

GWP-funded scheme for western and central roads into & through village

Measures being considered by OCC and GWP developers at PC request (Feb 2018) –

Pedestrian crossing on Wantage Road at Tyrells Close or the corner with Wellshead

“Local traffic only” signs at the ends of the Harwell Link Road & Grove Road

Width & weight restrictions to be specified

20 mph zones to start at the village boundary

Vehicle-activated signs where possible, preferably solar powered & with a sad face shown only when speed limit is passed (not set at the speed limit)

Marked cycle route between Harwell Campus & Harwell village – the route is already well-used but is not signed.

Clerk also asked OCC about plans and funding for a roundabout at the A417/Wantage Road/Winnaway junction, and for the blocked left turn on the bridleway near the Link road to be re-opened.

These measures were to be considered by OCC & GWP developers as the funding came from GWP. OCC responded but in the meantime owing to confusion about correct email address, funding for the A417 roundabout was re-allocated.

Last email from OCC (Oct 2019) indicated that items below were receiving attention but that A417 could not be included in the GWP developer-funded scheme. Blue font indicates further reply to OCC. Clerk has not received a response as at 9.7.2020 but has sent a follow-up email.

- The request for speed tables is difficult because of drainage and the varying nature of the existing kerb levels. One solution would be to create speed tables across most of the carriageway, stopping 10cm or so before the edges (please see example below in a screen capture from Saxon Way in Oxford). This allows existing drainage to function and doesn't necessitate costly alterations to existing kerbs. This option would potentially impact the humps' ability to act as informal crossing points though.
- Speed cushions are far easier to install and these work well in our experience. These are an option for parts of the road where tables are not possible/practical.

The council would prefer speed tables with the gaps at the edges to speed cushions, even if they can't be used as informal crossing points.

- In terms of specific locations, outside the Village Hall and the Kicking Donkey are both straightforward and should cause no problems. At Tyrills Close, the best location for traffic calming measures would be at the junction mouth itself, subject to appropriate design around bus stops. Council is happy with this as long as it will facilitate crossing Wantage Road. At Alder View, we would need to undertake a speed survey to ascertain whether the current build-out is helping to reduce traffic speed. At the junction of Grove Road and High Street, the number of side roads and varying kerb levels would make traffic calming measures very difficult to install. *Are there no options at all here?* At the bend by the Hart of Harwell, an additional bend chevrons sign is required to match the existing sign for traffic travelling in the opposite direction. Additionally, 'SLOW' can be painted on the road here. Council is happy with this.
- A 20mph zone covering the whole village is recommended (not exclusively the main road) but this would require appropriate conditions to ensure speeds comply (humps, bends etc.). *Is it possible to include the A417 Reading Road in this?*

Ultimately, speed tables may not be possible in all locations requested, particularly at the Grove Road junction. Also, the 20mph zone needs to be supported by measures designed to slow traffic so that it becomes reasonably self-enforcing, throughout its area (e.g. humps / bends / cushions etc).

There is no mention of the council's requests for removing the white lines in the middle of the road, planters for the roadside next to any speed bumps, or advisory cycle lanes. Have these been considered?

STATUS: Awaiting OCC response and verbal report from councillors following meeting with OCC officers scheduled for 9.11.2020

TRAFFIC SURVEYS

PC asked for various traffic surveys to be carried out by GWPRA. 3 surveys had been carried out before March 2020 (A417, A4185 northbound & A4130 near Rowstock roundabout – results provided). PC has asked for a new survey on A4185 southbound if possible. Surveys are yet to take place on Grove Road, Blenheim Hill/Burr Street, A417 at Rowstock. East Hendred PC has asked for data from the A4185 survey when it is available – clerk to send.

PC hopes to use the data towards deciding on traffic calming measures needed at various locations around the parish.

STATUS: PC approve that data can be made public and given to OCC when traffic calming measures are requested.

A417

Some residents collated and distributed findings following their questionnaire of residents.. Requests to the PC from residents July 2020, with PC responses in italics and subsequent details in bold;

“At least 75 households have expressed a high level of concern over the effects of traffic on the A417. As discussed at the meeting with the chair we would like to offer a potential way forward and propose a possible course of action over the coming months for your consideration:

- A formal letter from the Parish Council to the Police Commissioner giving the facts about the A417 and asking for immediate action.
- A formal letter from the Parish Council to the Traffic Commissioner to give information about the vehicles and behaviour of the LGV drivers on the A417.

The council has no objections to sending letters as described above – if you would like to draft them and send them to me, the council will approve the final wording. PC has written to Traffic Commissioner & Police Commissioner (no response).

- The Parish Council to organize a meeting with the Traffic Officer from the County Council to explain concerns and discuss possible solutions or alternatively hire a private consultant who could carry out this work.

I have asked Mr Fox-Davies to arrange this meeting as soon as possible. Meeting scheduled for 9.11.2020.

- A consideration of the potential solutions to the traffic issues as highlighted by the residents in the Questionnaire analysis. These included a 20mph new speed limit, safety cameras, crossings, village gates, weight limits, cycle lane markings, pedestrian refuges- all are relatively inexpensive but would have an effect on the traffic. At present many motorists travel through this section of the village without even noticing they are travelling through a 30mph speed limit.

*Most of these potential solutions have been considered before and raised with OCC. The 20mph speed limit for Reading Road was previously discounted by OCC because of the road's status but I can ask again! Mike Fox-Davies is working on getting the speed limit at Rowstock roundabout reduced. The council has requested lower speed limits throughout the village limits, road markings designed to slow traffic, planters to reduce road widths etc, and there have been discussions with OCC about possible changes. The council would welcome traffic calming measures and is happy to send further requests to OCC, including a new request for gates at the entrance roads coming into the village, and as a very quick and relatively inexpensive measure, I have also asked Mr Fox-Davies to push for existing faded chevrons to be repainted. The council is also looking at Drayton's proposals for traffic calming measures to see whether anything in the proposals could be adapted for Harwell. **No response from OCC but meeting arranged with officers. Mr Fox-Davies aware of issues and is pressing for responses.***

- We are offering to work with the Parish Council to undertake research and also to draft letters if it is helpful.

Please see above.

- Is there is a parish councillor who would be prepared to work with us and act as a representative of the residents of the A417 at meetings?

As the council has to represent the whole parish, it felt that any traffic issues should be dealt with by the full council, with me remaining as point of contact.

The same residents are co-ordinating a Community Speedwatch scheme with financial support for start-up costs from the PC.

ROWSTOCK

Residents have complained on various occasions about traffic speeds, lack of a pedestrian crossing, A34 diversions, HGVs & traffic from Truck Festival.

PC has £4300 in reserves for traffic calming which was originally for a VAS at Rowstock, following complaints from residents. OCC advised that VAS do not reduce speeds by very much and the project was postponed.

PC asks planners to ensure that construction traffic to and from Campus does not travel via Rowstock but that traffic is directed to Chilton sliproads and A34.

Previous requests from Rowstock residents are summarised below with PC responses (approved at meeting 14.7.2020) or comments in italics;

- To have the roundabout re painted.

Weeds have been cleared by OCC during recent works, and the painted roundabout is highly visible again

- To receive the 106 monies due plus any other funds we are entitled to from local building work (Taylor Wimpey). All received funds seem to be 'village focussed'.

OCC to confirm whether money is available for Rowstock

- To have the Parish Councils work together, for us in Rowstock. We need cohesive thinking and talking to make this happen.

Harwell & East Hendred have been in discussions about traffic surveys, which have been delayed for some months.

- To have the Parish / Councils be transparent about how much money Rowstock is due and for us, as it's residents, to have a choice on what we spend it on (VAS, crossings etc)

There is £4300 for traffic calming in the council's reserves which was originally allocated for a VAS for Rowstock - OCC officers advised that in current thinking VAS do not help to reduce

speed by very much. The PC decided against installing the VAS until after traffic surveys were obtained but has asked for other possible suggestions.

- To have firm plans in place for safer crossings (VAS, zebra crossings, islands as per Lee Turner's recommendation etc.) Residents are even prepared to fund these, yet we are still hitting brick walls. We have many more young families, dog walkers, older residents etc. who wish to be able to cross the road safely.

OCC to confirm possibilities and costs

- Diversions - to have more alternatives in place so we have less often diversions through our villages. For years we have been kept awake by trundling, speeding traffic.

OCC matter

- To place a dog poo bin in Rowstock, as per a previous request

Approved, subject to OCC permission. OCC responded that VWHDC not giving approval for a new bin as they are to take over waste collection in future – advised to use existing bins for dog waste as it does not need to be separated from litter.

- To keep Residents in the loop regarding Truck Festival traffic each year

Mr Fox-Davies has been in discussions with OCC officers about diversions on Truckfest days.

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A4185

A resident has been complaining about traffic speeds on the south side of Rowstock roundabout for a number of years. Also potholes need to be filled. Mr Fox-Davies has been involved.

STATUS – Mr Fox-Davies to be asked for update. PC to consider whether any measures can be taken once feedback received from OCC.

Other areas

Residents have complained about traffic speeds on Grove Road, Burr Street & on GWP, on-street parking at Church Lane/High Street junction (PC to decide whether to request white lines) & various queries about Grove Road following the end of resurfacing and reconfiguring there. Also concerns that nothing is ever done about the flooded section on Didcot Road and subsequent poor state of the adjoining pavement. Mr Fox-Davies provides regular updates on this as OCC is aware action needs to be taken on top of gully-clearing. Some funding will be available from nearby housing development to improve the pavement/cycle path in the vicinity.

PC has also requested gates at all entrances to the village, update on status of proposed improvements for pavements at Blenheim Hill as part of The Willows development, update on whether OCC obtained any Government funding for roads & if so, where this money will be spent. Previous request for dropped kerbs in The Styles was never answered. PC has asked for an update on original Valley Park S106 agreement for chicanes for traffic calming – if these are to be replaced, will a Deed of Variation be required to amend the agreement, and what will the chicanes be changed to?

ACTION REQUIRED: complete traffic surveys & collate data, decide on traffic calming measures and TRO for white lines. Request action from OCC re: flooding & responses to other matters.