

Ardingly Traffic Appraisal Past evidence on traffic speed/ pedestrian safety, 11 Dec 12

Extract from Mid Sussex Local Plan adopted 2004, Chapter 17: Ardingly

Introduction

17.1 The village of Ardingly is located approximately four miles north of Haywards Heath, on the B2028. It is situated on rising ground and has an extremely attractive countryside setting, being surrounded on all sides by high quality landscape, all of which is within the designated High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Its elevated position affords extensive views from the village, reaching as far as the Downs to the south, and West Hoathly and Highbrook to the east. Whilst this setting is an attractive feature of the village, it also acts as a significant constraint on prospective future development.

17.2 The village contains a number of shops, public houses, and a garage together with community facilities such as the village hall and the recreation ground. The High Street is adversely affected by the volume and speed of through traffic on the B2028, together with considerable on-street car parking arising from a shortage of off-street parking provision.

17.3 Adjacent to the village are a number of sites which have significant implications in planning terms and these are dealt with in more detail below. These are Ardingly Reservoir, the South of England Agricultural Society Showground, Ardingly College, Wakehurst Place, the Bluebell Railway and the depot at Ardingly Railhead.

Transport

Heavy Goods Vehicles

17.9 Arising from its position on the B2028, its proximity to Haywards Heath, and the existence of large commercial concerns adjacent to the village, Ardingly is adversely affected by the volume, nature and speed of through traffic. It is particularly vulnerable to the movement of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), some of which are passing through to locations elsewhere, with others gaining access to existing commercial sites. High Street, College Road and Copyhold Lane are particularly affected in this respect, and heavy traffic causes danger and inconvenience to other road users because the roads themselves are poorly suited to accommodate it. Where HGVs are seeking access, effective measures to restrict their movement are limited. Nevertheless, the Council will continue to press the Highway Authority to introduce controls to prevent the use of inappropriate roads by HGV traffic wherever it is practicable and expedient to do so, for example in the form of weight and width restrictions. With regard to through traffic, the District Council will, in conjunction with the Highway Authority, seek to encourage compliance with preferred lorry routings.

Village Crossroads

17.10 At its southern end the High Street meets with Street Lane, Lindfield Road and College Road. The previous layout of the junction was not considered to be of a sufficient standard to cope with the appreciable levels of traffic carried by these roads, resulting in vehicle conflicts and a highway hazard. Minor improvements to this junction have been carried out by the Highway Authority. However, the Council will continue to press the Highway Authority to consider the construction of a mini-roundabout at this junction.

College Road

17.11 College Road is one of the principal routes into the village from the south. It carries appreciable levels of traffic, some of it passing through but a proportion is gaining access to a number of sites along its length. It is, however, a winding road with varying gradients, and in parts there is poor visibility. This combined with the volume and speed of traffic, and the turning movements to and from adjacent sites, results in a degree of danger for road users. The District Council will urge the Highway Authority to give further consideration to possible improvements in the vicinity of the entrance to Ardingly College and will press for their inclusion in the minor works programme.

Pedestrian Crossing

17.12 The High Street is a busy through route with dwellings, shops and other services on both sides of the road. Pedestrians trying to cross the road encounter the hazards of parked vehicles and often fast, heavy flowing traffic. The need for a pedestrian crossing in the High Street is supported by the District Council. Currently most pedestrian demand is towards the south end of the High Street. However, the development at Hapstead House could significantly shift the demand towards the recreation ground and the footpath through it to the primary school.

Car Parking

17.13 One of the issues affecting Ardingly is the lack of off-street car parking provision. There is one long-stay public car park next to Hapstead Hall, administered by the District Council, allowing parking for 24 vehicles. This is generally full throughout the day. This factor, combined with the lack of adequate off-street car parking spaces for older dwellings, and a number of businesses and community facilities such as the village hall, results in considerable parking on-street, particularly in the High Street. This has one advantage in that it tends to slow down through traffic, although it can at times cause a hazard and inconvenience to other road users and pedestrians due to obstruction, restricted visibility and parking on the pavement. Although there will be additional parking provided as part of the proposed community hall development, it is considered that the provision of further off-street parking is desirable. Such a facility must be conveniently located in order to encourage its use, but due to the closely built-up nature of the High Street opportunities are inevitably limited. The District Council will continue to explore various possibilities for the development of an additional off-street car park.

Mid Sussex Local Plan

Extract from Inspector's Report, 2003

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN - ARDINGLY

INTRODUCTION

17.1 Ardingly lies to the north of Haywards Heath with the very attractive village core substantially surrounded by open countryside included within the High Weald AONB. The village is vibrant with several shops and related commercial uses and good public transport links to Haywards Heath. An obvious problem arises with the narrow main street passing through the village and the lack of adequate off-street of car parking facilities. The congestion and inconvenience caused by the on-street parking that this creates, particularly for heavy vehicles and buses, is severe. Several important land uses are situated close to the settlement, including the South of England Agricultural Society Showground, Ardingly College and Wakehurst Place.

Ardingly Parish Action Plan, 2003

The 2003 Parish Action Plan identified the issue of traffic/highway matters as the most important topic for residents. The document stated:

“Traffic matters to Ardingly residents and is the cause of greatest concern. The main problem is excessive traffic speed particularly on College Road and the High Street. As a result there were many requests for traffic calming measures and several for pedestrian lights and a zebra crossing to help those trying to cross the High Street.”

One of the actions proposed in the Plan was to “instigate traffic calming measures”.

Extract from Ardingly Village Plan 2010

7.3 Traffic /road safety /parking

Road safety/ traffic speed was the issue that generated most comment in the household questionnaire as had been the case in the 2003 Plan. Eighty one percent of responses said there are major danger spots in the village and this issue was overwhelmingly the largest response to the question: "Please list the three issues that you think are most important" (see table on page 30).

The responses to the household questionnaire on Traffic and Road Safety are shown in Tables 6 and 7 of the Appendix. They include the amalgamated comments on traffic issues drawing on both the Traffic & Road Safety section of the questionnaire as well as the concluding comments. This was done as there were linked issues in each section and so a view across the questionnaire was appropriate. A number of responses to the questions on personal safety also identified traffic as the greatest danger. It is clear from the consultations that there is widespread alarm about road safety issues and traffic speeds. The need to shift the balance in favour of pedestrians and away from through traffic has become a critical issue. There was general agreement that traffic was travelling too fast through the village and a wide range of methods for dealing with this were suggested. A desire for more parking was expressed and also that currently there is a good deal of inconsiderate parking obstructing roads and pavements. The connection was not made between alternative transport solutions and a reduction in car ownership thus relieving parking pressure, but this is complex and the questionnaire was not tailored to explore this matter.

Traffic flow

Responses to the household questionnaire show a great degree of concern that traffic is travelling too fast throughout the village, focusing on the most communal areas where people walk, although this should not suggest that speed does not pose a danger in other areas. The sphere of concern runs outside the village onto Selsfield Road to Wakehurst, Lindfield Road to Burstow Hill and Street Lane on to the reservoir. One junction that does stand out as not being part of the main thoroughfare and is seen as particularly tricky is the exit from The Close onto College Road. This requires more specific investigation.

Parking

There is some desire for increased parking in the centre of the village. This is split between the need for residents' parking, free parking and yellow lines on the High Street. This is complex as the parked vehicles act as natural traffic calming, but they also reduce visibility and make pedestrian crossing more dangerous. A similar situation is found on College Road where the parked cars do also act as natural traffic calming, whilst some people view them as obstructions that cause traffic jams. A principal focus is at Holmans where there is a significant conflict of usage with residents using it throughout the day for private parking whilst at drop off and pick up times parents wish access to the school and many use cars to achieve this.

Aims

Improve safety through traffic calming initiatives

The impact of this issue is intrinsic to the nature of our village. Fast traffic and obstructed pavements reduce the willingness of people to walk along the streets, damaging the community spirit that is developed through everyday meetings, something that is highly valued by a good proportion of our respondents. Attempts have been made in the past to try to find ways to reduce the impact of fast and heavy traffic on the village. The 2003 Parish Action Plan identified the issue of traffic/highway matters as the most important topic for residents. That document stated:

"Traffic matters to Ardingly residents and is the cause of greatest concern. The main problem is excessive traffic speed particularly on College Road and the High Street. As a result there were many requests for traffic calming measures and several for pedestrian lights and a zebra crossing to help those trying to cross the High Street."

The Mid Sussex Local Plan, adopted in 2004, highlights the adverse effect of the volume, nature and speed of through traffic on the village. It comments on the need for controls on heavy goods vehicles, junction improvements and pedestrian crossings. Given the strength of feeling of residents, the long standing nature of these issues, and the previous work that has gone in to seeking to resolve them, it is clear that a fresh approach and independent expert advice is now required. The success and speed of delivery of a solution will depend upon the extent of community involvement. The scope of the traffic review will start with the conclusions of this Plan and draw on past experiences and those of other parishes, with a view to developing a more detailed project scope including costs, timescales, deliverables and uncertainties.

To underpin this work it is imperative that the findings are regularly and frequently communicated to the village through the most effective channels, both to encourage engagement with the Parish Council, and to ensure the involvement of the community.

Improve pedestrian safety: accessible pavements

Obstructed pavements, primarily by parking but also by domestic waste bins, were the third highest concern in this section. This issue should be raised with the local PCSO and the importance of keeping the pavements clear should be effectively communicated. In order to keep pavements in good condition residents should be encouraged to report hazards (damaged pavements or utility covers) so that the responsible party can be contacted and make appropriate amends.

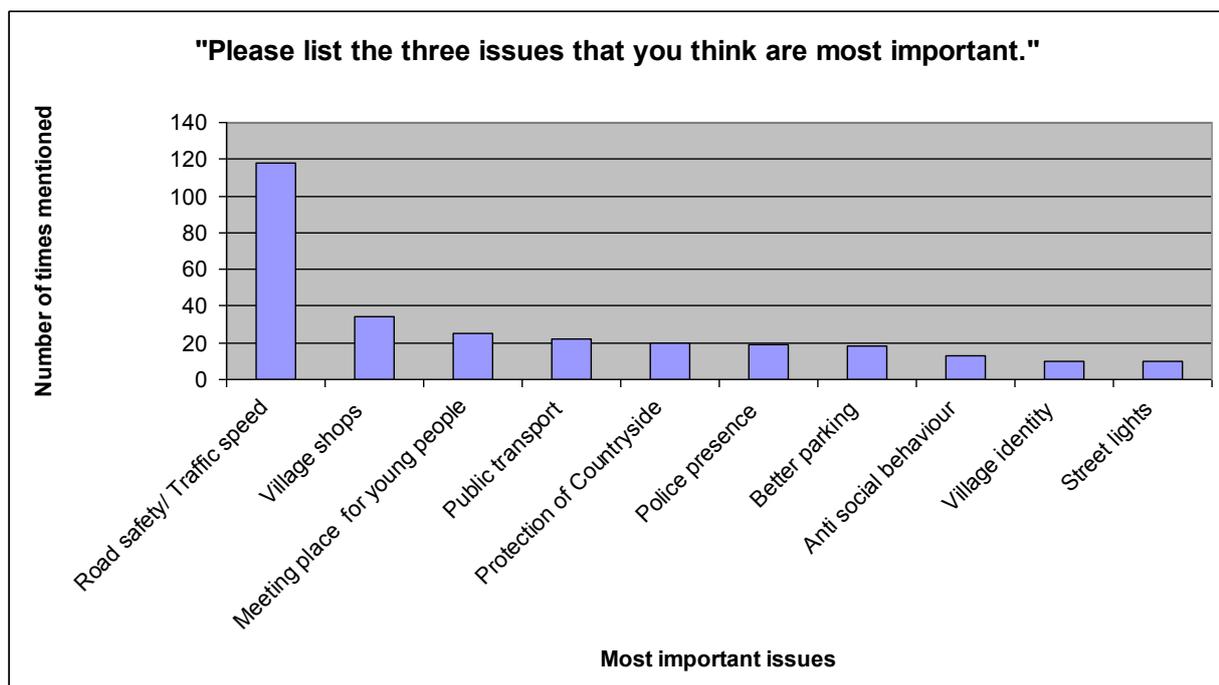
Improve parking provision

This issue has two strands. Firstly to review current parking facilities and to identify whether there is potential for further development. Any development, however, has to be held in balance with the character of the village and the value of the green areas that exist within it.

Secondly parking needs to be reviewed in and around Holmans to establish whether there might be alternative parking provision for school users and also to look at the pattern of journeys to the primary school. Preliminary meetings between the school and West Sussex County Council have occurred as part of an initial review.

7.8 Priority issues

The household questionnaire ended with the statement “Finally, please list the three issues that you think are most important”. The issues mentioned most often are shown in the table below and reviewed in detail in the Appendix, Table 12. For simplicity there has been some amalgamation of the responses.



Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan underway 2012

As part of work on the Neighbourhood Plan, a survey was sent to all households in April 2012.

Respondents' top three priorities in descending order were:

<i>Issue</i>	<i>votes</i>
Traffic speed/pedestrian safety	208
Village shops and services	200
Protection of countryside	180
Public transport	68
Protect village identity/support networks	68
Policing/anti social behaviour	63
Affordable housing	34
Youth club/meeting place for young people	30
Improve car parking	28
Allotments	27

SC/10 Dec 2012

Received from Ardingly Parish Council Nov 2012

Comments on how traffic affects people's lives in Ardingly

"We have lived in Ardingly for 40 years and we have only one problem which is the speed of the traffic coming up and down College Road. To cross to the post box opposite Standbridge Way where we live is taking one's life in one's hands!"

"We would like some traffic calming. We have been asking for 38 years."

"Car parking on the pavements is forcing pedestrians onto the roads, particularly if you have a pushchair."

"I feel very unsafe walking along College Road because of the speed of the traffic. "

"In relation to the primary school, parking is chaotic, dangerous and shows no respect for local residents."

"The speeding traffic in both directions is by far the most dangerous aspect within the village. The entrances by Hett Close and the recreation ground are potential accident spots and the Lindfield Road stretch is treated like a race track and is a serious accident waiting to happen for residents, walkers and cyclists alike."

Received from Ardingly Parish Council Nov 2012

Responses to St Peter's School Travel Survey, March 2011

Examples of some of the comments received:

"I don't think there is anything that can be done. People are still going to drive - I don't think you will stop that. We just need a safer place for people to park for the children."

"Its not safe to walk four children up College Road and Street Lane. The speed at which the motor vehicles go frightens me. They should have speed cameras down College Road. The traffic needs to slow down before I would consider walking more."

"Park and Stride should be more openly used, especially in the summer."

We don't tend to cycle to school because it's too dangerous with the roads. I prefer to take my own child to school rather than use the walking bus. Wider paths along some of the route would be safer but I don't think this is something that could be changed easily.

"We used to do the walking bus together but there were more adults than children. It is a very good idea in principle. More children would probably attract more children."

"There is no path between our house and the village".

"I think College Road is dangerous".

"Speed of traffic through the village makes walking to school very dangerous. I wouldn't be happy to let my son walk with the walking bus as I feel it wouldn't be safe. More signs through the village asking cars to slow down as children are walking would help, or speed prevention measures need to be looked at. Cars parked round the school is also a concern but residents around the school are extremely hostile at drop off so most parents are too busy worrying about verbal abuse from neighbours rather than children crossing roads".

"Improvements to safety along route would be very welcome, especially on narrow pavement by hedge (opposite field). Dangerous when cars pass, sometimes too fast- once had a car mount pavement and just miss us! General traffic calming needed".

"If a child walks to school (who lives within walking distance or uses the walking bus) he/she receives green points which can be converted to an interesting prize every half term. This would have to be thought out carefully as some pupils like my son walk to school anyway, so shouldn't qualify for a prize every half term".

"Get children to do posters ref. using the car park at the rec and walk from there. Parents will take more notice if their children are involved in promoting a different area to park".

“An incentive (certificate/class award like the golden broom?) system for children who do walk /cycle or park and stride to school would encourage the children to take an active interest.”

“A crossing over the High Street is desperately needed, cars and lorries come down road far too quickly”.

“Could we organise some traffic awareness for Reception class?”

“A zebra crossing across the High street would make crossing the road much safer.”

“Please tell all new parents not to block pathways when parking, otherwise not everyone knows”.

SC/ 13 June 11

ARDINGLY

Police speed checks 2011

Subject: Speeding checks Ardingly

Date: Tue, 22 Nov 2011 15:52:22 +0000

From: Stuart.Clough@sussex.pnn.police.uk

To: annerumble@msn.com; deb_ruse@hotmail.co.uk

CC: Geoffrey.bennett@sussex.pnn.police.uk; Rachel.Mundy@sussex.pnn.police.uk; Paul.tomlinson@sussex.pnn.police.uk

Anne, Pamela, Deborah

Just keeping you updated on what I have been doing in the village with regards our priority set at the last Panel Meeting SPEEDING!!

On the 21st November I went to College road and conducted speed checks for 30 minutes in both directions and here are the results:

29,25,36,37,32,30,29,33,33,34,32,25,36,34,30,22,34,42,31,29,35,33,33,21,27,28,30,30,

37,33,31,32,29,28,31,32,27,25,27,25,32,32,35,27,26,28,24,29,27,29,25,28,30,30,24,27,

27,39,38,35,31,30,25,34,27,32.

All the red ones are those that were caught travelling over 30mph of which there are 30. Obviously they have to be going a certain speed to be dealt with robustly this will be around 36mph for a 30 zone. Of which there are 7 that have fallen into this category.

After doing these checks I went onto the High street just outside of Studio 5 (we will be unable to do it outside of any shops due to H&S and risk assessing the site but this is a good gauge of the situation).

The results for the High Street for 30 mins are:

43,26,25,34,27,22,34,32,28,21,25,31,26,39,31,39,34,37,27,38,39,32,32,32,34,

37,23,42,32,46,22,19,25,25.

Again red ones are speeding of which there are 20. Of which there are 9 that could be dealt with officially.

I can say that there were no Hansons Lorries caught speeding all were well below the 30mph limit.

As you can see, and have pointed out to me in the past, there is a large number of vehicle that are not obeying the speed limit and I am happy to continue to attend the locations and will bring officers with me who can enforce those breaking the law. Just being there has an impact and word will spread that we are targetting the area over the coming months.

Can I please ask thought that people are reminded to report any anti-social driving to Operation Crackdown via their website or the phone number on the posters that I have delivered to the villages.

And of note I bumped into the male responsible for the traffic committee in the village, he was very appreciative of our presence and I said I would ask for these to be passed onto him so he has so information to go on so if you would please oblige in forwarding the data onto him.

If any clarification is needed on the content of this email then please do email me to discuss.

Kind regards

Stuart Clough

Police Community Support Officer

Haywards Heath Police Station, NPT

Tel: 0845 60 70 999 Ext 35214. Mobile: 07789168791

http://twitter.com/hheath_police

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