

Minutes of the Shere Traffic Working Group meeting held on 3rd October 2013 in Tanyard Hall, Gomshall

Present: Parish Councillors R Davey (Chairman), C Brooke, B Grover, J Hutton and J Tenner; M Dodd, A Denton, C Gorsuch, Keith Taylor (SCC), J Hilder (SCC), B Assadi (SCC) and the Clerk, J Millett.

Residents' responses to proposals

The quantitative and qualitative questionnaire analysis of questionnaires and summary of letters and e-mails from local residents was noted.

The Working Group also noted the decision of the Council meeting on 6th September: to accept the third option as described in Colin Davis's presentation, i.e. adopt the traffic calming scheme but consider some form of one way / no entry road system in Upper Street for implementation as a subsequent stage' if these measures proved ineffective or if circumstances changed.

Detailed responses to site proposals:

Residents' responses to each site for the proposed traffic measures was discussed with SCC:

Site 1 - Accepted as SCC plan – plus consideration / request that rather than the road then immediately broadening out for a short stretch, as it would, a black top footway, with grass verge behind, be established on the land / road between the current drive ways to The Manor House and The Lodge, and then, after the Lodge entrance, this be chamfered into the existing footway to form a continuous 5.5m road width, as established on Site 2 drawings. This could offer an enhanced safety and traffic calming feature at this point as well as improved aesthetic appearance to the entrance to the village.

SCC comment: can see sense in reducing width; suggest remove part of hedge so can see signs on both sides of road; will go through all these proposals with design team and report back to Parish Council.

Site 2 and Site 3 - Accepted as SCC plan.

SCC comment: Noted. Highlighted road safety problem caused by 4x4 vehicle habitually parking at site 3 and need for enforcement action; Upper Lodge – happy with Mr Hogben's sketches.

Site 4 - Alternative No.3 of proposals is only acceptable option, i.e., a raised pedestrian dedicated pavement is essential but it is accepted that occasionally vehicles may need to use it to pass - this solution is much welcomed. However, the widened footway needs to be extended beyond the frontage of Hillcrest as shown on your drawings. The second photo used on the plans shows the porch of Bignolds – the next but one property further on from Hillcrest. At this point, the resident of Bignolds steps from his porch onto a footway that is less than 2ft wide. The widened 1 metre minimum footway therefore needs to extend past this point so mobility scooters and pushchairs are able to safely traverse the length of Upper St.

Working Party comments: ensure road widths are measured accurately as don't want to create pinch points by mistake; kerb should be visually appropriate and practical for its uses

– suggest use existing granite/conservation kerbing and low, square edge pavement; traffic will tend to use the 4x4 garage forecourt if the road is narrowed and it also has a french drain which could be damaged if vehicles are driving onto it; the cottage opposite, Anchor Cottage, needs to be protected via a bollard.

SCC comment: suggest low, bull-nosed kerb; will speak to GBC Conservation Officer about kerb materials and could meet again to discuss this.

Site 5, Site 6 and Site 7. - Accepted as plan.

Working Party comment: Site 6 is actually Old Manor Cottages

SCC comment: Noted.

Site 8. - Accepted as plan, provided the 1 metre pavement extends past the frontage of Elm Cottage and June Cottage and The Little House. Also, it was accepted that further protection was needed – a bollard or trough? – to prevent the first floor frontage of Vine Cottage, which overhangs the road itself, continually being badly damaged by large lorries turning right out of Middle Street. Whilst avoiding the lower part of the building they frequently hit the overhanging upper part.

Working Party comment: the corner of the roof of Manor Cottage was often hit by large vehicles because of the narrowness of the pavement at that point and the camber of the road – it was suggested that there should be a bollard at this point. .

SCC comment: will look at and send Parish Council a plan.

Site 9 - Accepted as plan – with the following observations / feedback

- 1) the owner of the property on the southern corner of Pilgrims Way believes the suggested corner ‘adjustment’ impinges on his freehold land. He is not necessarily objecting to this but it does need to be discussed with him directly
- 2) the owner of the property that begins where the proposed new pavement ends – which was Shere Museum – is willing, subject to discussion, design and materials, that her flower bed, which immediately borders the road, be paved as far as her stone steps. This would provide a further 10+ metres of pedestrian usable footway and enable the crossing from one side of the road to the other to be made further back from the blind bend.

SCC comment: would have to have some form of dedication to Highways or can just do and use her private forecourt but the owner would have the right for 20 years to rip it up and her building would have to be protected against damp from the road.

Site10. – Accepted as plan, with the following strong request from residents of Pathfields to be considered. The school bus picks up children who wait for it at the island, having crossed the road from Pathfields. The traffic coming out from Shere accelerates sharply on leaving the village and the traffic coming down Sandy lane travels too fast. Why cannot the whole length of Sandy Lane - down to the new 20mph signs be established as a 30 mph limit and/or could there be a build out with one directional priority to slow traffic more significantly somewhere south of the Pathfields junction?

Working Party comment: there are no cars parked there at commuter times and there is poor visibility to the right where children cross – suggest widen Pathfields junction to make it a bit squarer.

SCC comment: also not averse to a priority give way at this location – will look at both these options.

Shere Improvements to signs

– to encourage motorists to use an alternative route to the A25 avoiding Shere Village. The improved signage proposal was much welcomed with most favouring option 1 at location 1. Proposals at locations 2 to 5 were generally approved but it was also very strongly felt by many residents and the traffic Working group, that the road markings at Location 2 should be such as to show the ‘normal / major ‘road continuing left around the bend towards Albury, as shown on the new location 1 sign board, with appropriate stop / give way markings relating to traffic coming up Sandy Lane from the village
SCC comment: suggest change priority at top of Sandy Lane and remove centre line marking. Also need signing to Guildford at Hound House Road.

Of major importance is the demand to impose a 3.5 ton weight restriction on all three roads into and out of Shere.

Such a legal prohibition (except for collection and delivery) would:

1. Reduce substantially the number of totally inappropriate vehicles coming through Shere’s narrow and closely populated centre via the three entrance / exit roads, and using a narrow bridge not designed for the weights involved. The New Road /Park Road route is immeasurably safer and less disruptive with only seven residential properties directly bordering this route – all of which are at least 30ft back from the road behind private front drives and hedges.
2. Substantially reduce the number of occasions when cars lorries and buses need to mount pedestrian footways. Even with the narrowed road widths the slowed cars will be able to pass without the need to mount pavements – but this will not be the case when a lorry meets opposing cars, let alone opposing lorries or buses
3. Establishing this internationally recognised prohibition will ensure that satellite navigation systems for lorries will no longer ‘declare‘ the route through the centre of Shere as a viable / recommended route for HGV’s – which is currently the case, as confirmed by all the drivers of the articulated trucks we have questioned when negotiating the left turn at Middle Street to head for Ewhurst over Hound House Road. It of course remains a mystery to us all why Hound House Road itself is not closed to such passing HGV’s.
4. Reduce the risk of buildings (most of them are Listed Buildings) being hit by HGVs

Working Party comments: the demand for an HGV weight restriction came out very strongly in the consultation exercise with local residents; the need for such restrictions was already proven by the existing advisory signs; the weight restriction on the bridge in Shere needed to be identified.

SCC comment: An HGV weight limit has to be a separate exercise; it needs to be evidence-based and it was a new request that would be added to the Highways list and it will require a further stage of consultation, including the police. Phase 1 is implementation of the agreed traffic calming measures and a separate Phase 2 could be a one-way system or a reduction in the HGV weight limit. In the meantime, advisory signs would be made a lot more visible.

Additional Community Requests / Ideas arising from the consultation exercise

1. No entry signs at the ford at the bottom of Lower Street and Rectory Lane (subject to consultation with Lower Street residents) – to prevent increasing use of these roads as a rat-run used to avoid the slowed centre of the village.

SCC comment: this was a new proposal and would have to be dealt with separately but the Parish Council could ask local residents for their views. If there were no entry signs, that would usually require turning space but there would also be advanced warning signs.

2. A build-out along Gomshall Lane to force traffic to slow – as per the build out in Upper Street near the car park.

Working Party comments: some members felt that the police would not support a build here as they would ask what was already being done to reduce speed at this location. A 20mph speed limit should exist throughout Gomshall Lane, together with the use of community speed-watch.

SCC comment: We will consult the police about a possible 20mph speed limit.

3. establish the start of the new 20mph limit along Gomshall lane BEFORE the entrance to the Surgery car park.

SCC comment: see 2. above.

4. Establish pedestrian footway opposite the Hop Gardens - and put yellow lines outside Hop Gardens – to provide continuous pavement as far as Knaveshurst, when will be able to cross to new pavement to Pathfields. This would increase safety and further slow traffic through the village

SCC comment: we will look at having a pavement from Vaughns, upwards.