

**Report to:** Lead Member for Transport and Environment

**Date of meeting:** 24 February 2025

**By:** Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

**Title:** East Sussex County Council Major Road Network A22 – Active Travel Measures Consultation Outcome

**Purpose:** To advise on the outcomes of the recent consultation on the proposed A22 Major Road Network (MRN) Active Travel Measures and the recommended next steps prior to inclusion of the Active Travel Measures in the A22 MRN Package full business case for submission to Government.

---

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** The Lead Member is recommended to:

- (1) Note the outcomes of the stakeholder and public consultation on the proposed A22 Major Road Network Corridor active travel measures; and**
  - (2) Approve the recommendation for each scheme within the sustainable transport measures package as detailed in Appendix 6 which sets out the elements for each scheme proposed to be taken to detailed design and inclusion in the full business case for the A22 MRN Corridor Package.**
- 

## **1. Background Information**

1.1 The Government's Major Road Network (MRN), established in 2018, comprises the busiest and most economically important local authority managed A roads. The MRN sits between the Strategic Road Network (SRN), which is the responsibility of National Highways and the rest of the local authority managed road network. For East Sussex, several A class roads were included in the MRN.

1.2 The creation of the MRN intended to provide more long-term certainty of funding with a portion of the National Roads Fund being dedicated to the MRN. In response to a request from the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2019, Transport for the South East (TfSE) identified their 10 highest priority early entry (Phase 1) MRN schemes for potential funding. One of the 10 priority MRN schemes was the southern section of the A22 corridor around Hailsham, Polegate and Stone Cross. Local authorities with prioritised projects were then asked to develop a business case for submission to Government in accordance with DfT's transport scheme business case guidance. The type of business case (strategic, outline or full) initially developed was dependent on where each scheme was in their development cycle.

1.3 In December 2022, the County Council submitted an outline business case (OBC) for the A22 MRN Corridor Package to DfT. The package comprised 5 junction improvements: Boship roundabout; Hempstead Lane and Eagles roundabout on A22 Hailsham bypass, as well as the A22/A27 Golden Jubilee and A22/Dittons Road roundabouts between Stone Cross and Polegate. The package also included an indicative package of active travel measures in the Hailsham, Polegate and Stone Cross area. A plan showing the extent of the A22 MRN junction improvements and active travel measures is at Appendix 1.

1.4 The total value of the package in 2022 was £46.5m, of which £7m would come from development contributions (S106/Community Infrastructure Levy) and the remainder coming from the Government's MRN funding.

1.5 DfT approved the OBC in May 2024 indicating that the County Council could progress to detailed design and full business case (FBC) development in relation to both the junction and active travel measures. At present, the County Council are working towards submission of the

FBC to Government in early 2026. Receipt of the full funding for the delivery of the A22 package is subject to Government's approval of the FBC.

## **2. Supporting Information**

### Identification of potential A22 corridor package active travel measures

2.1 The detailed analysis of the 2021 public consultation on the A22 package of junction improvements, reported to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment in March 2022, highlighted the need to develop a further package of sustainable transport measures for the area over and above the walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport improvements already included in the proposals. At the same time, DfT were also indicating to all local authorities developing MRN schemes that greater prominence needed to be given to the inclusion of active travel measures in these schemes.

2.2 Therefore, building on the evidence and proposals within the East Sussex Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), a package of active travel measures in the Hailsham, Polegate and Stone Cross areas was identified and indicatively included in the OBC. Their inclusion in the A22 Corridor Package FBC was pending further development and public and stakeholder consultation.

2.3 The identified A22 corridor package active travel measures comprise the following components; a full description of each is at Appendix 2:

- Hempstead Lane traffic management and pedestrian/cycle improvements (LCWIP Scheme HL2)
- Hailsham Core Walking & Cycling Zone (LCWIP Scheme HL1)
- Improved access to the Cuckoo Trail, Hailsham
- Polegate High Street to Stone Cross village centre walking and cycling improvements (LCWIP Scheme E4)
- National Cycle Network (NCN) 21 - Dittons Road, Polegate to Willingdon Drove, Eastbourne walking and cycling improvements (LCWIP Scheme E8)

2.4 Together, the full package of junction improvements and active travel measures on this section of the A22 corridor will improve strategic and local connectivity of communities in the south Wealden area to facilitate economic and housing growth. In doing so, it will create better travel opportunities that interlink with one another, encourage walking and cycling for local journeys, benefits buses travelling through the junctions, and in doing so help to reduce carbon emissions, local air pollution and noise generated by traffic.

### Public consultation outcomes and recommended next steps

2.5 As part of the FBC to be submitted to Government, the outcomes of stakeholder and public consultation is required to demonstrate acceptability for the active travel proposals which were not part of the consultation in summer 2021 on the proposed junction improvements.

2.6 A public and stakeholder consultation was undertaken between 4 November and 8 December 2024 on the A22 corridor package of active travel measures. The consultation used a range of mechanisms and media, as set out in Appendix 3, to help respondents understand and engage on the proposals, as well as submit informed comments. A copy of the full active travel measures consultation proposals is available on the East Sussex Consultation Hub at [A22 Active Travel Measures - East Sussex - Citizen Space](#).

2.7 Stakeholders were identified through a comprehensive stakeholder mapping exercise to determine those who may have an interest or could be affected by the proposed schemes, and they were emailed about the consultation. This included County, District, Borough and Town Councillors, local MPs, local bus operators, local businesses and organisations representing the business community, active travel groups, accessibility action groups, transport user groups, education providers, emergency services, resident associations, and voluntary and community

sector organisations. Prior to the consultation, online briefings were held with local County, District, Borough, Town, and Parish Councillors.

2.8 A total of 247 consultation survey responses were received, the majority of which were from the Hailsham, Polegate and Eastbourne areas. There were an additional 23 emails, and 3 documents submitted providing a more detailed response to the active travel proposals.

2.9 A summary of the consultation outcomes is at Appendix 4 and the consultation report is at Appendix 5. The analysis of the quantitative feedback shows that, in general, respondents were supportive of measures to improve active travel. There were mixed views on whether the proposed schemes would achieve their objectives. Overall, most of the proposals, especially those in the Polegate and Stone Cross area, received more support than opposition from respondents.

#### Hailsham Core Walking and Cycling Zone – Western Road

The Hailsham Core Walking and Cycling Zone scheme suggested making Western Road one-way between Summerheath Road and Sussex Avenue, with two-way cycling lanes. This would remove about 8 parking spaces near the Library. However, 35% opposed it due to congestion and safety concerns, while only 16% strongly supported it. Responders thought that one-way traffic would increase speeding on Western Road.

2.11 The routing of the Hailsham Core Walking and Cycling Zone scheme was identified following an assessment of several alternative routes using the Government's Local Transport Note (LTN 1/20) Cycling Level of Service (CLOS) assessment to determine the most preferable route. The route originally identified in LCWIP along Diplocks Way was not considered suitable due to road safety concerns or personal safety concerns as well as potential land ownership issues. The route that was publicly consulted upon via Western Road scored the highest in the CLOS assessment.

2.12 Consideration has been given to the feedback received during the consultation regarding the one-way proposal, and consequently a number of options have been developed. These include:

- 1) No change and continue with the proposed one-way proposal.
  - Due to objections received as part of the consultation feedback this is unlikely to be feasible..
- 2) The one-way scheme is not taken forward.
  - This would raise issues with Active Travel England, as a statutory consultee on the active travel proposals, and compliance with LTN1/20, but the scheme could be promoted as a series of separate measures instead of an end-to-end route.
- 3) Alternative options which could provide some level of benefit while enabling two-way traffic and cycle movement on Western Road which will require further assessment:
  - Re design the Western Road/Summerheath Road junction to provide a raised table which provides a gateway and speed reduction feature
  - Re design the Western Road/Summerheath Road junction to provide a segregated island, and/or narrowing to reduce cyclist crossing width.
  - Local changes – potential to realign guard railing in recreation park, to improve space availability at park access/egress, together with on road markings and way finding for cyclists (to advise drivers)

2.13 It is recommended not to progress with the one-way proposal on Western Road and to consider, at detailed design stage, the alternative options set out above for the Western Road/Summerheath Road junction, to support cyclist movement and to provide on road 'cyclists' marking and route signs highlighting that Western Road is part of a wider network, linking Hailsham town centre, Cuckoo Trail and further west to the A22.

### Hempstead Lane traffic management and walking/cycling improvements

2.14 In addition, feedback received for the traffic calming measures on Hempstead Lane indicated concerns raised about the proposed 20mph on Hempstead Lane in the context of other nearby speed limits on the A22 and local road network.

2.15 The proposals for traffic calming and a lower speed limit on Hempstead Lane were identified to mitigate the impact of opening up the road to potentially greater levels of traffic wanting to travel to/from north-west and northern parts of Hailsham as a result of replacing the existing left in/left out arrangement with an all-moves roundabout at its junction with the A22 Hailsham bypass. The new roundabout would be subject to a 40mph speed limit on the A22 dual carriageway bypass meaning traffic would be entering into Hempstead Lane from a 40mph into a 20mph, rather than the current national speed limit (70mph). The mitigation package is also supported by the introduction of walking, wheeling and cycling measures along the corridor also helps to facilitate access to the Cuckoo Trail at the eastern end of the Hempstead Lane corridor. It is recommended that all elements of scheme to proceed to detailed design and inclusion in active travel measures element within the A22 MRN package full business case.

### Polegate High Street to Stone Cross village centre walking and cycling improvements

2.16 In Polegate, the Town Council raised concerns about losing bulb planting between segregated footways and cycle routes on Station Road. Originally, removing the planted area for a shared use facility was proposed for consistency. Following consideration of feedback, it is proposed to retain the segregated layout and existing bulbs and not progress the shared use facility.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

2.17 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out, with an updated version of the assessment programmed to be completed following review of all consultation and will be included as part of the detailed design stage. A further review of the EqIA will then take place prior to the construction stage of the programme.

### Financial Implications

2.18 Following the submission of the OBC in December 2022, a further quantified risk assessment will be conducted as part of the FBC development. The County Council's highways contractor, Balfour Beatty Living Places, has already performed an interim cost review, and it is expected that the measures will be deliverable within the funding sought from the DfT. The DfT has provided financial contributions for the development of both the OBC and FBC. The FBC will also include provisions for future maintenance costs, and any cost overruns will be managed by value engineering the package to stay within budget.

### Recommended next steps

2.19 Considering the outcomes of the consultation and feedback, as well as the wider objectives relating to the delivery of the overall MRN package which includes the junction improvements, the recommendations for each scheme are contained within Appendix 6.

## **3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1 In December 2022 the County Council submitted an outline business case (OBC) for the A22 MRN Corridor Package to DfT, comprising five junction improvements on the section of the A22 as well as an indicative package of active travel measures around Hailsham, Polegate and Stone Cross. Together, the full package of measures on this section of the A22 corridor will improve strategic and local connectivity of communities in the south Wealden area to facilitate economic and housing growth, encourage walking and cycling for local journeys, and in doing so help to reduce carbon emissions, local air pollution and noise generated by traffic.

3.2 Public and stakeholder consultation on the active travel proposals was undertaken in November and December 2024. The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative feedback shows that, in general, respondents were supportive of measures to improve active travel, however views were mixed on whether the proposed schemes would achieve their objectives. Overall, most of the proposals, especially those in the Polegate and Stone Cross area, received more support than opposition from respondents.

3.3 However, concerns were raised about some elements of the proposals put forward at consultation. This included the proposal to make Western Road one way between Sussex Avenue and Summerheath Road as part of Hailsham Core Walking and Cycling Zone scheme as well as elements of the Hempstead Lane traffic calming proposals and the loss of bulb planting by converting the existing segregated sections of footway and cycle route in Polegate between Aberdale Road and Levett Road to shared use.

3.4 The Lead Member is therefore recommended to note the consultation outcomes on the A22 active travel measures. Taking into consideration the outcomes of the consultation and feedback, as well as the wider objectives relating to the delivery of the overall A22 MRN package which includes the junction improvements on Hailsham bypass and in Polegate/Stone Cross. The Lead Member is also recommended to approve the recommendations for each scheme within the active travel measures package as detailed in Appendix 6 of the report which sets out the elements for each scheme proposed to be taken to detailed design and inclusion in the full business case for the A22 MRN Corridor Package.

**RUPERT CLUBB**

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: Rebecca Newby

Tel. No: 01273 336434

Email: rebecca.newby@eastsussex.gov.uk

**LOCAL MEMBERS:**

Councillors Bennett, Fox, Liddiard, Murphy, Daniel Shing, Stephen Shing, Shuttleworth, Swansborough

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Consultation responses.