

Response received from East Sussex Highways:-

Strand Hill was closed sometime around the mid to late 1990's due to a land slip for a period of about six months. During this time the road was closed to vehicular traffic but pedestrians were accommodated around the slip. There was a lot of debate at the time about what should happen when the landslip was repaired, with public opinion being divided between keeping the road closed (which was supported by some residents) and opening the road (which was supported by some businesses).

ESCC were aware that there was a strong feeling that traffic needed to be managed through the village and therefore undertook a local consultation on the following three options:-

- keeping the road closed.
- introducing a one-way system (northbound or southbound).
- retaining the existing two way working.

The results of the consultation were inconclusive with no majority emerging as being in favour of any one proposal. The resident's opinion was split depending on where they lived and the impact that any proposal would have to them as individuals. ESCC therefore decided to retain the current layout.

No external consultation was undertaken at the time as this would only have been considered necessary if an alternative to retaining the existing two-way access was proposed.

In terms of the proposed options now presented by GTA, ESCC have advised that 'in principle' they would not have any 'objection' to these as the road does not serve any significant traffic management function. The problem would be trying to establish the impact of any scheme on the locale and whether it is supported by the wider community. This would have to include, but not be limited to, all residents and businesses, National Highways, the Emergency services and Rother District Council. It is worth highlighting that without a significant majority in favour of any one particular option it is unlikely that a scheme could be progressed.

In terms of the proposed reduction in speed limits it is suggest that a 20mph limit on the more residential roads would be largely self-enforcing and therefore not an issue. The available speed data would indicate that High Street would require a light touch level of traffic management to be self-enforcing but German Street would require a more robust level of features. We are not sure that a 30mph speed limit for Monks Walk could be achieved or even supported by ESCC as there is no frontage development and current speeds are relatively high.

Having said that it may be prudent to update the available speed data as it is fairly old now. I would also recommend that vehicle speeds are collected on German Street and Monks Walk as the data presented was collected at, or very near to, the 30/40 mph terminal signs where vehicle speeds are likely to be higher.

The introduction of a 20mph speed limit (plus the 30 mph limit on Monks Walk) may not be required if the proposal to 'close' Strand Hill is strongly supported through a consultation process as this will remove all through-traffic. Any vehicles in the village under this scenario would be residents or generated by the residents or the school.

Whichever option emerges as the preferred option, National Highways may also require that any design is easily 'removable' as Monks Walk/High Street would serve as a local diversion route if Ferry Hill was closed for any reason (the HGV route is much longer via the B2089/A28 etc.).

Before progressing with any option it is recommended that the Parish Council identify clear and specific reasons why they are proposing a scheme for the village as there isn't an identified road safety or a speed issue that would justify a scheme or be a priority for ESCC. This would then need to be progressed as a community based/environmental improvement meaning that any design would need close consultation with RDC's conservation officer to ensure that it conformed to their requirements.

I appreciate that this response doesn't provide you with a definitive 'preferred' option that could be taken forward but I can only reiterate that ESCC have advised that they would not have any objection 'in principle' to any of the options suggested. Key to any option taken forward, however, would be to gain the majority support from the residents and businesses.

Response received from Sussex Police:-

Sussex Police will neither support or object to proposals from a parish council in relation to Highway issues. The correct procedure is for you to consult the highways authority, in this case either East Sussex County Council or National Highways (depending on the road in question).

They are the managers of the county's roads and it will be their decision as to whether any changes are required, appropriate and lawful. Under certain circumstances they may need to consult the police and at that stage I will be invited to comment, support or object to any proposal.