

# Traffic Calming Improvements, Alfriston Stakeholder Engagement

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## Introduction

### 1.1. Purpose of this Note

This technical note (TN05) sets out a comprehensive record of our stakeholder engagement for SCH-149 which comprises of a series of traffic calming improvements within Alfriston Village and will cover such topics as our engagement approach and process.

It should be noted however that these design proposals will be shared more widely and will be subject to a public consultation later in the year.

### 1.2. Report Structure

This technical note is based upon the following sections,

- Section 1 - Introduces the project and its current stage of development.
- Section 2 - Describes the stakeholder engagement methodology for the proposed scheme and the methodology used for analysing feedback from stakeholders. This engagement process identifies the different groups engaged and what their functions are, as well as requesting technical input and suggestions.
- Section 3 - Outlines engagement to date to explain with whom we have engaged so far on the Project and how we have listened to their feedback, analysed it and communicated it back to them.

### Supporting Information:

- Appendix A - Proposed Scheme Design
- Appendix B - Stakeholder Consultation List
- Appendix C - Engagement Communications 'ESCC Email Template'
- Appendix D - Engagement Communications 'Stakeholder Responses'.

### 1.3. Project Summary

In June 2022 East Sussex Highways (ESH) were commissioned by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to undertake a feasibility study for traffic calming improvements in Alfriston Village.

Alfriston is a small village in the East Sussex district of Wealden that lies within the Cuckmere Valley, approximately four miles north east of Seaford. Highway access to the village is provided by an unclassified road that passes through the historical centre of Alfriston. This unclassified road is accessed from the A27 Drusillas Roundabout in the north and from the outskirts of Seaford in the south and provides a route through the Cuckmere Valley. **Figure 1.1** displays the location of the study area and the surrounding highway network.

**Figure 1.1**  
Study Area and Surrounding Highway Network



The main highway route through Alfriston includes North Street, Market Square and High Street. North Street, which is located towards the north of Alfriston, is relatively residential with a series of terraced houses located on either side of the carriageway. Access and egress to both Dene and Willows car parks is now provided off North Street, after recent works were undertaken to widen the eastern entry of Dene car park to allow two-way vehicular movements. This was designed to reduce the number of motorists entering the village square.

Market Square is considered the historical centre of Alfriston. It is surrounded by local businesses and features a medieval market cross on a pedestrian island in the middle of the square. Further local businesses are found along High Street, which lies towards the south of the village. The width of the carriageway along High Street is very narrow in areas causing

congestion issues for passing traffic. The majority of the main highway route through Alfriston features double yellow road markings on both sides of the carriageway. Buses pass through the village and stop at bus stops within Dene and The Willows car parks as well within Market Square.

Data was collected from a range of different sources, all of which formed an essential part of understanding the characteristics of the study area's highway network. This included an initial desk-based study and a review of personal injury collision (PIC), traffic flow, speed and non-motorised user (NMU) crossing movement data provided by ESCC.

Review of the collected data has provided a detailed understanding of traffic and pedestrian issues along the local highway network.

Thus, conclusions have been reached regarding these issues and potential remedies for addressing local concerns and therefore the following traffic management measures were recommended;

- Introduction of a 20mph village-wide speed limit, supported by the implementation of two physical measures i.e., road narrowing with village name signage (to introduce drivers to the village). The village gateway will help to create 'a sense of place' when drivers enter the village, and the physical measures are designed such that drivers are required to slow down before entry;
- In addition to the village gateways, two further design options have also been prepared. The first of which looks to discourage HGVs travelling through the village via the A27. This element of the scheme will look to incorporate a series of Advisory Lorry Route Signage along the A27.
- Furthermore, to make the existing 7.5-ton limit sign on Alfriston Road more prominent to Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) drivers, the sign will be mounted onto that of a yellow background. Thus, making the sign more visible, especially amongst vegetation or the skyline
- The final proposal, will consist of removing the existing give-way lines in Market Square as well as incorporating additional double yellow lines outside the Star Public House on the High Street

It should be noted that the proposed scheme illustrated within **Appendix A**, was submitted and approved by the ESCC Road Safety Team for a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) in July 2022.

## Stakeholder Engagement Process

### 2.1. Methodology

The main focus of stakeholder engagement for this project was to;

- Give stakeholders an understanding of how the feasibility study for Alfriston village is being developed (stakeholder contact list is included within **Appendix B**);
- Give stakeholders the chance to provide feedback on the design option; and
- Review all feedback received and explain how this was taken into consideration for the final design.

### 2.2. Feedback Analysis

On Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022 an invitation was issued to key stakeholders, asking them to provide feedback in the form of written representations on the proposed traffic calming design options. Organisations were asked to respond to an identified project mailbox by Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022.

A copy of this written communication is included for reference within **Appendix C** with the responses received also being provided within **Appendix D**. All of the responses were documented and allocated a reference number. The project team then sorted through all representations to highlight the key themes and provided these to the subject matter experts who would be responsible for analysing the issues in more detail.

It should be noted that due to a lack of responses from the initial email correspondence, a secondary email was issued to some of the outstanding recipient's again asking for stakeholder feedback by the above-mentioned deadline.

## Stakeholder Feedback Responses

### 3.1. Feedback Analysis

The Project Team sent requests for written representations to 28 organisations as well as a handful of Councillors that operate within the district of Wealden. The invitations were sent to organisations within the Stakeholder Reference Group, a list that was provided by ESCC.

It should be noted however that from the 28 organisations contacted only 7 sent submissions back to the project team, thus achieving a response rate of only 25%.

As mentioned previously, a copy of the written responses has also been included for further reference and is attached within **Appendix D** of this Technical Note. The below Table 3.1 has illustrated if that individual stakeholder was either in support of the proposed scheme or was opposed.

**Table 3.1.**  
*Expression of Interest*

Support/Oppose	Frequency	% of total responses
Strongly support or support	2	28%
Neither support nor oppose	5	72%
Strongly oppose or oppose	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3.1 above depicts the number of stakeholders who expressed a preference for the proposed traffic calming improvements in Alfriston Village. As the table has identified, none of the respondents opposed the scheme.

However, it should be noted that both Surrey and Sussex Police and the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) were in support of the scheme, subject to further design amendments/clarifications.

In order to receive further feedback from Stakeholders this Technical Note was prepared on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022, thus giving additional time to receive any such late responses from Stakeholders, however no further corresponding emails were received.

The project team received detailed comments in the feedback which has been helpful in identifying the overall view of stakeholders to the scheme concept as well as specific issues of importance. Therefore, the more detailed suggestions regarding the scheme have been provided below within the subsections of this Technical Note, with the following response in [blue](#) by ESH.

## 3.2. Broader Points Raised

### 3.2.1 Traffic Calming Gateway Design

The SDNPA issued the following response on the proposed traffic calming design *“We welcome the reduction of speed to 20mph through Alfriston, though given the intention to slow traffic with buildouts, and the decision to not include repeater signage, would this not be more appropriate as a 20mph ZONE as opposed to simply a limit? Road features present in Alfriston such as narrow widths, bends and a removal of the centrelines would all count as traffic calming features for the purposes of a ZONE. This would allow for a reduction in clutter including the proposed gateway style furniture, which is being used solely to highlight the change of speed, not serve as a gateway to the village”*

**ESH Response** - Paragraph 3.2.16 of LTN 1/07 states A 20 mph zone should have entry treatments with signing at the gateways to the zone and suitable speed reducing measures. Within the zone speed control measures are needed, which are broadly defined in TSRGD 2002 (e.g., road humps, raised junctions, speed cushions, horizontal deflections, mini roundabouts, bends and reductions in the width of the carriageway.) The fact that the roads are narrow with bends would therefore not be considered as introducing speed control measures.

*“Additionally, in the interests of reducing clutter, could there be a change of speed (or 20mph ZONE) sign on only one side of the road? The Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 3 states ‘There is no specific requirement to provide two terminal signs, one on each side of the carriageway, where the speed limit changes along a length of road.’ therefore could the infrastructure be limited to solely the carriageway where the traffic is to be slowing”.*

**ESH Response** – While the SDNPA is correct that the Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 3 does state that *“there is no specific requirement to provide two terminal signs, one on each side of the carriageway, where the speed limit changes along a length of road”*. However, Chapter 3 then highlights *“in most situations it is recommended that two signs are provided, particularly on motorways and rural dual carriageway roads. Drivers need to be fully aware of the speed limit both for reasons of road safety and enforcement, particularly where the sign indicates a reduction in the speed limit”*.

Given the rural location, there is always the possibility that a single sign might become damaged or obscured by vegetation and require a more rigorous maintenance regime. A single sign could also be obscured by high sided vehicles, particularly on roads with more than one traffic lane in the same direction. Hence, the reason to include two terminal signs was justified.

*“If the gateway style furniture is insisted upon, as is being discussed in the developing ‘Communities in the South Downs’ guidance and accompanying National Park appropriate ‘Catalogue of Interventions’, within the park it is preferred that gateway furniture be made of timber or other locally significant materials in the first instance. While I recognise there may be some concerns regarding passive safety, Hampshire County Council are currently trialling passively safe timber gateway furniture and could be contacted for advice”.*

**ESH Response** – While ESH would not have an issue in principle with using timber for the construction of the gateway features, a full risk assessment would be required to assess the potential impact that the material would have specifically in relation to passive safety. Long term maintenance would also need to be agreed with ESH or the APC (depending on who will be responsible for maintaining any of the features).

*“Again, the SDNPA approve of the use of a buildout to reduce traffic speed, with priority for traffic leaving Alfriston, but would request that the verge/embankment in each of these locations be continued into the buildout, rather than the whole thing be topped with tarmac. The kerbing for these buildouts should match the conservation kerbing used throughout Alfriston. Additionally, there is an excess of clutter. There may not need to be the large amount of signage.”*

**ESH Response** – Again, ESH don’t have any problems in principle if the buildouts were ‘filled’ with soil/grass instead of blacktop. Consideration would need to be given to the long-term maintenance of the area and how this would be undertaken in a constrained area, and both ESH and ESCC would need to be satisfied that any vegetation that may take hold will not impact visibility of any reflective material that may be present on posts/bollards etc.

*“Traffic Note 9/94 (Horizontal Deflections) makes mention that the Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations 1993 allows for warning signage at horizontal deflections (like chicanes and buildouts) to be omitted in areas where the speed limit is 20mph. Part of this scheme is to reduce the speed limit to 20mph including the areas where the buildouts are located. Without explicit signage, drivers should fall back on the advice of the highway code, rule 163 of which states drivers should ‘give way to oncoming vehicles before passing parked vehicles or other obstructions on your side of the road’.”*

**ESH Response** – Whilst guidance states that they could indeed be removed within 20mph speed limits, ESH would need to be convinced that the speed limit is not going to be exceeded and that forward visibility of each feature is such that an approaching driver can see far enough ahead to make a decision about whether it is safe to proceed. Therefore, it is recommended that a monitoring period of 3 months be implemented once the scheme has been implemented.

*“In addition to the signage above, the Traffic Signs Manuals note that ‘Yellow backing boards can be especially environmentally intrusive, and their over use could eventually devalue their attention attracting benefits. A less garish way of increasing a sign’s conspicuity is simply to provide a standard sign of larger size.’ Therefore, we would request that this advice is followed, possibly alongside producing the signs with a higher level of retro-reflectivity, if these signs need to be made more conspicuous, rather than yellow backing boards.”*

**ESH Response** – ESH agree with the SDNPA comment and that ‘yellow backing boards’ are not required if visibility of the proposed sign meets the recommended design specifications.

*“The SDNPA recognise that there is to be little benefit to adding ~30m of centre lining on a road which does not already have centre lines. If this was to highlight the change of speed, this is mentioned in the Traffic Sign Manuals as an option to replace existing centre lining, not really stating that new markings should be added where there are not any currently. Edge marking, possibly forming a virtual narrowing, would be a more appropriate method of drawing attention to the new speed limit”.*

**ESH Response** – ESH agree with the above comment about edge marking, thus forming a ‘virtual narrowing’ which will be investigated further.

*“The addition of the small areas of buff surfacing is not suitable for a rural village in a national park setting. Especially as this is a compromise from the Parish's request for a change of surface throughout the 20mph area. With the buildouts, lack of centre lining and the nature of Alfriston itself, these additional, unsympathetic, items of clutter may not be necessary for informing drivers they have entered a different road space.”*

**ESH Response** – While there is no specific requirement for a coloured road surface other than to draw a driver's attention to the change of environment, it is considered that the more visual impact that is experienced by a driver in these specific locations, the greater their speed will be reduced as they enter the village, hence the reason for its current inclusion.

### **3.2.2 Road Markings – North Street & Market Square**

*“The removal of centreline markings from the gateway on North Street is supported by the SDNPA but does raise the question of why additional markings are being added on the approach to the White Way change of speed where there are no markings currently. We do not support adding additional centrelines in locations where there are none currently, especially as there is no advantage in safety at this location as CrashMap shows no injury collisions in this location for the last 5 years. Indeed, a lack of centre lining would add additional emphasis to the give way markings for the buildout.*

*The decluttering of road markings and yellow lining around the central market square is appreciated, but it should be noted that the upgraded double yellow lining on High Street should be in colour No 310 (Primrose) as specified by Traffic Manual chapter 5 for use in environmentally sensitive areas”.*

**ESH Response** – As stated previously within this TN, the proposed design options have undergone a GG119 Road Safety Audit (Stage 1) and has been approved by the ESCC RSA team. The point regarding the additional centreline road markings on the approach to the White Way has been incorporated in order to reduce vehicle speeds/driver awareness before they reach the 20mph gateway area. However, further investigation into if the centreline can be removed will be undertaken after the public consultation stage of the project.

ESH note the endorsement from the SDNPA on the removal of the road markings and yellow lining around the central market square.

In addition to the above comment, ESH received the following response from the Road Safety and Traffic Management Team at Surrey and Sussex Police that specified *“we do have concerns about the removal of the give way lines in Market Square. They clearly serve a purpose, particularly with the poor visibility to the left at this junction. They are a road safety feature and removal of such a feature is a serious step to take, with potential repercussions if this leads to an increase in collisions. However, the introduction of a 20mph speed limit may go some way to offset the removal of this road safety feature”.*

**ESH Response** – As highlighted within the previous response the proposed design options have achieved approval from a GG119 highway safety point. However, the point raised regarding the lack of visibility is indeed valid and will again form part of our discussions during the public consultation stage of the project. However, the induction of a 20mph speed limit within the village of Alfriston will hope to improve driver awareness through a ‘sense of place’ by making the area more welcoming to both pedestrians and cyclists.

The Cuckmere Community Bus Company stated that *“by extending the double yellow lines along High Street will make a big difference. The cones unofficially placed along that section have deterred most from parking but making it formal is good. As far as bus stops are concerned, there is currently a bus stop marked on the road beside the oak tree at the Market Cross. In fact, services pull up parallel to the centre island outside and opposite the Stores to leave the main carriageway on the other side of the island clear for traffic to flow.*

**ESH Response** – ESH note the endorsement from the Cuckmere Community Bus Company regarding the extension of double yellow lines along the High Street.

### **3.2.3 HGV Signage – A27**

*“The SDNPA welcome the addition of the black signed route for HGVs, recognising that some larger traffic may be intending Alfriston as its destination, but would like to add that this will require enforcement”.*

**ESH Response** – ESH note the endorsement from the SDNPA of the use of additional signage for HGV's. Further conversations with both National Highways (who maintain the A27) as well as Surrey and Sussex Police are currently ongoing during the design process.

## Next Steps

### **4.1. Feedback Analysis**

This TN provides a detailed analysis of the feedback received during the stakeholder engagement. The next step will be presenting the updated design proposals to the Alfriston Parish Council (APC) before sharing the design proposal to the general public via a joint consultation between ESH/APC during the beginning of next year (January 2023).

This TN will also be circulated to the project and design teams in order to inform the detailed design and further planning stages of the scheme.