

**Notes from meeting with Cllr Philip Whitehead, Dave Thomas, Sarah Simmonds, Andrew Williamson and Mike Bedford on 5 January 2016 at County Hall.**

General introduction to Avebury Parish Traffic Plan and its origins and inputs, how this evolved and was incorporated into the Avebury WHS Transport Strategy and into the overall WHS Management Plan. The process of integrating the WHS Transport Strategy into Highways' policy decisions was also discussed. Four elements from the Transport Strategy were discussed with a view to gaining an understanding as to what should be done next.

**1) 30mph extension northwards on A4361.**

- a. PW and DT pointed out the problems of extending the limit up to and beyond Rutlands Farm; there are too few markers of human settlement at Rutlands to signal to drivers that it is an inhabited area and that they should abide by the speed limit. A simple change in speed limit and accompanying signage is generally found to be ineffective in reducing speeds in areas not obviously built up. PW and DT suggested, however, that the 30mph limit could be effective if it was sited just north of the Bonds Garage re-development [i.e. a little north of Melbourne House just north of Harrington Court] where it is clear to drivers that there are significant numbers of dwellings. This would also help remove signage near the Henge. It was generally agreed that this should be implemented.
- b. A question of a 40 or 50mph buffer zone north of a new 30 limit was discussed. PW and DT thought this could not be agreed at this stage due to likely ineffectiveness and lack of need if the new 30 limit worked. It was agreed the situation be reviewed as a second phase once the new 30mph limit had been operational for a while.
- c. PW and DT suggested that an informal pedestrian crossing might be installed between the two bus stops at Rawlins Park. This could help to reinforce in drivers' minds that pedestrians could be nearby. The crossing would include one or two low marker posts incorporating night-time reflectors on each side of the road, dropped kerbs if necessary, and a strip of coloured tarmac across the road. The colour of the tarmac should relate to the WHS and therefore perhaps be a chalky colour or other neutral shade. Highways are currently outsourcing works to a new contractor but a very rough estimate of costs might be £4k to £5k, or less if several crossings were commissioned. SS noted that any design needed to adhere to the Design Principles set out in the Transport Strategy and be consistent across the WHS. The design should be reviewed by the WHS Steering Committee and by the organisations responsible for the protection of the WHS such as Historic England. It was agreed that the Parish Council will then finalise its proposals and apply to CATG for scheme approval.
- d. Further design-appropriate informal crossing points should be considered where rights of way cross roads in line with the WHS Transport Strategy and the WHS Management Plan 2015.
- e. Double white lines from the Henge past Rawlins Park – apparently this is not an option from a Highways perspective as this is legitimate only when sight lines are so limited such that they make overtaking dangerous. It may still be legal under DfT guidance to put white lines in but departure from DfT guidance would potentially increase liability issues for Highways if accidents were to occur because of the lines. This would also set a precedent – i.e. more would be demanded in the parish and elsewhere.

- f. AW raised the possibility of installing a chevron sign warning northbound traffic of the right hand bend immediately north of the Henge. It was felt this should be reviewed once the effectiveness of the changes proposed above could be assessed together with the need to reduce signage in the WHS.

## **2) Trusloe speed limits and crossings**

- a. Implementation of a 40 mph buffer zone between the current 30mph limit and the A4 south of Trusloe. PW and DT did not see this as effective as this is a main road with only a few houses on one side.
- b. Implementation of a 40, 30 or even 20mph zone at the entrance to and throughout Trusloe. All possible but it would be necessary to check speeds perceived by pedestrians with actual traffic speeds and, in addition to the entry speed limit signs, there would have to be repeater signs where street lamps did not exist at regulation intervals. The excess signage would also have to be weighed against their effectiveness in reducing speeds. Parish Transport Group to consider, consult with those involved and make proposals.
- c. Crossing to bus stop seen as the danger spot. Community presence not great enough to warrant a zebra crossing – needs 50 crossings per hour for each of the peak 4 hours of the day (i.e. at least 200 crossings per day) to enable a zebra crossing to be considered. PW suggested however that an informal crossing point similar to Rawlins Park could be put in here. Seen as a cheap and possibly more effective solution than the 40mph extension. Parish Transport Group and WHS partners to consider as at 1c above.
- d. A similar crossing point from the NT car park to the footpath to Silbury Hill should also be considered which may further help to slow traffic in this area.

## **3) Beckhampton roundabout**

- a. Speeds of cars within 300m of the roundabout in all directions threaten pedestrians at crossings on all 4 exit roads which go to and from public footpaths, bus stops (especially school bus), public house and stables. Solution in the WHS Transport Strategy is to extend the grassed splitter islands from the roundabout in all directions and move them further into the roundabout to narrow the carriageway on the roundabout itself. This was estimated by DT to cost at least £100k and thus not likely to be funded by the Substantive Fund which only has a total budget of £250k for all of Wilts; the question arises as to whether value for money would be achieved by spending, say, £150k to achieve, say, a 5mph reduction in speeds.
- b. Solution for the longer term is to put the plans in the WHS Transport Strategy to Atkins for drawing up detailed plans. The project would then be oven-ready for implementation if/when larger funds were identified. This has in fact already been done at the last CATG meeting when it was agreed that Atkins should give an estimate of their fees. MB/AW said that if CATG budgets are the limiting factor then contributions from local residents, businesses and the Parish may be sought to ensure the plans are drawn up. Parish Transport Group to explore fee funding.
- c. Short term solution may be informal pedestrian crossings (see para 1c above) at the stables, bus stop on A361, crossing to Nash lane on A4361 and on the A4 between the pub and the village. Parish Transport Group to seek agreement on design with WHS partners and make application to CATG, including race-horse crossing at paragraph 3g below.

- d. [Points for information: the size and design of a roundabout is partly determined by likely queue lengths on entry roads, and by entry and exit speeds of vehicles. Constructing a smaller roundabout more appropriate to current numbers of vehicles might cost something in the region of £400k. Highways' procedure for designing larger schemes has four stages: Feasibility – looking at a range of options, Preliminary – assessing two or three of those options, Detail – designing and costing one option and Construction – producing working drawings and specifications.]
- e. Reducing light pollution from street lighting on the roundabout was discussed. New LED lanterns are much brighter and can be focussed more accurately to avoid light spill into the environment. Street lights cost in the region of £2k to £3k each; their current pay-back period depends on their usage but is still about four years short of breaking even. Although unlikely to be funded in the short term, this can be prioritised when updating of the street lights across the county takes place. Highways to liaise the WHS Coordination Unit before implementing any changes.
- f. AW noted that the A4 crossing at Beckhampton Stables had become slick due to wear caused by steel horse-shoes and horses could slip. He requested that a special non-slip surface be installed in a strip across the road. See paragraph 3c above for action.
- g. SS asked about the new pillar/weather station on the north side of the roundabout. It was agreed that PW/DT would ask the relevant member of staff to contact SS to see whether it could be moved out of the line of sight through to the Long Barrow.

#### **4) West Kennett**

- a. Similar problems as Beckhampton – traffic too fast for safe crossing. Again the WHS solution will cost more than the Substantive Fund can deal with. Agreed however that an informal crossing point over to bus stop to change the perception of an unbroken carriageway could be proposed as a similar shorter term solution on the same basis as per Beckhampton.
- b. MB requested consideration of a 40mph limit in West Kennett, but PW/DT expressed the same reservations about efficacy as in paragraph 1a above.
- c. Longer term solution same as Beckhampton – get detailed plans drawn up by Atkins as per CATG meeting output and explore obtaining funding from individuals, business and Parish Council to speed this process up.
- d. Grass/soil has covered the surfaces of some existing footpaths beside the A4 (i.e. towards the East Kennett turning). Parish Stewards are about to be reintroduced and the Parish Council should request them to clear paths and repair them.
- e. A scheme at West Kennett might involve the closure of the B4003. Wiltshire Council would rely on the Parish Council to advise on agreed way forward.

#### **5) Implementing WHS Transport Strategy into Highways' daily policy**

The fact that Highways had commissioned Atkins to produce the WHS Transport Strategy and been involved in its development as members of the project board was noted. It was agreed that Highways would liaise on potential works with SS and that she would advise Highways' staff on policies and actions contained in the Transport Strategy. This will help to ensure the Design Principles are adhered to and that the correct WHS partners are involved in new schemes in the sensitive WHS landscape.