

Parish Council draft proposals for improving highways in Leeds Village

Parish Plan: The Parish Plan (published December 2008) made the highways issues of the speeding vehicles and the large, articulated lorries through Leeds village an issue that has galvanised the village.

KCC funding cuts make a bypass unlikely

It is the Parish Council highways sub-committee's view that particularly given the impending reduced funding arrangements for the KCC, the chances of a bypass for the foreseeable future are at best slim. Therefore, the recommendation from the Leeds Parish Highways sub-committee Councillors is to press on to install other traffic calming measures, while still trying to secure the village a by-pass.

Professional support to assist recommendations

In recent Parish Council meetings there has been much debate and agreement about the need to collect data to prove our case about speeding vehicles, accidents and lorries that are too large for the small village lanes on the B2163. A number of options have been considered and it is felt that to ensure we collect the right data over the right period of time to support the right traffic calming strategy for the village, the recommendation is that the Chairman of the Parish Council approach the KCC and seek three recommendations for the Parish Council to procure a knowledgeable traffic consultant to help set up viable, safe and costed options.

Leeds Parish Highways Sub-Committee (informal meetings) approach:

1. Crossing to the School and the playing fields:

- a) It is felt that the lollipop person at key times for the primary school is effective but the alternative of a permanent solution is to be considered below:
- b) For the majority of Leeds residents, they and their children have to cross the busy B2163 to get to the children's play area, the tennis court and the playing fields. The need for a safer and permanent solution is considered below.

2. Working with other Parishes

It was agreed that Leeds Village would be better placed to garner support for its traffic calming measures if surrounding parishes could be persuaded to join in or even support our cause and it was felt that the following solutions would be more likely to succeed.

3. Traffic Calming recommendations

Speed

1. 30mph speed limit to be proposed, right the way through the village.
2. Lower the limit to 20mph outside the primary school.
3. Installing appropriate signage without cluttering the rural village with 'street furniture'.

4. Traffic calming measures

A strategy of starting with the best case/most desired traffic calming solutions to the speeding vehicles and also the large lorries means there is a tiered approach to the plans considered by the Parish Council representatives, as set out below:

5. Entry and Exit

From Leeds Castle/ A20 end of the village

Enhanced signage stating the new traffic calming measures (once known and agreed) at the junction with the roundabout with the A20 into Leeds Village



Main traffic calming measures recommended (IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE)

a. *Width restrictor* that prevents large articulated lorries over the 17 tonnes entering the village. (A set of keys to be used by emergency vehicles as it other areas of the country). Also a set of keys retained by the Parish Council and/or key businesses – possibly the pubs - for use by residents for removal vans or unusual size vehicles)

Location: Penfold Hill: before the bend at the top to slow traffic down before attempting the corner. It needs to be far enough down from the top of the hill to allow for traffic coming down the hill to not back up around the bend.

This would

- allow Southern Water lorries to freely use their own access point to their property
- allow larger lorries who manage to still find their way up Penfold Hill to use the Southern Water entrance (with their permission) to turn around
- avoid using the bridge as a width restrictor to appease Leeds Castle.



b *Average Speed camera* going up Penfold Hill supported by the police that send fines to those that break the speed limit. The speed cameras entering and existing the village would be using an average speed camera system, in conjunction with rumble strips that would show when larger vehicles had passed the camera. The advantage of the combined rumble strips and the Average Speed Camera's are that they would clearly show which HGV's over 17T were not stopping to unload in the village but just using it as a "rat-run" and so allow the Police to take action against them.

c *Chicane*: To make it as awkward for articulated lorry's and to slow the traffic speed for all vehicles.

d. *Speed humps* of approx 1 metre wide and across the full width of the road.

FROM LANGLEY (IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE)

a. *Average speed cameras on both sides* with rumble strips, supported by the police that send fines to those that break the average speed limit and those HGV's over 17 T that do not stop in the village. HGV's not stopping in the village could reasonably be assumed given the average time between cameras.

Location: Just past the Leeds turning to Broomfield and Kingswood and before the main entry into the village before The Ten Bells pub.



Width restrictors that prevented large, articulated lorries over the 17 tonnes level entering the village. (A set of keys to be used by emergency vehicles as it other areas of the country). Also a set of keys retained by the Parish Council and/or key businesses – possibly the pubs - for use by residents for removal vans or unusual size vehicles)

Location: Just past the Leeds turn to Broomfield and Kingswood. To remove the current raised grass 'V' junction shown below and flatten it to road level and so to allow vehicles too large for the width restrictor to turn around.



Or investigate having the width restrictor at the main junction with the A274 near the Plough pub, with appropriate signage.



Chicane: To make it as awkward for articulated lorries and to slow the traffic speed

Speed humps of approx 1 metre wide and across the width of the road.

Location: see below



TRAFFIC CALMING ALONG the B2163

Raised Zebra crossings

- I. Location: Leeds & Broomfield School

A raised zebra crossing acting as a speed bump that is raised for the entire surface of the zebra crossing that allows parents and children to cross from the car park and Church.



- II. Location: Opposite the playing field by the tennis court and car park vehicle entrance.

A raised zebra crossing acting as a speed bump that is raised for the entire surface of the zebra crossing across the width of the road.

This would slow the traffic but also act as a safe place for crossing to the main playing fields, tennis court and children's play area from the main side of the street, where most residents live.



Next steps

1. Leeds Parish Council to procure an experienced traffic consultant who can either; support these suggestions and cost them and/or to produce alternatives that have the same end result (or better) as those solutions suggested in this paper.
2. To share at the Parish council meeting in October 2010 these proposals and agree next actions and start to gain views from the local residents re the Parish Council approach.
3. To post this paper (or any variant agreed at the October Parish Council meeting) on the Leeds Village website and then write to interested stakeholders with it for comment.
4. Engage and consult with the whole village on the proposals as part of the overall Parish budget process during early November 2010.
5. To investigate support or otherwise from the Police to act on speed camera's etc if that is the preferred option.
6. To consult on residents views on adding an extra amount to the Parish tax to the overall council tax to pay for village highways work as suggested in this paper, should the KCC not be able to afford our plans and given likely budget cuts.
7. Make findings, costs and feedback available as part of the budget planning process/ consultations for next years precept that will need to be agreed by early New Year by the Parish Council.