

Minutes of Parish Council Highways Group Meeting 16/4/2024

Present: Cllr Terry Hayward (Chair), Cllr Carrie Allen, Cllr Stephen Woodbridge, Colin Burns, Jill Leyland

Apologies: Nick Austen, Claire Brown, Vicky Ellis, Sue Lowen, Nigel Pickford

1. **Extension of 40mph limit in Faversham Road.** Terry Hayward has consulted residents. While disappointed that the limit will only be extended to the Wagon and Horses there is agreement that it will be an improvement and worthwhile doing. It was agreed to press ahead with that (in addition once Faversham Road is “done” we will be able to bring forward another item on our HIP.) The next stage is to request an invoice for the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which will cost £3,000. The Parish Council has budgeted £10,600 for Highways works in 2024/25. This will not cover both Faversham Road and gates etc. We expect to be able to obtain some contributions from residents and businesses.

Actions: JL agreed to approach Charlie Simkins for help (done). TH agreed to ask Kieran Doble for the invoice and a breakdown of all costs for the project.

2. **Gates.** Highways had some objections to our proposed sites for gates and suggested alternatives. (See earlier note of meeting with Kieran Doble attached as appendix. Roundels are being left until gates are sorted.) Looking at their suggestions:
 - a) A252. Highway’s suggestion is to put a gate on the left side as you approach the junction with Faversham Road just by the crossing point. The refuge in the centre of the road would then act as the right hand “gate” so only one would be needed. It was agreed this would be suitable.
 - b) A20 coming from Ashford. It was agreed that gates at the speed limit sign was the best option.
 - c) School Road. It was agreed that gates at the entrance to School Road would not be suitable due to potential vandalism. Other initiatives need to be considered including reinstatement of the previous white line. (Possibly a “school sign”?) **Action: CB** offered to look at early versions of Google Maps to see if the former white line was visible – so we had proof that it existed.
 - d) A20 coming from Maidstone. We were not keen on Highways’ proposal and consider that, even if they are prepared to pay for the footpath to be moved, it would be a waste of public money. It was agreed, therefore to leave gates on the western approach for the moment.

Pluckley Road. It was agreed that the “High Halden” type sign would be suitable. (If not too expensive it might be sensible to put one on the right hand side as well since it will be several years before we get a pavement?) We also agreed to go ahead with informal signs but felt there were better options than the KCC proposal. CB had researched other signs and had

found other possibilities. The meeting looked at pictures of some of the signs he had found.



This appeared to be the most suitable and had the message we wanted to convey. Agreed to follow up with this and ask residents who would like one on their verge. **(Action CB).**

3. **Disappearance of Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) from A20.** CB had found out that the sign had been removed for repair as a routine inspection had found it faulty. However, it was not possible to repair it. The Parish Council would need to pay for a replacement if desired. It was agreed to defer discussion on whether this is needed for a future meeting. *Post meeting note: Kieran has since advised that a speed survey would be needed. He has offered to fund this.*
4. **Parish Speed Indicator Device.** Given the limited amount that can be done for Pluckley Road it was agreed that we should perhaps look more into the possibility of one of these. CB has already researched a possible site in Pluckley Road which could cover both directions. It was agreed that The Hill, facing downward traffic, would be suitable if an appropriate site can be found. The maximum number of sites is 5 and it was agreed that the final 2 could be in Charing Heath. *Post Meeting note.* Kieran has since advised that Tenterden, Aldington, Great Chart and Singleton and Wittersham use them.
5. **Speedwatch.** CB is keen to do this provided Pluckley Road can be included (one resident of Broadway Slip has also expressed an interest. **JL** agreed to contact Brian Fitzmaurice who previously ran speedwatch (done and put in touch with Colin). *Post meeting note: Dawne has confirmed that the Parish Council still has the equipment.*

Appendix: **Note of Teams meeting with Kieran Doble, KCC Highways, 15/3/24**

Present:

Kieran Doble

Terry Hayward

Colin Burns

Jill Leyland

Sue Lowen

The meeting followed an onsite review by Kieran and an engineer colleague of our proposals for gates. Roundels will be discussed at a future meeting.

A252

The suggestion was that there was a gate (left side only) at the crossing point which is just beyond the 30 mph sign. A left hand gate only is needed since the crossing island narrows the road. This was agreed.

A20 approaching from Ashford

A gate on the island would not be viewed favourably due to problems of safety during maintenance and repair. Plus the A20 is wide at that point. A gate by the new houses would interfere with sightlines for residents leaving the houses. Highways proposed a gate approximately where the 40mph reminder sign was but this would mean that the older people's housing and the entrance to the future ABC houses would be outside it. In the end it was agreed that the 40mph limit would be the best place.

A20 approaching from Maidstone

Our proposal for a gate at the 30mph limit was deemed too far out since there is no impression that you are passing through a village at that point. Highways suggested that there are two places where a gate could be put after the roundabout if the footpath on the left was moved. Kieran said he would probably be able to help fund the footpath realignment. *Can you remember exactly where the two places are or should we ask Kieran to clarify?*

School Road

While looking at the A20 Kieran and his colleague noticed that there was ample space for gates (both sides) at the entrance to School Road when coming off the roundabout. Do we want gates there?

Pluckley Road

Unfortunately our proposed place for a gate was deemed unsuitable as it would interfere with sightlines for people exiting Harrison Court. There seems to be no other suitable place for a proper gate since everywhere that is wide enough would interfere with sightlines. In addition a gate on the right side when approaching would not be compatible with plans for a pavement.

Kieran suggested a sign similar to that in High Halden with a single post which would fit on the narrow verge between Harrison Court and Coppins Corner (albeit there could be problems of vegetation needing to be controlled so it does not obscure it:



Or possibly one with a double upright, maybe diagonal?.



Unfortunately it would not be legal to put roundels in Pluckley Road as it is a 30 mph limit with lampposts (considered sufficient to remind drivers). (This restriction only seems to apply to 30mph limits.) However there are informal signs that can be used - Kieran seemed happy with the use of the 30mph billboard - and Highways have developed a kit (described on page 49 of the new booklet) that can be used to help drive the message home. We can obtain more details and an exhibition if needed.

Other points mentioned

Queries for Kieran

1. Kieran promised to let us know some parishes which use the Parish Speed Indicator Device. (Great Chart are now requesting a second.)
2. The disappearance of the Vehicle Activated Sign on the A20 needs to be investigated
3. Could we potentially have a Puffin Crossing by Poppyfields? (So that this can be factored into future plans.)

To be discussed at a later meeting

4. Need for the turning lane for Wilkinson Close to be reinstated
5. Need for a turning lane for vehicles turning right from A20 into the High Street

Not mentioned but needs to be raised at some point

6. Poor state of surface of Pluckley Road
7. Problem with cars driving too fast and overtaking dangerously between Harrison Court and the motorway Bridge. Would double white lines be possible?