

Notes from Traffic Calming Public Meeting

21st May 2022

11.00 am at Winchelsea New Hall

Cllr David Smedley (Vice Chairman and Chairman of Open Spaces)

Jenner Sands, Clerk & RFO Icklesham Parish Council

Lawrence Stringer, Director, GTA Civils and Transport

Cllr David Smedley opened the meeting. He started off by explaining that Icklesham Parish Council have no set agenda when it comes to the traffic calming. He said that this is not a decision for the Council or any individual Councillor. He explained that everyone has a voting sheet on their chair which they will be able to complete and hand in at the end of the meeting. He introduced Lawrence Stringer from GTA Civils and Transport and explained that he was here to give a brief presentation on the options considered in their report and also to answer any questions to help residents come to an informed decision. Cllr Smedley also explained that all of the costs we have at the moment are approximate and that what we are asking residents to vote on is which scheme they would like GTA to take forward to draw up and obtain accurate costings for.

Cllr Smedley then handed over to Lawrence Stringer.

Lawrence Stringer then gave a brief presentation on all 6 options that have been considered.

Lawrence then asked the public if they had any questions:-

Questions and answers

██████████ asked whether rising bollards have been considered in place of traffic lights on Strand Gate. She said that this would not have the same issues as traffic lights which people may jump.

Lawrence Stringer confirmed that this is not something that they have considered but they could look at this and discuss it with ESCC. He did say that these would have the same ongoing maintenance issues as traffic lights.

██████████ said that he lives on Tanyard Lane and asked Lawrence Stringer if there has been any consideration for the residents who live on Tanyard Lane as if any traffic calming happens in the town it is going to increase the traffic flow along the A259. ██████████ said that there is 90% more traffic travelling along the A259 than there is through the Town. He also said that they have heavy traffic all throughout the day, not just at peak times like they do in the Town.

Lawrence Stringer confirmed that it could mean that more traffic would remain on the A259 but he confirmed that as the A259 is the trunk road, the traffic should be on this road.

██████████ confirmed that the police have previously said no to Strand Hill being closed as it is used as an alternative route if there are accidents on the A259.

██████████ asked if a traffic survey has been done to see how many people actually turn left at the bottom of Strand Hill. He said that in his opinion the no left turn no right turn option

is basically the same as closing the hill as he cannot imagine many people actually turn left at the bottom of the hill.

Cllr Smedley confirmed that the Parish Council have purchased black cats which will enable us to collect traffic data and these should be up and running very soon. Lawrence Stringer also confirmed that there was a destination survey undertaken by East Sussex Highways in 2018 which showed how many vehicles turned left and right at the bottom of the hill. This survey is included in the report.

Cllr James Justice said that his concern is that people will get to the bottom of Strand Hill and will only be able to turn left and so will then want to go and turn round at the bottom of Ferry Hill. He said that he can see this causing all sorts of problems. He also mentioned that parents wanting to drop their children off at school will have to come in through all of the other roads.

Cllr Smedley said that they recently had a closure of Strand Hill for repair works and they did have a few people that went down but eventually people got used to it. He also said that parents now have an alternative route via Jubilee Field as the new gate has now been installed.

Lawrence Stringer confirmed that the consequences of any options need to be looked further into.

██████████ confirmed that he owns the shop in Winchelsea. He said that the recent closure of Strand Hill had a very negative impact on the shop and they lost a significant part of their income. He said that they have also had temporary traffic lights on Strand Hill in the past and these did not have a significant impact. He said that if the costs of the traffic lights are an issue he would be happy to raise an appeal to try and cover the costs. He also said that in his opinion, traffic lights should have been installed on Strand Gate years ago as there is a real safety issue there and there have been accidents on Strand Gate in the past.

██████████ said that he hates the rat run through Winchelsea but would like the shop keep open for the residents of Winchelsea. He said that the shop is a loss making enterprise but if that loss gets much greater it may not be possible to keep it open.

██████████ asked if there was anybody from the Traffic Calming Working Group present who could speak about the no left turn no right turn option as they did a lot of work on this.

██████████ asked if we had considered solar energy and whether this would make the installation costs any cheaper.

Lawrence Stringer confirmed that at the moment we only have very broad estimate and that the preferred options can be costed more thoroughly.

Lawrence confirmed that sleeping policeman may solve some of the problems and that road humps can be quite effective although they would not put people off the short cuts. Lawrence did say that the ambulance service do not like these for obvious reasons. He said that speed cushions are less effective as larger vehicles such as 4x4 drive over them.

██████████ asked what options there are to test these options.

Cllr Smedley confirmed that obviously we cannot test speed humps etc.

Lawrence Stringer confirmed that we could introduce experimental traffic orders subject to the two Highways Authorities permission.

██████████ confirmed that she and her partner lived on the corner of Mill Road on the A259. She asked Lawrence if there is a scheme that he as the expert prefers.

Lawrence Stringer confirmed that in his opinion the only way we can completely eradicate the rat running is through complete closure. However he also said that he has been involved in projects where road closures have been involved and objections have been received and the closures have been taken out. Lawrence said that all of the options contained in his report 'have legs' in his opinion.

██████████ confirmed that he was part of the traffic calming working group. He said that it is a very complicated situation in Winchelsea. He said there is an issue with through traffic aggression. He said that if we were to introduce speed bumps there is a real possibility people would slow down for the bumps and then accelerate for the rest of the route to try and make up time. He said that this would come down to how many features you put up and how far apart they are. He said that we would also need to take into account the fact that Winchelsea is a conservation area and that Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent would likely be needed for any civils work. He also said that obviously cost is a very heavy weighted factor.

A resident asked if we opted for the complete closure of Strand Hill would it be closed to cyclists. She said that the A259 and Ferry Hill is too dangerous for cyclists.

Lawrence Stringer confirmed that we certainly could keep Strand Hill open for cyclists and pedestrians and that of course we would want to encourage cyclists.

██████████ asked if residents that are not at this meeting will get a chance to hear some of the things that have been said in this meeting as she has actually changed her view after hearing from the shop.

██████████ said that she would like to address the issue regarding the shop and the road closure. She said that when Strand Hill was closed recently, this was also in the middle of the fuel crisis which would also have had an impact. She also made the point that the shop is a loss making enterprise.

██████████ confirmed that he lived on Rookery Lane and has a medical background. He said that with this in mind, surely the most important thing is the safety of the residents. He said that we have to reduce the rat running to make Winchelsea a much safer place.

██████████ of Barrack Square said that she is aware of a similar project in South West London where a road was closed which completely solved the problem. She said that she does see the road closure as the only option to solve the rat running problem.

██████████ said that he believes we should be concentrating on stopping the rat running rather than stopping the through traffic.

██████████ said that there is very little input from the police. He said that he has actually witnessed police parked up outside the shop and comment on the speed of traffic going through Winchelsea.

██████████ confirmed that he also has a medical background and wanted to reiterate that safety is absolutely key here.

██████████ confirmed that he owns the New Inn and that he sees the speeding traffic going past everyday. He said sooner or later there is going to be a serious accident.

██████████ asked Lawrence Stringer whether, in his opinion, there is a scheme that is going to be the most successful.

Lawrence Stringer confirmed that they have tried to include options that have some legs. He did say that in relation to traffic lights, these are generally used to control traffic movements rather than calm traffic. He said that whatever option is chosen there is a lot of further work to be done.

■■■■■ asked what happens next and said that there are a significant number of people not here today and she asked how they will hear about the commentary that we have been part of.

Cllr Smedley confirmed that this is the first part of the consultation and there will be a lot of further consultation to go. He said that the Clerk will make notes available for those who were unable to attend. He also said that he will leave the left over voting forms in the shop for people to complete.

Cllr Glazier confirmed that the chosen scheme would need to be presented to ESCC in preparation for the regulation order. He said that at this point everyone in the world would be able to look. It would then have to be presented to the County Council for formal consultation with the Council, Parish and residents.

■■■■■ asked if we could make a start by reducing the speed limit to 20mph.

Cllr Glazier said that simply reducing the speed limit to 20mph would not speed traffic down and that it would still be the subject to the same process. He also said that he would like to make a point that the police are indeed very busy catching criminals and all work very hard to keep us safe.

The meeting closed at 12.30 pm. Cllr Smedley asked people to complete their voting forms and to put them in the box by the door as they leave.