Luxford Road then /Newton Road/Dukes Road/Brushes Lane and back on to the High Street. Traffic will then either turn left and then right into Hickmans Lane (north end) or turn right and leave the Village by the B2028.

After the publication of the Report, there was informal consultation between West Sussex County Council and Lindfield Parish Council who met regularly to discuss the options. Formal public consultation on the proposed solutions took place before a final scheme was agreed.

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The following solutions were implemented with the exception of the pedestrian refuge south of Pondcroft Road (*see note below*).

(See map at Appendix A)

1. Summerhill Lane/West Common
 - Traffic signals incorporating relocated existing pedestrian crossing facility.
 2. Appledore Gardens/West Common
 - Mini roundabout.
 3. Hickmans Lane (south)/West Common
 - Traffic signals with pedestrian facility across West Common (including some restriction of parking in Hickmans Lane).
 4. Backwoods Lane/Black Hill
 - Mini roundabout.
 5. High Street (south of Pondcroft Road)
 - Pedestrian refuge and local carriageway widening at the edge of the Common.
(*This was not implemented – there were problems due to the depth of the mains services and legal difficulties associated with land-take from the Common*).
 6. High Street/Lewes Road
 - Improvement of pedestrian refuge with associated widening of footway on the eastern side of the High Street, changes to the existing give way approach from Lewes Road to improve visibility and safety. The option of future conversion to a mini roundabout to be protected, so as to minimise conversion costs (see further below).
- N.B. 1 – 6 above form the single route treatment of the B2028.**
7. Sunte Avenue/Gander Hill/Portsmouth Lane/Summerhill Lane
 - Single mini roundabout with reshaping of the small green and other verge works.

The work was funded by WSCC with a contribution from the Parish Council to ensure the use of appropriate materials for the Conservation Area.

Luxford Road/Brushes Lane and Hickmans Lane/Sunte Avenue

These routes were to remain as lower priorities in the study. It was anticipated that the primary measures could have an interactive effect on the remaining areas and once these measures were in place, the overall benefits would be assessed, which would identify whether there was justification for having the remaining areas considered for forward funding.

In 1999, on completion of the implementation of traffic calming measures along the B2028, the 40 mph speed limit between Haywards Heath and Lindfield was reduced to 30mph. This had not been possible until physical means were in place to slow the traffic. At the same time other speed limits in Haywards Heath were reduced.

A post-scheme report, prepared in December 2002, by WSCC is appended. (Appendix B)

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After the main work was completed on the B2028, the Parish Council negotiated further with West Sussex County Council on minor traffic calming measures for the north end of the High Street (B2028) and the following were implemented:

(See map at Appendix A)

8. High Street junction with Brushes Lane
 - extension of existing Traffic Regulation Order
 - new kerb lines and brick paving
 - alterations to existing road markings

9. High Street Junction with Hickmans Lane (north end)
 - extension of existing Traffic Regulation Order
 - new kerb line and brick paving
 - illuminated signs
 - safety barrier on the footway on the west side of the High Street at the junction with Hickmans Lane to prevent pedestrians from crossing at the point where visibility was poor.

10. Northern End Village Entry Gateway
 - white painted barred gates at the entrance to the village on the B2028 from the north with associated signing, lining and coloured infill surfacing.

This work was paid for by the Parish Council.

Subsequently, in 1993, Denmans Lane (which runs from the High Street to Hickmans Lane) was closed off just beyond the junction with Compton Road. This means that traffic uses Denmans Lane/Compton Road to cut the corner between the High Street and Hickmans Lane. Compton Road is quite a narrow road, and constant car parking (residential and casual) takes place along its route. This issue was not considered in the context of the Frank Graham Group report.

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POST 1999

A number of new factors now need to be considered:-

- In 2000, since the implementation of the Traffic Calming measures, Lindfield County Junior School, which formerly occupied a site in Lewes Road, was relocated to new facilities at the Infants School site, off Backwoods Lane, to form a through primary school (Lindfield Primary School). The site of the former Junior School has now been redeveloped to provide eighteen dwellings. The pattern of vehicle and pedestrian movements will already have changed, both on the routes to the school and on Lewes Road, and will have changed further now that the redeveloped site is fully occupied. Many children still cross Lewes Road to the Common footpath on their journeys to and from school and the school crossing patrol outside the former school building has been retained.
- In 2006, the Parish Council published its Lindfield Village Action Plan. Within the document there is a section entitled "Traffic & Transport." This set out a number of objectives and ambitions. A copy is appended.

Appendix H

It should be noted that the proposal at Action 1 (the mini-roundabout) was subsequently included as a condition of the planning consent granted by Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) in 2008 (and comprised in a section 106 Planning Agreement) for the residential development of a parcel of land at Newton Road for 120 houses (known as "The Limes"). The reason for the attachment of this condition is cited as "*to ensure that the development does not result in increased congestion.*" However, MSDC agreed to remove the condition in 2010, as a result of both Lindfield Parish Council, and the Lindfield Preservation Society withdrawing its support for the proposal, in the light of further research undertaken. A copy of a letter dated 24th May 2010 briefly confirming the position is appended.

Appendix I

- Planning consent for a housing development of 230 houses on land at Gravelye Lane/Lyoth Lane was granted by MSDC in 2013 and is presently in the course of construction (the Barratts development). It is contended that there will be an increase in traffic exiting Gravelye Lane onto the Lewes Road (B2111) and heading into Lindfield. A copy of the Transport Assessment carried out on behalf of the developer, as part of the planning application is available on request, but the applicant sought to show that there would only be a fairly minimal impact from this development.
- The Haywards Heath relief road to the south of the Town (which is designated the A272) is intended to become the primary route for long distance through-traffic travelling between destinations to the east and west of Haywards Heath. The existing A272 is reclassified as a "B" class road and designated the B2272. The road is not yet fully opened, but it seems doubtful that it will direct much traffic going north-south/south-north away from Lindfield. However, although not something the Parish Council can do, it has been pointed out that there needs to be much better signage for this road in order to encourage greater use of it.

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- In connection with the Barratts development, some work has been proposed for the section of the High Street from the King Edward Hall up to the Lewes Road turn. This includes a more visible and obvious crossing point outside the King Edward Hall. The Parish Council expressed some concerns about a number of the proposals. Correspondence and plans regarding these proposals is attached. However, the appropriate solution for the junction itself remains a major objective of this study.

Appendix J

- In connection with the Safer Routes to School initiative, and in consultation with the Parish Council, and West Sussex County Council, a particular issue at Backwoods Lane regarding parking traffic in the road (mainly relating to school drop off and pick up times, and the use of the Common) is currently in the process of being resolved by the application of a Traffic Regulation Order for the installation of yellow lines.
- Parish Council support has recently been sought from the promoters of an application for a Traffic Regulation Order to impose a 7.5 tonne weight restriction along the B2028 through Lindfield High Street. This would be for all vehicles except those requiring access.
- The level of increase and speed of traffic is a recurring feature in the range of comments the Parish Council receives from residents, wherever they may live. The possibility of a 20 mph speed limit throughout the Village needs to be considered. There are of course issues around how practical and enforceable such a measure might be.
- For the survey/study to be a success, in the light of a substantial recent increase in particular of heavy lorry traffic, which is likely to expand rather than shrink, the effects of county-wide external factors that determine through traffic in our locality need also to be considered. As above, the obvious impacts are the programmes of housing and industrial developments implied by national as well as appropriate regional policies and the extent and limits of a strategic allocation of highway routes for the County (East and West Sussex) that should attempt to minimise the environmental impacts on Communities, Heritage Assets, Wildlife and Climate. For these reasons the proposals for study need to extend outside the parish/ward boundaries in order to serve the legitimate interests of our parish. Again as alluded to above, particular local concerns brought to the Parish Council's attention are the absence of a width restriction on the B2111 where, near the junction with the B2028 in Lindfield, pedestrians are frequently put at risk, the absence of a weight limit on the B2028 where ancient buildings are endangered, both to divert heavy lorry through traffic onto A-roads, and high speeds down High Beech Lane.
- Finally, regard should be had to the Mid Sussex District Council Transport Study 2013, as this contains some helpful data in terms of projected traffic flows. This is available here <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/8309.htm>

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The Parish Council has been under increasing pressure to address the outstanding issues from the Frank Graham Report and to consider further traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures in various parts of the village, in view of the general increase in traffic using the road network in Mid Sussex, and recent housing expansions. Mindful that solutions for problems in one area are likely to affect other roads, the Parish Council feels that it is advisable to consider commissioning an independent study in order to reach comprehensive decisions on priorities and solutions to unresolved problems rather than to treat selected areas in isolation. The Parish Council is also keen to try and avoid over urbanisation of the Village and its approaches, and wherever possible to keep street furniture to a minimum.

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SCALE OF THE SURVEY

The survey should target the areas listed below but should address the likely effects of any possible solutions upon the entire road network in the village.

(See map at Appendix C)

1. Luxford Road-Brushes Lane commuter route } *outstanding from 1996 Survey Report*
2. Hickmans Lane-Sunte Avenue/Hickmans Lane - Finches Park Road "commuter" route(s) } *outstanding from 1996 Survey Report*
3. Lewes Road/High Street junction
4. Lewes Road (pedestrian crossing) *WSCC may consider the merits of installing a pedestrian crossing facility but the siting of this is significant in terms of its likely effect on the Luxford Road-Brushes Lane route. At present there is no unanimity on the siting.*
5. Approach from Scamps Hill (B2111)
6. High Beech Lane and Portsmouth Lane (C310)
7. West View (Speed humps)
8. High Street (from The Welkin footpath to All Saints Church, and opposite the Co-Operative Stores)
9. Denmans Lane

1. Luxford Road-Brushes Lane

This is identified as a 'rat-run' in the Frank Graham Report. **(Appendices D and E i – iv)** (*please note that the flow diagrams at appendices E ii - iv concentrate on Eastern Road rather than Luxford Road. Luxford Road appears to be the road more favoured by through traffic*).

It is acknowledged that motorists, particularly during peak times, avoid the difficult right turn from Lewes Road into the High Street by using Luxford Road, Newton Road, Dukes Road and Brushes Lane. These are narrow residential roads and Luxford Road in particular has limited off street parking, consequently a number of residents park their vehicles on the road. Residents have complained of damage to their vehicles and there is a perception that volumes of traffic and speeds exceed acceptable levels for a residential area. Residents, particularly those with children or who are less physically able, are also most concerned that there will be a serious accident unless traffic calming is introduced to deter or even stop through traffic in these roads. Options here could include speed humps, chicanes or road closure.

2. Hickmans Lane/Sunte Avenue and Hickmans Lane/Finches Park Road

Hickmans Lane/Sunte Avenue identified as a 'rat-run' in the Frank Graham Report **(Appendices D and F i - v)**.

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Motorists use this route to Haywards Heath and speeds in excess of 30 mph are reported. Residents particularly of Sunte Avenue, where there are a number of young families, are concerned about safety and the damage that is being done to their parked cars. In addition, because of the recently introduced parking controls on Gander Hill, commuter parking (using Haywards Heath railway station) is being pushed further into residential roads (Sunte Avenue).

In addition, there has been an increase in "rat run" traffic since the Frank Graham report, along Hickmans Lane, and then into Finches Park Road, as motorists seek to avoid Sunte Avenue (which can be quite congested). Finches Park Road is a narrow road with soft grass verges, and two very tight bends. With parked cars on either or both sides, passing is often difficult and quite dangerous.

3. Lewes Road/High Street junction

This junction was reshaped during the implementation of the main traffic calming scheme in order to improve visibility. The option to consider a mini-roundabout at a future date was kept open, but as explained above, the proposal was withdrawn in 2010. However, the proposal needs to be revisited in the context of this study. It should also be pointed out that there was some resistance to a mini-roundabout mainly because the associated signage was thought to have an urbanising effect in the Conservation Area.

The right turn from Lewes Road into the High Street is still a difficult one and this is thought to encourage drivers to avoid the corner by turning off at Luxford Road (see point 1 above). It may be that solving the problems at the Lewes Road/High Street would reduce the through traffic on the Luxford Road-Brushes Lane route.

One option might be to have traffic control lights situated appropriately, such that the narrowest part of Lewes Road (from the junction to where it widens) becomes in effect a single lane.

West Sussex County Council have considered further treatment of this junction and previously concluded that they cannot justify it as the post scheme accident analysis has shown that the junction has a very good safety record.

4. Lewes Road Pedestrian Crossing Facility

There has been a well supported campaign for pedestrian crossing facilities in Lewes Road. Previously, there were sixty four signatories to a letter presenting the case, mainly people from the immediate locality, many of whom have school-age children. There have also been objections to this proposal. West Sussex County Council have indicated that they are prepared to look into provision of a pedestrian controlled crossing on Lewes Road and have asked us to indicate where this should be located. The Parish Council feels that this should not be dealt with in isolation: the effects of alterations elsewhere could affect the Luxford Road/Brushes Lane route for better or worse.

5. Approach from Scamps Hill (B2111)

6. High Beech Lane/Portsmouth Lane (C310)

Both of these roads enter the Village from areas with higher speed limits and a proportion of drivers appear not to slow down when entering the 30 mph zone. There is a bend in Portsmouth Lane which limits visibility for those turning from By Sunte and the speeds of approaching vehicles can make this turning dangerous. Controlling the speeds of vehicles

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approaching from the north may also improve safety at the mini roundabout at the junction of Sunte Avenue and Portsmouth Lane. A petition was presented to the Parish Council (also to West Sussex County Council) asking for a number of measures along this stretch of road, and a copy is appended.

Appendix K

7. West View

This is a cul-de-sac bordering the eastern edge of the Common. We have been asked by a resident to consider traffic management on this road.

8. High Street – (from The Welkin footpath to All Saints Church)

In response to requests from parishioners crossing the High Street from The Welkin footpath to All Saints Church, the Clerk of Works to All Saints Church approached West Sussex County Council in November 2002 to request some kind of traffic calming measure or pedestrian crossing. WSCC could not justify funding such work as there were no recorded casualties in the latest three year period. The Parish Council did not support the subsequent suggestion of erecting a mirror in the churchyard to aid pedestrians as it was felt that speeds and distances could not be safely judged through a mirror. Speeding generally in the High Street is a constant and recurring issue. The installation of a pedestrian crossing point opposite the Co-Operative Store, or at another appropriate location in the High Street, has been a long held objective (as can be seen from Appendix H).

9. Denmans Lane

A number of residents have suggested that the road closure in Denmans Lane (see above) be re-opened. However, it is likely that this will be a very controversial and expensive option, given that modern day standards for pedestrian safety will probably mean that pavements would have to be provided.

SCOPE OF THE SURVEY

The survey should encompass the road and pedestrian safety at each of the specified locations together with the problems experienced by those living in the residential roads used as commuter routes to avoid the difficult High Street/Lewes Road junction (volume/speed of traffic; danger to young and less physically able pedestrians; damage to parked vehicles). Solutions should not create problems elsewhere. For information purposes, solutions suggested to the Parish Council include speed humps, chicanes, weight and width restrictions (to deter heavy lorries through the High Street), Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs), speed limits (e.g. 20 mph limit in the conservation areas), yellow lines, no parking zones, one way systems, etc. All these need to be looked at and considered.

The Parish Council does not possess the technical expertise to prescribe in precise terms how the survey is to be conducted but-

- the report should provide the Parish Council with the evidence to justify any decisions it may then make to implement and pay for solutions and to prioritise where necessary
- it anticipates that data will include traffic volumes, direction flows and speeds
- a summary of possible solutions should be offered for each of the areas to be targeted
- there should be an indication of how the suggested solutions could affect the traffic in the village as a whole
- detailed designs of suggested solutions are not required at this stage.

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CONSULTATION

The Parish Council will remain in consultation with WSCC throughout the process. The views of local residents will be sought by the Parish Council and there will be full formal consultation prior to decisions being agreed on solutions.

TIMETABLE

In the light of recent discussions with the West Sussex County Council, the Parish Council is expecting to have to pay for, or significantly contribute, towards any traffic calming measures agreed following this survey. Ideally it would be helpful to know the likely cost of solutions in time for the sum to be incorporated in the budget for the 2016/17 financial year, which goes before Council in November/December 2015.

Quotations to reach

Mrs. C. Irwin (Parish Clerk) by 25th September 2015

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