

## **Traffic and Highways Report**

### **Traffic Steering Group**

The inaugural meeting of the Traffic Steering group took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 2.30pm in St Pancras Pavillion.

Present :            John Bewick (Chair), Steve Pearce, Christine Moulder, Wendy Brewer, Bob Evans,  
                              Duncan Mackenzie-Reid.

Apologies for Absence: Will Dorman ( Holiday)

The group approved the adoption of the following objectives:

- i.    Reduce the volume and
- ii.   Reduce the speed of traffic passing through the village.
- iii.   Create a safer and healthier environment for residents, pedestrians and cyclists, encourage more active travel and make Kingston a better place to live.

Notes on the discussions during the meeting are included at the end of this report.

#### **The Group Proposed:**

John Bewick will request approval from the Council to obtain quotations from experienced consultants to develop creative and effective solutions that will address the objectives listed above – particularly the first one related to reducing traffic volumes.

Approval is requested to spend a sum of up to £5,000 of the Traffic Calming allocation from the Saxondown Easement Fund for this purpose.

In anticipation of approval Steve Pearce agreed to draw up a proposal brief, a copy of which is attached to this report.

## Notes on the Inaugural Meeting of the Traffic Steering Group 26/6/2023 (Draft)

**Present:** Wendy Brewer, Bob Evans, Chris moulder, Steve Pearce, Duncan Mackenzie-Reid, John Bewick

**Apologies for Absence:** Will Dorman (holiday)

2. John Bewick (Chair) welcomed the group and a personal introduction was made by everyone present.
3. The group agreed the proposed objectives, viz:
  - i. Reduce the volume and
  - ii. Reduce the speed of traffic passing through the village.
  - iii. Create a safer and healthier environment for residents, pedestrians and cyclists, encourage more active travel and make Kingston a better place to live.
4. JB summarised the two traffic-calming feasibility studies that have been commissioned by the council to date but had been advised that the 'match-funding' scheme operated by ESCC had been put on hold. No date for when or if it would be reinstated was forthcoming from ESCC. Following her attendance at another meeting, Wendy advised that she had met Ruby Brittle (ESCC Contract Management Group) who has been put in charge of the Community-Match scheme, and she aims to simplify the process and relaunch it - so it appears that it will reappear in some form at some point in the future.
5. A broad discussion of the remaining agenda items took place, including observations on the state of the roads through the village and the lack of firm information available from ESCC on how much or when repairs would take place. A number of suggestions and observations on potential traffic calming measures were raised, including: installing physical obstructions to enforce the 6'6" width restriction, barriers alongside the road at the school, zebra crossing in place of the crossing patrol, using camera technology for enforcement, using road traffic lights for enforcement, widening the footpath and thereby narrowing Ashcombe Hollow to enforce single lane use. It was noted that, for the most part, the suggestions would control traffic speed but were not guaranteed to reduce traffic volumes.
6. The group agreed that in order to make progress in achieving its objectives the advice of a specialist consultant, conversant with traffic control measures and experienced in dealing with Highway Authorities was required. This would require the prior approval of the Parish Council.
7. JB will put the proposal to the next Council meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> July, with a suggested initial budget of £5,000. The money will be sourced from the funds allocated to towards traffic calming by the Saxondown Easement Fund.
8. Steve Pearce volunteered to prepare a draft brief outlining our requirements, together with a list of potential consultants. The brief will be circulated to the Group for comment prior to submission to the council for approval.
9. Assuming approval for this action is given, the consultants will be approached and if they are willing to offer their services, initial discussions will be arranged between them and the group, possibly by Zoom ( or similar).

## Kingston Parish Council

### Transport consultancy advice

#### Request for initial proposal and fee quote

1. Kingston near Lewes is a village that lies to the south-west of Lewes within the county of East Sussex. It has a population of just under 1,000 people. The C324 road runs through the village, and it used as a “short cut” for traffic travelling to and from the coast (eg, Newhaven and Seaford) to the A27 and onwards in a westerly direction as an alternative to the A26 strategic road connection. Traffic surveys that we have undertaken have identified that between 4,000 and 5,000 vehicles pass through the village each day to the detriment of the village and its residents.
2. The Parish Council has established a ‘Transport Steering Group’ to consider this issue with the aim of identifying solutions to it. The objectives of the Steering Group are to:
  - 1: Reduce the volume of traffic passing through the village
  - 2: Reduce the speed of this traffic, and
  - 3: Create a safer and healthier environment for residents, pedestrians and cyclists, encourage more active travel and make Kingston a better place to live.
3. The Parish Council and existing members of the Steering Group have already identified several specific priority areas (see appendix) and has sought advice from the term contractors to the Highway Authority on potential interventions. We are concerned that the suggested solutions will not significantly address the objectives above. They are generally directed at ‘traffic calming’ rather than traffic reduction.
4. The Steering Group is therefore seeking support from experienced transport consultants with the aim of developing creative and effective solutions that will address the objectives listed above – particularly the first one related to reducing traffic volumes.
5. Ideas we have explored amongst our membership include:
  - a) Physical bollards or barriers to enable enforcement of the width restriction at Ashcombe Hollow and to prevent commercial vehicles using it
  - b) Pedestrian and / or signalised controlled crossing at the junction of The Street and Wellgreen Lane where large numbers of school children cross the road
  - c) Something similar at the junction of the C324 and Juggs Way / Kingston Ridge where significant numbers of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and others cross the road along a strategic footpath / bridleway

- d) More 'chicanes' and speed bumps and / or an extension of the existing 20mph zone
  - e) Use of digital technology to charge a 'toll fee', for instance, to through traffic
  - f) Widening pavements and / or creating segregated cycle routes in some locations where the road and / or pavements are presently too narrow (thereby reducing the carriageway to single working only)
6. We are conscious of the fact that Kingston is a very pretty village located within the South Downs National Park, with the South Downs Way less than a mile from the village centre. The village boasts a conservation area, several listed buildings and a 15<sup>th</sup> Century Church. ***We are therefore keen to avoid 'heavy engineering' solutions and would prefer 'digital', light touch and / or quality design solutions instead, as referenced in the South Downs 'design guide' ("Roads in the South Downs"), attached.***
7. The Parish Council has a modest budget available to fund this work **and** the interventions that will hopefully flow from it, so the initial consultancy support will need to be carefully and cost-effectively managed.
8. For information, the Parish Council has its own ring-fenced budget of £60,000 for "traffic calming works", which we expect to 'match' with a potential County Council 'Community Match' contribution of up to £50,000, with a further supplement from the South Downs National Park (as Planning Authority) through the Community Infrastructure Levy.
9. We suggest the following work stages:
- a) Briefing from Steering Group members
  - b) Development of strategy for interventions with indicative designs and costs
  - c) Discussion with Highways Authority, alongside the Steering Group
  - d) Development of detailed designs
10. At this stage we are looking for a proposal, to include information on successful interventions that have been utilised elsewhere in similar circumstances, and fee quote (capped at £5,000) for stages a) and b) with the potential for follow up work on stages c) and d) subject to the outcome of stage b).
11. For an informal discussion please contact Steve Pearce at [stevepearce139@gmail.com](mailto:stevepearce139@gmail.com) and / or 07961 111988
12. Proposal and fee quote should be sent to: [John.Bewick@kingston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:John.Bewick@kingston-pc.gov.uk)

**30<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

## Appendix – locations identified by Kingston Parish Council as likely to benefit from further traffic calming measures

**1. The transition from the A27** a major trunk road and through route, to the C324, a rural road. Currently this road has a national speed limit (60mph) extending from the A27 roundabout to the 30mph restriction at the parish boundary on Ashcombe Hollow, just to the north of Kingston Ridge. The road is largely rural in character with nothing to warn motorists they are approaching the village or to encourage them to modify their driving. *How can this be better managed to slow traffic and encourage safer driving?*

**2. Access from Ashcombe Hollow footpath across the C324 to the bus stops on the A27.** Currently there is no safe crossing point. This deters use of public transport. *How do we remedy this?*

**3. Oversize/overweight vehicles** regularly ignore the access restrictions. This occurs in spite of signage on both east and west bound carriageways of the A27 and on the C7. *Can the signage be improved to ensure the restrictions are adhered to? Can a physical width restriction be installed? This contributes to point 4 below.)*

**4. Erosion of the sides of the C324 along Ashcombe Hollow** (i.e. from the railway bridge to the junction with Kingston Ridge) caused by overrunning the carriageway on both sides, threatening the stability of the banks and creating a potential hazard. It is gradually undermining the rural character of this previously narrow lane and is also eroding a natural traffic calming device. *Can kerbstones be installed to deter further erosion and unintended widening of the carriageway?*

**5. Dangerous junction C324 with Kingston Ridge and Juggs Way**, a cross roads on the brow of a hill with curving roads and poor sightlines, shaded by trees. This is a major access to the Southdowns Way and is heavily used both by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. It is dangerous for them as there is no safe crossing point. It is also dangerous for vehicles as sight lines are poor and traffic speeds are high. *Can the junction be redesigned to slow traffic and create a safe crossing point? Would a village gateway buildout at this point help reduce traffic speed and improve safety?*

**6. The carriageway between Kingston Ridge and The Avenue** is wide and curving, which encourages traffic speeds. The pavement is narrow and feels hemmed by a high kerb and the high retaining wall on its eastern side. This deters pedestrians using the footway as it feels very intimidating and dangerous. This deters walking, which in turn impacts on the use of public transport as this is the main route to the bus-stop on the A27 (see point 2, above). *Can the footway be widened and the road narrowed to single lane? Is this road suitable for conventional chicane width restrictions?*

**7. The junction of Ashcombe Lane with The Avenue.** Currently vehicles speed down the hill to this junction. With the proposed development at Castelmer (12 houses) there will be more traffic feeding into this junction. This is a relatively complicated junction with the access to Castelmer offset from the Avenue, together with the presence of household driveways. *Can the junction be redesigned to slow traffic and create a safe crossing point?*

**8. The junction Wellgreen Lane and the Street.** This junction is within the existing traffic calming and is in the Kingston conservation area. The recent Conservation Area Appraisal (SDNP - out for consultation) identified that there is little to indicate that people are entering a conservation area and suggested that this junction could be improved to create an entry point to the historic village. It is also the crossing point for the village school and the bus turning point. *Can this junction be redesigned to achieve these ends? Would some form of 'Public Realm Enhancement' (e.g. benches, improved landscaping/signage) be suitable for this location?*

**9. Junction C324, Wellgreen Lane with the C7.** This is a busy crossing point for both walkers and riders to and from the village to the new footpath/cycleway on the eastern side of the C7, as well as to the nearby garden centre. There is no safe crossing point on a very busy road. *Can an island/junction be installed to provide a safe crossing point, as well as a pathway to the garden centre?*