

Traffic Plan Public Meeting Notes 30th June 2014

Present: Cllr Peter Lawler (Parish Council Chairman) [PL], Cllr Richard Price (Lead on Parish Council Highways Responsibilities) [RP], Martin Cook (WC Area Engineer Highways & Transportation) [MC], James Sheppard (WC Ward Councillor) [JS], Karen Clay (Parish Clerk), approx 100+ members of the public

1: Welcome by Chairmen of APC – Peter Lawler

Cllr Lawler welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained how the traffic plan came about, and the purpose of this meeting. Introduced Martin Cook, who was there to advise on traffic issues on behalf of the Wiltshire Council.

2: Discuss the following:

A: Closure of two roads into The Square

[PL] About 20 years ago this was tried by the then Wiltshire County Council. However, there was pressure from the public to have it overturned. The decision was reversed and a speed hump was installed instead.

[RP] Re-iterated that this is a consultation and that the PC wants to hear everyone views to help them make the village a safer place for everyone.

[MC] The schemes suggested in the plan are not set in stone. The consensus across the county is to regain the balance between pedestrians and vehicles. Schemes from countries such as Denmark are being copied. If other ideas are suggested by Aldbourne then these can be moved forward.

C: Concerned about how school coaches would access The Square if roads are closed.

R: No specific decision on how this would be handled has been taken yet. The traffic plan group did liaise with Barnes Coaches whilst working on the plan. They advised it would not be an issue for them, and that they would work with what ever road rules were in place.

C: Forcing vehicles to reverse into The Square is not a good idea

C: It is not just buses but lorries and cars would also be affected. It would force large vehicles to reverse into The Square or reverse into The Green to turn around.

C: Not a fan of closure. Would rather see traffic slowed. It would turn the area into a car park.

C: Can't understand why they need to be closed. The stats on pg 10 of the traffic plan show only 4 vehicles use the road by the Dabchick Delight. Traffic will bottle neck at the other end of The Square. Don't see there is a problem, find another solution.

R: [PL] Re-iterated that the PC hasn't made a decision on how to proceed yet. This is a proposal that is being consulted on.

C: Feel have to protect the village atmosphere. Aldbourne is not Swindon. The area around the pond is a roundabout and it works well.

C: Need to look at the unintended consequences of closing these roads. It could increase the likelihood of an accident as more traffic in one area.

C: Yes there is a problem as traffic does go the wrong way. However, closing the roads is not the answer. Restricting access is better. Make it narrower to reduce speeds. Speed bumps are not environmentally friendly.

R: [PL] The Council are open to considering alternate options.

R: [MC] Could look at marking parking bays to make a chicane. Or even a bus stop/wait area that would reduce the width of the road and thus the speed of vehicles.

C: Look at laws already in place to help with the issues. Enforce highway encroachment, and prosecute people breaking highway & traffic laws.

C: Unless you put a wall there people will still drive in, and they have to pull back out into the main road when they find the road closed. Which is much more dangerous than the current situation.

C: Don't want to see the roads closed. Prefer an option to have pedestrians and vehicles together in harmony. Better signage is required to show the roads are one way.

C: If the two roads are closed people will start using Back Lane instead. This is already a problem area, with school parents being encouraged not to use it.

C: What is the point of closing the roads? The little roads make Aldbourne what it is.

C: Need to make the area at the end of Marlborough Road by the Post Office safer. Feel some of the other suggestions in the traffic plan are better than closing the roads.

C: The easiest way into The Square for buses is this road. Closing them will cause more problems than it sorts.

C: Traffic coming in along the B4192 from both ends of the village should be slowed. This should be looked at before anything else is tried.

C: The proposal should be to work to slow traffic down across the village.

C: There will be a conflict with children and vehicles as they get off the bus if all traffic is coming in from one place. Improve traffic flow and slow traffic which improves safety. Dutch solution is a good compromise.

C: The signs at the end of Marlborough Rd are badly positioned. They currently point traffic into The Square. There is also no sign for Baydon. Satellite navigation systems direct traffic through The Square.

C: Use of 20mph limits on these two roads should be considered. Satellite navigation systems would divert traffic away from these roads then. These roads allow for exit in times of high traffic if needed.

R: [RP] During the flooding earlier this year there was a unintentional closure of the two roads. It did not appear to affect people too much.

C: Suggestion of better road signs on Marlborough Road is good idea. Why can't flashing speed warning signs be used across the village?

[PL] Suggested that the roads could be closed to through traffic.

There was concern that yet again non enforcement of this rule would make it unworkable.

A show of hands of those opposed to the closure of the two roads was asked for. All but one person raised their hand. This person was in favour of closing the road that goes past the public toilets. There were no votes for a closure of the roads.

B: Pedestrian Crossing over the B4192

[PL] The suggestion is for a proper zebra crossing where the current red crossing strip is. Speeding needs to be proved, as well as a survey carried out to show how many people are crossing the road at this point. Members of the Council are attending the next CATG to push for a survey to be carried out. They will insist that the survey is carried out where the current red strip is.

C: A count has been carried out, but it was done in the wrong area.

C: If an official crossing is installed wouldn't it restrict parking for some distance either side of it?

R: [MC] Any sort of crossing has to have 4mtrs clear either side of it. This can be extended up to 40mtrs if required. Parking issues would be addressed to stop any issues arising if an official crossing was to go ahead.

C: Surely this would stop parking outside the PO or opposite it?

C: A crossing should be thought about after the traffic speed is addressed. It may not be such an issue once this is sorted.

C: The Post Office is working to improve the facilities available to the village. If parking was stopped outside the building this will affect trade and make the improvements pointless.

C: It is all common sense. People need to be shown how to cross the roads properly. Parked cars cause problems outside the old Aldbourne Engineering building.

C: Walking along Castle Street is very dangerous as there is no footpath, and traffic speeds are way too high.

C: How about a crossing from opposite the pond?

R: [PL] It is not a natural crossing area and is likely to be ignored.

3: Discussions on any other part of the traffic plan

C: Oxford Street/Lottage Road junction is very difficult & dangerous to use. The suggestion within the plan to move all parking to the other side the road would make it even more dangerous. Whilst it would improve sight lines, it would remove the natural chicane and mean traffic speeds would increase. Also, as the cars will not be parked next to the pavement it will force people to walk across the road to get to their cars, which is also much more dangerous.

C: Can the priority at the junction be changed?

R: [PL] It has been discussed in the past

C: Surely it is all about enforcement of the rules and speeds?

R: [MC] A priority change can be done, but new road markings would have to be put down. If it then turned out that the change of priority did not work these lines would have to be taken up, which damages the road surface. Many drivers will still come down the hill (some at speed) on autopilot and the potential for an accident is therefore still very high. When the speed changes were brought in at Liddington there was enforcement by the Police. However the camera partnership has been disbanded since then.

C: The no parking line on Oxford Street near the Lottage Rd junction does help with cars not parking there, and goes some way to helping with visibility. However, it could do with being extended by a couple more car lengths to make visibility even better. The best view possible from this junction is required. Changes to parking outside the PO are not necessary. Though parking the other side of the road should be addressed.

C: Baydon Hill, cyclists are a major hazard as you cannot see them.

C: The camber on this junction is very steep. Can the junction be raised and the end of the junction brought forward more into Oxford Road?

C: There will be many unintended consequences by changing how things currently stand. Slowing traffic is the first issue that must be addressed.

R: [RP] Agree, first thing suggested when joining council was that traffic needed to be slowed. Progressive slowing of traffic from 60mph to 40mph to 30mph as you come into the village either end. Also a 20mph across the whole village. If Bristol can do this, so can Aldbourne.

R: Martin - 20mph can be installed as a zone or a limit. New estates are designed to slow traffic hence they become a 20mph zone. However, a 20mph limit must have signs installed every few meters. There have been trials in four Wiltshire villages. The results from these are currently being assessed. If they prove successful then it could be rolled out to Aldbourne.

C: Parking issues across the village need to be addressed.

C: How about remodelling Lottage Junction with a mini roundabout? By not doing anything to address the speeding issues it is being endorsed.

C: Mini roundabouts tend to be ignored. The one by Turnpike is.

C: Parking in Lottage Road around the Goddards Lane junction is very bad, and often it is difficult & dangerous to exit Goddards Lane due this. A resident approached a Policeman who was in the village about this parking and he said it was not something they could deal with.

R: [MC] Civil Enforcement Officers were brought in by WC to deal with parking infringements. However, if there is an obstruction to the road then the Police should deal with this.

C: If parking is illegal, such as within so many mtrs of junction, should the police or WC be approached about this?

R: [MC] WC Civil Enforcement Officers have no powers to enforce parking in such places. It would be the Police that need to be contacted.

C: The bottom of Marlborough Rd and Castle Street should not be made any tighter. It is already very difficult for large vehicles to traverse.

C: A mirror the opposite the end of Lottage Road would help with visibility when exiting this junction.

C: Next to the entrance to the Goddards Lane junction there is a patch of grass that could be removed to allow better parking. This would then remove one of the vehicles causing problems for vehicles exiting or entering Goddards Lane.

R: [PL] This was looked at by the Parish Council but it forms part of the highway.

R: [MC] It could be removed to allow for parking, but this could then have a knock on affect such as people parking in areas they did not previously. It needs to be looked at as part of the bigger picture if it was wanted.

C: There should be a 30mph limit all the way from Aldbourne to Baydon. Restrict access into The Square with village only signs. A 20mph on Lottage Road is needed.

C: Parking in Lottage Rd is very bad, particularly towards the end nearest Oxford Street. When it flooded no cars parked there, where did they go?

C: Castle Street at the end nearest the PO is very dangerous. A slower limit is urgently needed. Parked cars on the road make it more dangerous. Signage at the very least is required to warn of pedestrians in the road.

C: The 30mph coming into the village from either end of the village is regularly ignored. Why would a 20mph make any difference? It needs something to slow traffic, like speed humps or chicanes.

C: Marlborough Rd is also very dangerous as there no pavement. Vehicles have been recorded doing 75mph in this 30mph zone.

C: Castle Street, shrubbery either side of the road needs cutting back to widen the road.

R: [MC] Again the bigger picture needs looking at, with the pros and cons weighed up. If these shrubs are removed and the road widened then it means there is more likely be damage sustained to properties due to vehicles being much closer to them. Though there may be some work that is required.

C: Closure of road around the pump off West Street. It is a very bad idea to close this road. If the road is shut no one will be able to get into Back Lane due to bad parking. Again, what is the issue that is being addressed by this suggestion?

C: Is there a forum to make comments on-line?

R: [PL] The PC will look setting something up. The Parish Council will on consider comments made under peoples real names not pseudonyms on the Aldbourne website.

C: Why can't the village have flashing speed signs?

R: [MC] The type like the ones on the A346 through Savernake are only installed where there have been crashes, and speed has been proved to be the cause. They are effective but can also be ignored. Community speed watch groups can be productive in getting signs installed.

C: Baydon hill – The issues here are caused by bad driving and bad parking.

[JS] – In order to get funding from CATG (Community Area Transport Group), evidence of speeding is required. Baydon succeeded in getting traffic calming measures installed by setting up a speed monitoring group. Armed with evidence of the speeding they came to CATG. The village would be well served by setting up a speed monitoring group. Signage has been shown not to work, as it is just ignored. In Chilton Foliat the lines were not put back after resurfacing, and proved to have an effect of slowing traffic. This could be something Aldbourne considers when the B4192 is resurfaced.

[RP] - Thanked everyone for coming along. It had been very constructive to get everyone's views.

[PL] – Thanked Martin Cook, and everyone else for attending.

C = Comment from members of the public present

R = Response by the PC or others attending