

# ARDINGLY PARISH COUNCIL

## Comprehensive Traffic Appraisal for Ardingly Parish

### Invitation to Tender August 2012



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**Invitation to Tender to carry out a:**

**Comprehensive Traffic Appraisal**

**for Ardingly Parish**

Ardingly Parish Council is seeking to commission a comprehensive appraisal with proposals for ways to manage traffic, promote pedestrian safety and enhance the streetscape in the village of Ardingly. This work is to be carried out in partnership with residents and the Highway Authority.

The funding for this project has been contributed by Ardingly Parish Council, West Sussex County Council's Community Initiative Fund, the National Trust and local business organisations.

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Vision

*'Our vision for Ardingly is to conserve and improve the village, encourage a greater sense of inclusion, safety and pride in the community, and promote sustainable and vibrant economic activity while protecting and enhancing the outstanding landscape setting of the parish.'*

### 1.2 Study Objectives

Our objectives for this study are as follows:

- For residents to live in a safe and cohesive community, allowing increased freedom of movement and interaction, regaining ownership of village streets.
- That the unique and special character of our village should be immediately recognised and respected by all those who enter, visit and pass through, developing Ardingly's 'spirit of place' and reinforcing its rural qualities.
- Identify fresh ideas to influence driver behaviour and reduce vehicle speeds, while strengthening the local distinctiveness of the village.
- Enhance the village heritage and character.

## 2 Background and Context

2.1 Ardingly parish comprises some 700 households which generate considerable daily traffic. Large volumes of traffic also pass through the High Street, from Crawley and the M23 in the North and along College Road and the B2028 Lindfield Road, from Haywards Heath and the A272 in the South. Narrow pavements adjacent to these roads with their restricted highway width make walking difficult and often dangerous for pedestrians.

2.2 Ardingly is home to a number of significant venues and visitor attractions: Wakehurst Place is the most visited National Trust property in the country, with almost half a million visitors a year and is home to the Millennium Seed Bank. The South of England Showground attracts some 200,000 visitors a year. Ardingly College has around 900 students and employs 370 staff. Ardingly Reservoir attracts walkers, bird watchers, fishermen, and water sports enthusiasts. To the south of the village the Hanson asphalt plant generates 20,000 heavy vehicular movements a year.

2.3 Traffic speed / pedestrian safety has been a key issue for residents over many years. Although attempts have been made in the past to try to find ways to reduce the impact of traffic on the village, it is clear that a fresh approach is now required. Some relevant documents are listed in section 9.

## 3 Scope of the work

3.1 The appraisal should identify traffic management proposals that respect Ardingly's distinctive rural qualities, using these to influence vehicle speeds, whilst continuing to promote the activities that are a core part of village life. Simple and cost effective solutions are required that will allow local village life to coexist with traffic, and restore confidence and freedom to pedestrians within a safe environment.

3.2 The appraisal should include ways to balance pedestrian movement and safety and the quality of the village environment, together with driver behaviour, design speeds and the serious impact of through traffic including HGVs.

3.3 The study will cover the whole parish but will focus upon the core of the village, shown in Plan 1. The requirements of, and access arrangements for traffic generated by the major land uses at Wakehurst Place, South of England Showground, Ardingly College, and the Hanson plant will also be considered, plus the junction of Church Lane / Street Lane at the western approach to the village, indicated in Plan 2.

3.4 As part of the acquisition of information, the consultant must include discussions with Ardingly College, National Trust at Wakehurst/Kew, South of England Society, Hanson, and St Peter's Primary School.

3.5 The consultant should indicate in his tender how he intends to engage with residents in his initial investigations, in order to gain opinion prior to solutions being suggested.

3.6 The consultant must bear in mind the maintenance demand of any implemented scheme. If the materials proposed have a high maintenance cost, ie above the standard level of the maintenance authority, West Sussex County Council (WSSC) then the Parish Council will have to bear the extra cost. The alternative would be that WSSC would carry out the repair works with their standard materials thus spoiling the original effect.

3.7 The consultant's proposals should include a range of schemes which are realistic and practical. Some may be quick to implement, others may take longer dependent on cost. But all proposals must be justified with the benefits to be achieved.

## 4 Expected activities

5.1 The consultant is required to assess the nature of the current streetscape, road conditions and traffic speeds using existing data together with his own observations and prepare solutions for resolution and enhancement.

5.2 Identify priorities together with estimated 'broad brush' costs and timetable.

5.3 Respond to comments under 'Additional Information' provided with this brief.

5.4 Ensure that the preferred approaches are acceptable to WSSC Highway Authority before submitting a Report for Audit.

5.5 The consultant will attend:

- a) a meeting of the parish council's Traffic Committee plus interested parties eg small businesses, to gather information,
- b) an open forum to explain his initial proposals to parish council, residents and interested parties.

## 5 Expected Outputs:

5.1 A written report to include the following broad aspects:

- Background and village context
- A statement giving evidence of community involvement
- Local observations and details of site visits
- Design principles and recommendations
- Audited and phased schemes with 'broadbrush' estimates so that the overall scheme may be accomplished over a number of years.

5.2 The draft report should be provided in suitable electronic format together with three hard copies. Plans showing proposals which have been Audited and approved in writing by WSSC Highway Authority should be at a scale of 1/2500 and in a suitable electronic format, together with five hard copies. The final report should be provided in electronic format plus ten paper copies.

## 6 Form of Tender

6.1 Consultants are invited to submit proposals for this work in accordance with the information set out in this tender document. Three hard copies and an electronic version of the tender should be supplied.

6.2 Tenders should be submitted using the following format:

1. A description of how you would approach this contract including techniques you would use in your appraisal.
2. Brief details of and references of relevant experience of similar previous work.
3. CVs of consultants who will work on the project, and what proportion of the work they will be undertaking.
4. A project plan, including a timetable for the work to include all meetings.
5. Total costs showing consultancy charge per day and other specified costs.

## 7 Evaluation

7.1 Evaluation of tenders will be based on an understanding and ability to deliver the contract objectives, specifications and outputs, the strengths of the team, soundness of the proposed approach and knowledge of the relevant issues, as well as value for money.

## 8 Contract administration and management

8.1 Tenders to be submitted electronically (with paper copies to follow) no later than  
**12 noon on Friday 21 September 2012**

Please address your tender submission to:

Louise Meehan, Parish Clerk  
Ardingly Parish Council  
c/o Post Office, 37 High Street  
ARDINGLY, West Sussex RH17 6TB  
Tel: 01444 226209 email: [ardinglypc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ardinglypc@hotmail.co.uk)

8.2 The employer will be Ardingly Parish Council and the primary contact will be the Parish Clerk but for the purposes of discussion of details, investigation and preparation in respect of the Report, the contacts will be Parish Councillors Don Walker at 01444 892022, [marilynjanetwalker@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:marilynjanetwalker@yahoo.co.uk) and Sarah Chapman at 01444 892681, [jsri123@aol.com](mailto:jsri123@aol.com)

8.3 Meetings shall be held with at least one Parish Councillor present.

8.4 The Consultant will present his final draft report [inclusive of an executive summary] to the Parish Council prior to submitting to WSCC for Auditing and Approval.

8.5 The Consultant's Brief will not be complete until the preferred approach, agreed with the Parish Council has also been finalised, audited and agreed in writing with the WSCC Highways Authority. Please note that West Sussex County Council have already agreed to an Audited Proposal in writing.

8.6 No document associated with this project shall be put in the public domain unless prior agreement has been obtained in writing from the Parish Council.

## 9 Additional information

The Consultant is expected to take the following information into consideration.

### **Projects currently being progressed due to recent incidents**

9.1 Since the death of a pupil crossing the road to the playing fields at Worth School near Turners Hill in November 2011,(the next Parish), the need for 'traffic control' for pupils crossing at Ardingly College has been highlighted. West Sussex County Council has agreed that the College may pay for a controlled crossing to be installed to achieve greater safety. The design is now proceeding with a view to implementation and completion within the next few months (autumn 2012).

9.2 In December 2011 there was an incident at the junctions of Hett Close and the Recreation Ground with High Street, B2028. A vehicle stopped to allow a mother with 3 small children to cross the road. A following vehicle overtook the stationary car while mother and children were crossing. Fortunately on this occasion there were no injuries. The Parish Council have met with WSCC officer for 'Safety Routes to Schools' who is investigating with WSCC Engineers with a view to completing the crossover and whether a controlled crossing can be installed. In the meantime a school crossing patrol is to be employed.

### **Speed Limits**

9.3 West Sussex County Council has over the past two years, been reviewing the speed limits on the periphery of the village, as follows:

- A 40 mph speed limit has recently been installed on the B2028 to the north of the village, extending from Cob Lane to the northern boundary of the Showground.
- The 30 mph zone south of the village on College Road is proposed to be extended south of the College access to replace the present 40mph (public consultation - June 2012).
- A 40 mph limit is being investigated on the B2028 south of the village from the 30mph signs, through the double bends.

## **Schools**

9.4 School Travel Plans have been published for St Peter's Primary School- Ardingly, Oathall Community College-Haywards Heath and Ardingly College. School buses pick up children for Oathall School at the northern and southern ends of the High Street.

9.5 There are two nursery schools in the village and a babes and toddlers group. These are located in the St Peter's Church Centre in Street Lane, and at the rear of the old Chapel in Street Lane close to Fellows Bakery. The Consultant should consider the safety of parents and children at arrival and departure to and from these premises.

9.6 The Primary School is located in Holmans to the north of Street Lane. There are pedestrian access points from both Holmans and the footpath which links with the Recreation Ground and the northern end of the village. Vehicular access is via Holmans which at arrival and departure times causes difficulty in respect of parking and conflict with residents' parking spaces. The Parish Council has agreed that the Recreation Ground car park may be used for 'Park and Stride' to enable safe pedestrian access to the School.

## **Village parking**

9.7 Parking in the village centre is inadequate. When there is a meeting at the Hapstead Hall it is difficult to find a parking space. The large amount of 'on street' parking, particularly on the High Street, is due to the number of properties which have no 'off street' parking within their property. However the presence of parked cars appears to assist in reducing traffic speeds.

## **Public/community transport**

9.8 Bus provision to Ardingly has been cut in recent years, but it remains a vital service to a proportion of residents. There may be opportunities for schemes such as community buses, green travel schemes and car share.

## **Planning applications**

9.8 Two proposals for housing were refused by Mid Sussex District Council in Feb 12 and are now the subject of appeals. The two sites are:

Butchers Field, located to south of Street Lane, opposite access to tennis courts, with access onto Street Lane, 35 dwellings.

Standgrove Field, located to east of College Road and to south of Lodgelands, with access onto College Road, 37 dwellings.

## **Evidence, documents**

9.9 The following documents should be taken into account:

\* Mid Sussex Local Plan, adopted 2004, identified traffic as the major issue in the village.

\* Ardingly Village Plan, community led plan published and adopted in November 2010, was the subject of extensive consultations with all households, young people, local clubs and businesses. Traffic speed and road safety emerged as the dominant local issue.

\* Ardingly Parish Action Plan, 2003, identified 'traffic/highway matters as the most important topic for residents'.

\* English Heritage's 'Save our Streets' heralded a fresh approach as to how we look at roads in villages and towns.

\*Manual for Streets, Dept Transport, 2007, recommends greater emphasis on the 'place' function of streets.

\*Manual for Streets 2, published in 2010, extends the principles to cover rural streets.

\*'Traffic in Villages, A tool kit for communities, 2011', contains detailed ideas for rural communities.

## 10 Further observations

10.1 It is considered that a dramatic change in thinking is needed in Ardingly in order to produce a solution which will change the perception of motorists such that they recognise that this is a place for pedestrians to walk in safety.

10.2 Ideally we would wish to see 'gateways' at entrances to the village with a sign indicating that 'Pedestrians have Priority'. However if such a proposal is unacceptable it is recognised that the experiences shown in the 'Tool Kit for Communities' indicate a changed perception which can also enhance the village environment.

10.3 We wish for a sensitive physical means of restriction to constrain traffic speeds for pedestrian safety and freedom, and expect a real perceptive means of persuasion to be incorporated into the street scene.

10.4 Signage in and around the village is of varied height and styles and it is felt that there is an opportunity to reduce its impact with appropriate techniques and materials.

10.5 We support WSCC proposals to reduce speed limits at the approaches to the village. This could be supported by other perceptive means to achieve the end goal.

10.6 Other measures should be considered to help restrict and slow the movement of traffic.

10.7 At the junction of the B2028 with College Road a mini roundabout has been proposed in the past as well as pedestrian crossings. This is the intersection of two well used roads and a major bus stop where many school children need to cross for access to the bus. There have been instances where vehicles have driven on the wrong side of the splitter island when turning from the B2028 into College Road.

10.8 College Road is bounded by narrow footpaths, 1metre wide, behind which are walls and hedges. Even when vehicles are travelling at less than 30mph they are too close to pedestrians for their safety as the road width is only 5.5 metres.

10.9 It has been observed that when two HGVs pass in opposite directions at the 30 mph sign on the Lindfield Road [B2028], the vehicle on the south side mounts the kerb to the footpath which is only one metre wide. This suggests there is a 'pinch point' where a more purposeful narrowing could be implemented for the safety of both pedestrians and traffic. This is a stretch of road where, both through the approaching bends prior to the 30 mph signs and the straight thereafter, traffic speeds are excessive.

10.10 At the junction of Church Lane/ Street lane, visibility from Church Lane to the west is only 20 metres.