

**Safer Routes to School
Full Consultation Report
October 2011**

South Portslade

Benfield School
Portslade Infant School
St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary
St Nicolas Church of England V.A. Junior
School
St Peter's Community Infant and Nursery
School

CONTENTS

	Page
1.1 Public consultation results	3
1.2 Public comments	3-7
1.3 Response by Internal consultees	7-8
1.4 Response by Statutory & Non-Statutory Consultees	8-9
2. Recommended measures	9
3. Timescale and Build	10
4. Conclusions and final remarks	10
Appendices 3.1 & 3.2A-E– location & site maps	

1.1 Public consultation results

58 people responded, giving a low response rate of 2%, a poor result compared to previous Safer Routes Consultations. 19 replies came via post from paper copies of the survey distributed at events and exhibitions, and 39 from the on-line survey. This low response rate calls into question the value of postal drops as the primary feature of a communication strategy.

Future consultations will need to take more account of existing community organisations and networks, particularly those already connected with council services such as housing and libraries. Earlier research into these organisations and networks is needed. Events should be tailored for these groups or offered as agenda items for meetings in their regular meeting cycles.

In this year's consultation, open text boxes were given after each question for people to make comments and these are summarised in this report. Some respondents chose not to comment on every measure.

1.1.1 Speed limit reduction and various minor measures/ overview: Map 1

71% supported these measures, 3% opposed them and 26% did not answer.

1.1.2 Measure One; Map 2A

81% of respondents supported the proposals, 2% opposed and 17% did not answer.

1.1.3 Measure Two; Map 2B

80% of respondents supported these proposals, 5% opposed and 15% did not answer.

1.1.4 Measure Three; Map 2C

. 83 % of respondents supported these proposals, 5% opposed and 12% did not answer.

1.1.5 Measure Four: Map 2D

80 % supported the measure, 8% opposed and 12% did not answer.

1.1.6 Measure Five: Map 2E

81% supported the measure, 5% opposed and 14% did not answer.

1.2 Public comments

The questionnaire also provided space for comments. The key points raised by local residents are summarised as follows:

1.2.1 Speed limit reduction and various minor measures/ overview;

Map 1

Several respondents welcomed the speed limit reduction but questioned whether enforcement was possible or likely. They expressed the hope that cars will exit the Old Shoreham Rd more slowly because of the reduction and that it will be easier to cross the road with lower speeds. One person was concerned about increased pollution.

Questions were raised about lowering speed limits on the Old Shoreham Road and Victoria Rd.

Two residents of Abinger Rd were concerned about the possible increase in heavy vehicles and speeds in their road. A further resident wrote in to support this view and to request some form of traffic calming for Abinger Road.

Two respondents requested a replacement for the lollipop person who used to work on the Victoria Rd crossing and suggested this was more important than repainting. One mentioned lorries serving the adjacent car dealerships often park hazardously on the crossing. One felt the dropped curbs on the junction of St Andrew's Road were leading southbound turning vehicles to mount the pavement.

Other issues included access to the cycle path through Vale Park from Vale Road, and more cycle friendly traffic calming in Victoria Road.

One person suggested railings to separate the footway from the carriageway under the railway line on Trafalgar Road, and that the trees on the corner of Vale Rd obscure southbound traffic on Trafalgar Road.

One person suggested the crossing point from Carlton Tce across the Old Shoreham Road towards Hangleton Road needs improving, and that this would improve the safety of Hove Park Students walking to the lower school site on Hangleton Way. They also felt the Victoria Road/ Carlton Tce junction was dangerous.

One person felt more crossing points were needed on Trafalgar Road/ Church Road because of speeds and traffic density.

One person felt that access to the port needs reconsidering to bypass residential areas.

Officer response:

The concerns about parking on the Victoria Road crossing by car transporters have been passed to the Civil enforcement team.

The Road Safety Engineer is confident that as the 20mph limit does not include traffic calming measures on Trafalgar Road, it will not displace traffic onto Abinger Road. Although the issue is therefore not considered relevant to this scheme, the Road Safety Engineer will conduct a site visit and make recommendations.

The comment on the crossing point for Hove park students has been passed to colleagues who administer a list of city wide light controlled crossing requests.

The SCP administrator has confirmed that counts have been done on the zebra crossing in Victoria Road, and that the crossing does not meet the criteria for a school crossing patrol.

The Walking and Cycling officer has agreed to look at the request to make signage to the cycle path in Vale Park clearer.

The Road Safety engineer confirms that the pavements under the railway on Victoria road are already below the minimum width to add railings to.

1.2.2 Measure One: Map 2A

Positive comments were made on the potential for increasing visibility and slowing speeds.

Some people felt barriers were needed, while others were anxious to make sure this wasn't included.

Two respondents were concerned about facilities for cyclists, particularly travelling northbound on Trafalgar road where they have to be in the outside lane while pedalling uphill.

One respondent requested the refuge on the southern Trafalgar road arm of the Shelldale/ Trafalgar junction also be enlarged.

One respondent was concerned about the size of lorries expected to negotiate this measure.

Officer response:

Map 2A shows the northbound left turn lane has been removed. Cyclists need to signal and take the 'primary riding position' (the middle of the left most lane of traffic) before approaching the roundabout.

The refuge on Trafalgar road will also be enlarged.

The size of vehicles using the road has been factored into the designs.

1.2.3 Measure Two: Map 2B

There were many positive comments about this measure.

One respondent felt a zebra crossing was needed at the western end of Victoria Road.

Several commented on the tendency of drivers to exit Victoria road without appearing to look to the right for oncoming traffic southbound on Trafalgar Road.

One suggested adding a raised table on the Victoria Road arm to slow cars approaching the junction from Victoria Road.

Some felt this would not do enough to stop inconsiderate drivers ignoring pedestrians.

One respondent said this arrangement had been tried before and caused buses and lorries to mount the pavement on the junction.

Respondents were concerned that the buses would block the south bound lane, or cars would attempt risky overtakes when this happened. Deliveries to the shops opposite were said to add to problems at peak times, and double yellow lines in front of the shops were requested by one respondent as an addition

Officer Response: The Road Safety Engineer confirms that there are double yellow lines outside the parade of shops. Give way signs are part of the junction redesign.

Cllr Harmer-Strange raised the issue of parking in Victoria Road just before the recent election (May 2011). The current parking arrangements are deliberately designed to deter speeding. Speed checks at the time suggested speeding was not an issue but it was suggested that a proposal to move all parking to the north side would give drivers a clearer run and this could lead to increased speeds.

A raised table would impede bus services and car transport deliveries to local businesses and is likely to be objected to by statutory consultees to this scheme.

A request for a crossing point on Victoria Road at the Trafalgar Road end has already been received. This has been assessed under the new criteria approved at the 26th May 2011 CMM. The recommendations resulting from the priority list will be considered by CMM on the 24th of January 2012.

1.2.4 Measure Three: Map 2C

This received a lot of positive comments as this road is very congested due to the railway barriers.

Those opposed felt a similar measure on the south side of the railway (Boundary Road) has made congestion worse to the south, and suggested this would now happen to the north.

Cyclists responded by welcoming a reduction in build outs but remained concerned about a pinch point created by the refuge

One respondent requested steps to prevent drivers performing overtaking manoeuvres when traffic queues at the barriers on both sides of the railway.

One asked if a zebra could be added to the design to help pedestrians at less busy times, when traffic is moving faster.

Officer response:

The arrows on the refuges indicating which lane southbound cars should be in will make it easier for the Roads Policing Unit to issue penalties to drivers overtaking the queue. At the moment this manoeuvre is not illegal..

The pinch point between the reduced build out and the pedestrian refuge will be 3m meaning that following motorists will have to give cyclists space. Cyclists need to signal and take the ' primary riding position' (the middle of the left most lane of traffic) before entering the pinch point created by the refuge.

A request for a crossing point on Carlton Terrace north of the level crossing has already been received. This has been assessed under the new criteria approved at the 26th May 2011 CMM. The recommendations resulting from the priority list will be considered by CMM on the 24th of January 2012.

1.2.5 Measure Four: Map 2D

There was general support for anything that improves pedestrian safety around this busy junction at a relatively low cost. Concerns were raised about the crossing point near Benfield school at the bottom of Benfield way

One respondent suggested barriers were needed, and several suggested the pavement needed extending to narrow the slip way. One person felt car speeds on this slipway needed addressing, and another thought the solution was to make the slip one lane (as it is on the southbound side).

Officer response:

A separate scheme is looking into improvements to the Benfield crossing, but this is not affordable in the current SRTS budget.

A separate proposal to reduce the speed limit to 30mph on the Old Shoreham Road between Locks Hill and Carlton Terrace is currently being consulted on. If approved this will reduce speeds onto the northbound slipway of the Hangleton Link.

1.2.6 Measure Five: Map 2E

One respondent commented North St is very narrow at this junction and is being used as a cut through by cars coming from the Boundary Rd direction.

One suggested a bell bollard would be more effective at preventing vehicles driving over kerbs.

Officer response:

The Road Safety engineer advises that the pavement does not meet the minimum width to accommodate a bell bollard, which would cause an obstruction for mobility scooters and buggies using the pavement.

1.3 Response by Internal consultees

Colleagues in Transport Planning were consulted. The Public Transport Officer commented that the area includes three important bus corridors with over 38 bus movements per hour. He wanted to ensure that bus operators were consulted on all the measures. The transport planner for Walking and Cycling requested that all future schemes check their proposed measures against the list of crossing points where light controlled crossings have been requested by residents. This list has been established on the basis of criteria approved by CMM in May 2011.

The Environmental Protection team approved of the use of pedestrian refuges as better in terms of air quality than light stop crossings, and pointed out that pavement widening increases the distance between vehicle exhausts and adjoining residential housing. They identified Trafalgar road between Shelldale Road and the A270 as having the highest Nitrogen dioxide emissions in the Portslade area. Approximately 900 Heavy goods vehicles use Trafalgar road every weekday.

It is well documented that emissions are likely to be increased by increasing the frequency of traffic queuing and stop-start movements. However, Paragraph 2.13 of the May 2010 recommendations of the Council's Scrutiny Panel into 20mph Speed limit Zones suggests that environmental impacts of speed reductions are difficult to assess because of the number of variables involved, including driving styles. If traffic flow is improved or the volume of traffic is reduced then emissions can fall. Potential benefits which could offset any emissions rise include greater use of sustainable transport because of improved safety perceptions and a reduction in local noise pollution. Given the

current average speeds at peak times the speed limit change is unlikely to make much difference to flow, as the area is already very congested.

1.4 Response by statutory and non-statutory consultees

A full list of external consultees, both statutory and non statutory, were invited to make submissions. Statutory bodies included the Emergency Services, the Road Haulage Association and Bus Companies. Non statutory organisations such as the taxi companies and Brighton Chamber of commerce were also contacted.

1.4.1 Statutory

Sussex Police have concerns about the introduction of 20mph limits in areas which are important distributor routes within the city and impact upon the local economy. Their policy is to support the introduction of such limits where the Department for Transport recommendation that the limit be self enforcing is met, as indicated by the mean speed criteria. Where this is not the case Sussex Police would need to be assured that effective traffic calming or other engineering measures are put in place as part of the initial scheme to ensure the mean speed criteria is achieved. Sussex Police have no objections to the other proposals outlined in the same letter.

Officer Response

A snapshot survey lasting 45 minutes was conducted on 1st November 2011 in Church Road. Whilst this did show low mean speeds, close to the 24 mph parameter, the maximum speeds recorded were 35 mph northbound and 41mph southbound. In response to this, the RPU(Road Policing Unit) took the view that a full 24 hour count would show higher mean speeds as levels of non-compliance are higher in the quieter periods of the day.

After further discussion with the RPU it has been agreed that permanent VAS (Vehicle activated Signs) signs will be installed on the A293 Trafalgar Road and Church Road route.

A review will be undertaken six months after the implementation with a view to assessing the need for additional measures to bring the mean speeds down to below 24 mph across an average 24 hour period. The RPU believe this will indicate that a reasonable level of self compliance has been achieved. On this basis, Sussex Police have agreed to withdraw any formal objections to the speed limit change..

1.4.2. Non-statutory

Tony Green of the cycling campaign group 'Bricyles' would like to see a 20mph speed limit throughout the city and have been campaigning towards this outcome for a number of years He therefore supports the proposals to reduce the speed limit to 20mph along Trafalgar Road and Church Roads.

The group largely support the other measures, making two specific comments. They support the removal of build outs, which they believe create pinch points for cyclists, and commented that a speed limit reduction on the Old Shoreham Road (addressed in a separate scheme) will further enhance the safety measures proposed by this scheme at the Hangleton Link Junction.

2. Recommended Measures

The measures are outlined as follows:

A reduction in the speed limit from 30 to 20mph along Trafalgar and Church Roads between the A270 and the A259. Installation of permanent VAS (Vehicle Activated Signs) signs on both roads and a review of mean traffic speeds 6 months after installation to assess the need for further traffic calming measures (not part of the Safer Routes to School scheme).

At the junction of Shelldale road and Trafalgar road (roundabout) realign the junction eastwards to allow greater visibility. Enlarge the pedestrian refuge on Shelldale Road to allow access for buggies and children.

At the junction of Trafalgar road and Victoria road (roundabout) realign footway westwards to increase footway and allow visibility beyond the bus stop. Enlarge the pedestrian refuge on Victoria road to allow access for buggies and children.

On Carlton terrace north of the junction with Victoria road install a pedestrian refuge. Remove existing build-outs on both sides of carriageway.

On the Hangleton Link slip road at Old Shoreham road install hatching to carriageway to encourage vehicles away from footway.

At the junction of Church Road and North Street realign existing lane lines southwards to increase lane size for traffic turning into North street. Raise curbs along northern corner of junction to discourage vehicles from mounting footway.

Install school warning sign onto carriageway of St Peter's road.

Improve the existing zebra crossing on Victoria Road by repainting road markings.

3. Timescale and Build

November 2011

- report to Cabinet Member's Meeting with final recommendation

January 2012

- Construction of scheme measures

Summer 2012

- Post scheme monitoring

4. Conclusions and final remarks

- The results of public consultation indicate the five main measures have received support from between 80 and 83%. The speed limit reduction proved more controversial, although this was still supported by 71% of respondents. There was some confusion caused in the public's mind by the timing of this scheme in relation to others which had not received permission to consult during our consultation phase. The police response has

prompted the addition of VAS signs and a plan to reassess the need for additional measures in six months.

- Given the growing number of children who travel to school on foot or who require good access to their school, the schools and local community has the potential to gain much from the scheme.