

ALFRISTON AND CUCKMERE VALLEY TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL 2019

Introduction

1. This proposal presents a carefully considered, comprehensive set of sensitive traffic management measures that seek to address driver attitude and behaviour in Alfriston's historic centre and throughout the Cuckmere Valley. It is now accepted that there is no single 'fix it all' answer to traffic management in Alfriston and this proposal does not claim to try and provide one. It sets out, through the implementation of a variety of sensitive measures to make the centre of the village and the valley a safer and more pleasant environment for all road users, at the same time enhancing the beautiful nature of the village and valley and the historic character of the village.
2. The approach begins at the vehicular entries to the valley and carries on through the village, emphasising the historic centre of the village as a public realm as opposed to the vehicular dominated thoroughfare that it has become.
3. The inspiration for this proposal comes from Roads in the South Downs, Enhancing the Safety and Quality of Roads and Places in the National Park (Hamilton-Baillie Associates (prepared for ESCC and SDNPA amongst others)), Manual for Streets 2 (CIHT), Reducing Sign Clutter (DfT 2013), Traffic in Villages, Safety and Civility for Rural Roads: A Toolkit for Communities (Dorset AONB Partnership & Hamilton-Baillie Associates (endorsed by CPRE)), the 2018 proposals drawn up by Conserve Alfriston, TPA draft designs for APC and the in depth understanding of the real issues by those who are most immediately affected by them.
4. We subscribe to the following statement: "When streets become highways, public life disappears. Spaces designed just for fast traffic no longer support everyday activities and interactions. The local trade declines, town centres become less attractive and safe. Barriers are created and communities suffer. This need not happen. Streets designed as places and not as highways can restore the balance between traffic and public life. Public space can be preserved and restored without creating more congestion, or diverting traffic. Slow, steady traffic flows can minimize delays, and allow pedestrians and cyclists to be safer and more confident. But this needs a different approach to street design from conventional highway engineering."
5. Design elements that the Parish Council do not wish to see include:
 - traffic lights (now ruled out in any event);
 - street lighting (does not fit the rural character of the village/SDNPA Dark Skies policy/longstanding local objection);
 - additional signage [unless particularly good reason for it] (over signage tends to reduce the attention paid to all signage (cf clutter at Drusillas as prime example) and does not sit well with the historic and rural setting);
 - one way-system (largely unworkable due to increased signage and speed).

The Cuckmere Valley

6. It is anticipated that the Parish Councils in the Cuckmere Valley will work together with SDNPA and ESCC to introduce a unified approach to traffic management across

the valley. Whilst the specific village-centric proposals relate to Alfriston it is hoped that other villages may draw inspiration from them and put forward their own, village-led designs.

7. Beginning at the outer edges of the valley it is anticipated that, by discouraging large vehicles from entering the valley, and by encouraging a sense of place once drivers leave the major trunk roads, a changed mindset will have been engendered before drivers reach the villages. This will help to reinforce the changes made within the villages themselves.
8. Whilst we wish to discourage large vehicles from transiting through Alfriston we do not wish to discourage coaches from visiting. However we would like to achieve a way by which they do not travel through the centre of the village.

A27/Drusillas Roundabout

9. Clear weight restriction signage on the A27 approaches to the Drusillas Roundabout, to include on the Westbound approach 'straight on for freight' signage to Newhaven port (as currently exists at Polegate A27/A22 junction).
10. Clear, more persuasive signage to discourage large vehicles from using the C39 as a cut-through from the A27 to Seaford/the coast roads. Examples can include larger/more vivid/clearer weight restriction signage accompanied by 'Unsuitable for Large Vehicles' and/or 'Do not Follow SatNav' signs to reinforce the weight restriction (example images below).
11. Decluttering of signage (both Highways and unofficial advertising) in order to maximise the impact of the important signage that remains.
12. Consideration of width, length or height restriction in combination with weight restriction. Consideration of a physical width restriction (whilst still allowing access for emergency vehicles/refuse).
13. Once on C39, SDNPA styled National Park/Cuckmere Valley way-marker (similar to that on A259 approach to Exceat bridge (image below)) and short rumble strip or similar (cattle grid/cobbling (example image below)) to mark the entrance to the valley and begin the process of instilling in the driver's consciousness that they are entering a space that is not a typical highway.
14. C39: removal (or, when the time comes, the non-renewal) of all white lines and cats eyes as at Whiteway. To remove from the driver's mind the sense of 'certainty' thus engendering a greater awareness and sense of caution/consideration for other road users.

Seaford/Hindover

15. Clear more persuasive signage to discourage large vehicles from using the C39 as a cut-through from the Seaford/the coast roads to A27. Examples can include larger/

more vivid/clearer weight restriction signage accompanied by 'Unsuitable for Large Vehicles' and/or 'Do not Follow SatNav' signs to reinforce the weight restriction (examples below).

16. Consideration of width, length or height restriction in combination with weight restriction. Consideration of a physical width restriction (whilst still allowing access for emergency vehicles/refuse).
17. SDNPA styled National Park/Cuckmere Valley way-marker (similar to that on A259 approach to Exceat bridge) and short rumble strip or similar (cattle grid/cobbling (example below)) to mark the entrance to the valley and begin the process of instilling in the driver's consciousness that they are entering a space that is not a typical highway.
18. Exploration of the possibility of open grazing (controlled by cattle grids (cf Chailey Common etc) across the C39 at Hindover.
19. Removal (or, when the time comes, the non-renewal) of all white lines and cats eyes as at Whiteway. To remove from the driver's mind the sense of 'certainty' thus engendering a greater awareness and sense of caution/consideration for other road users.

Exceat, Milton St, Wilmington

20. SDNPA styled National Park/Cuckmere Valley way-marker (similar to that on A259 approach to Exceat bridge (image below) and short rumble strip or similar (cattle grid/cobbling) to mark the entrance to the valley and begin the process of instilling in the driver's consciousness that they are entering a space that is not a typical highway.

Existing 40 mph Whiteway

21. Retain this to begin the process of slowing traffic as it approaches Alfriston.

Existing 30 mph

22. Retain this in its current locations at either end of the village to begin the process of slowing traffic as it approaches the 20mph limit.

20mph

23. 20 mph speed limit (not zone) to be imposed across the entirety of the village and to include Winton Street. A 20 mph zone is not desired as the required road markings are not considered sensitive to the historic setting or the rural character of the village. It is believed that the existing 30mph markers (save those at the change from 30mph to 20mph) can simply be exchanged for 20mph markers, obviating the need for greater signage.

24. 20mph limit to begin at same location as the village gateways. All measures together in one place increase the impact of change in the road layout from thoroughfare to public realm.

Village gateways

25. Village gateways to be sited immediately after the entrance to the Willows car park at the Northern end and 2/3 of the way along the straight section past Deans Place (roughly 1/2 way from Deans Place wrought iron gate to the end of the 'moat'). The siting of the gateways close to visual cues (such as the first view of St Andrews church/the built environment) is important to reinforce the impression that the driver is entering a new/different space.
26. Village gateways to include: new village name sign (to include "Historic Village" or similar but not "Please Drive Carefully" as this phrase is overused and worn out); 20 mph limit begins; narrowing of the road (not necessarily a build out but narrowing to single lane width in the middle/to one side of the road (see representative examples below); rumble strip (cobbling preferable, probably not cattle grid because of equestrians); gateway (can be five-bar gate, sculpture, flint wall etc but not white picket fencing (too urban/ordinary); potentially priority given to traffic exiting the village (dependant on signage) (some representative examples below).
27. The purpose of the gateways, in combination with a change to the road surface and other measures through the centre of the village is to create a public realm space as opposed to a thoroughfare that will achieve the aims set out in para 3 above and therefore improve the situation in Alfriston for all types of road users, and at the same time enhance the beauty of the village and its desirability as a place to live, visit, victual and shop.

Road Surface

28. These changes to be between the village gateways (North St & High St), West St to Dene car park East entrance, Star Lane, Weavers Lane and the made part of River Lane. The aim is to reinforce the sense of place and public realm.
29. Change in road surface texture to bound grit (so it can be felt by drivers) reinforces the sense of being in a different environment - but low noise required.
30. Change in road surface colour (rural not urban red) to reinforce the change to a different environment (example image below).

Dene Car Park Eastern exit/between the car parks

31. Existing Eastern exit of Dene car park to become entrance and exit (requires widening). This will ensure that fewer vehicles have to enter the centre of the village in order to access this car park, reducing traffic in North St, the Square and West St. As traffic is already permitted to turn into Sloe Lane at this junction no issue can arise re traffic making the same manoeuvre to enter the car park.

32. Between the Dene car park exit and pedestrian entrance to the Willows car park: Slight remodelling of the road(cf TPA design below) and introduce a roundel (example below). A roundel is not a roundabout but acts as a traffic calming device because it changes the space, creates uncertainty for the driver (thus increasing awareness and reducing speed) and breaks up the linear journey (reducing speed). It can act to increase the drivers sense of place, thus increasing awareness and reducing speed. This should achieve a safer pedestrian crossing point for those exiting (and accessing) the Willows car park as well as reducing the speed of and attitude of drivers approaching North St.
33. Retain the existing 'entrance only' at West St to avoid the car park becoming a cut through/ de facto road.

North Street

34. There is a need to break up the linear nature of North St so as to engender a sense of uncertainty and decrease speed. Build outs at each end are thought not to help as drivers tend to 'race' to get past them. Ideas to include different non-linear road surface at the side of the road and/or the introduction of planters/vegetation at the side of the road (which may obviate the need for a bollard outside Badgers).
35. It is hoped that by changing the entire environment of the centre of the village this will also assist in changing behaviour in North St.

Market Square

36. Continuation of the changes to road surface as above.
37. Not to have any designated parking space - so as to avoid signage, road marking and to enhance the beauty of the Square.
38. Encourage businesses to spill out into the public realm (as Singing Kettle does at present), maintain public seating etc. Encourage use of the Square (morris men, farmers market etc) to reinforce the sense of public realm.
39. Bus stop to remain, but explore possibility of 'waiting buses' to stop in Willows car park to reduce congestion.

High Street

40. To continue the sense of public realm from Market Square along the length of the High Street, break up the linear nature of the street with planters/small build outs to reduce speed, engender sense of place. Retain lowered paving as at present.

41. At the narrow bend, site a convex mirror (requires approval of Minister of Transport) on the eastern side to assist drivers in seeing what traffic is approaching.
42. Remove the existing give way signs. If a mirror is in situ allow drivers to sort out for themselves who will go first. This helps engender a sense of courtesy amongst drivers and forces them to be more aware of their surroundings (thus reinforcing what the overall scheme seeks to achieve).
43. Star Lane to remain two way (entry and exit).
44. Re-set uneven pavements.

West Street

45. Continue road surface as per High St to junction at Dene car park entrance.
46. Introduce a roundel at entrance to car park/junction of West St & Sloe Lane to reduce speed and elicit greater awareness of junction.

Parking restrictions

47. It is hoped that, if enforcement can be achieved, it can be handled sensitively and proportionately so that those who only stop for a moment (to pick up a newspaper or pint of milk) are not penalised but those who 'park' are penalised [NB: stopping for loading and unloading remains a lawful activity on double yellow lines].
48. Introduce the same restriction outside the Star Inn as for the rest of the High St.
49. Reduce the extent of the restriction on Kings Ride and Deans Road to encourage drivers not to park in the High St and Square.
50. To reduce the sense of linear created by the double yellow lines explore the option of a restricted parking zone. Its desirability is dependent upon signage required in order to enforce (example of signage required below but NB not to include the 'no loading' restriction pictured).
51. If yellow lines remain ensure that they are and remain: heritage colour and width and properly signed so as to be enforceable (should the day come...).

Bollards

52. Consideration needs to be given to all bollards currently sited on the High St as the installation of these has been an ad hoc exercise. Consideration as to whether all bollards continue to be necessary within a de facto shared space/if planters for build outs installed, and those that remain require replacement/repair as appropriate as many are damaged.

53. REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES

These are some representative examples of the type of measures that are proposed.









