

## Highways Project - update at September 2023

The Parish Council has been looking at ways to improve highways safety in Stradbroke since September 2015. Over the years a number of ideas have been considered, but ultimately the Parish Council has not yet been able to complete any of the proposed areas, either through lack of funds, incorrect information, COVID or just the speed at which it takes to get surveys etc undertaken.

In June 2022, the Parish Council approved a project proposal (copy attached). The agreement at the time was to bring forward the following:

- 20mph zone in the conservation area
- Double yellow lines on the corner of Queens St/Church St
- Install gateways at the 4 x entrances to the village

The cost of these projects was estimated at £70,000, an indication was given from Mid Suffolk that Suffolk County Council could apply for CIL for these; therefore the cost to the Parish Council would have been in the region of £25,000 which has been reserved from CIL income. However, this is not the case and the Parish Council would need to find full funding for all works.

### **Since June 2022:**

The Parish Council has been pursuing the project and investigating ways forward.

### **A complete update on progress is listed below:**

#### **Double yellow lines**

- Parking guidelines state that no vehicle should be parked within 10m of a junction.
- The Parish Council was originally advised by the police that this measurement is taken from the centre of the junction ie in the middle of the road, therefore there would be very little area covered.
- The Parish Council received advice that white "H" markings may be a better solution. However, after attempts to follow this up, Highways stated that this was incorrect advice and that double yellow lines would be the only option.
- Double yellow lines would require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and the order itself will cost up to £10,000. Added to this would be the cost of traffic lights to close the road and the painting of the lines.
- An experimental TRO could be used; this would involve painting the lines and running the consultation for a 6 month period with them in place, as has been done in Eye with the current increased area for a weight limit. If unsuccessful, the lines would be removed.
- A Highways representative and the Clerk reviewed the junction, and discussed the reasons for the yellow lines. It was agreed the purpose was to make the junction safer and easier for all to use. Looking at the area the Highways representative advised the following (the cost for all would be the same):
  - 10m from the centre of the junction would be one (small) car length from the corner of the pavement and it is unlikely this would improve the junction at all.

- It would be possible to stretch the yellow lines 10m from the corner down Queens Street and along New Street in both directions. However, highways advice is that this is also unlikely to adequately improve the safety of, and access to/from the junction.
- To allow vehicles to turn left onto Church Street from Queens Street, the area of double yellow lines needs to stretch at least the length of an HGV to allow vehicles to exit Queens Street to stop the junction becoming grid locked.
- The advised pedestrian crossing point for the junction is down Queens Street and the advice from highways is that the double yellow lines should reach to the crossing point, to allow a clear view of the junction for pedestrians.



- Bearing in mind the information provided, the highways representative measured from the pedestrian crossing point to the required distance round the corners and it came to between 30m and 40m, depending on how far down Church Street each way the lines stretched.

### 20mph zone

- Advice received from Suffolk Highways that a request to install a 20mph across the conservation area was very unlikely to be successful and the Parish Council were advised against submitting an application for the whole area. However, there was a much stronger chance of success if the request was for Queens Street only, to include the area outside the primary school. The guidance on 20mph is listed below:

**Unless in exceptional circumstances**, locations will not be considered for 20mph schemes where any of the following apply:

1. they are on A or B class roads;
2. they have existing mean speeds above 30 mph;
3. there is no significant community support as assessed by the local County Councillor. In assessing community support, Councillors should review the views of District, Town and Parish Councils and give weight to petitions and local residents' views.

Locations will then **only be considered for 20 mph** limits or zones if **two out of three** of the following **criteria are met**:

1. current mean speeds are at or below 24 mph;
2. there is a depth of residential development and evidence of pedestrian and cyclist movements within the area;
3. there is a record of injury accidents (based on police accident data) within the area within the last five years.

Given the guidelines above, Queens Street will need to be reviewed as a site with “exceptional circumstances”.

- Work to apply for the 20mph have included:
  - Road Surveys
  - Footfall Survey
  - Business case
  - Request for letter from County Councillor
- The business case including all survey results has been submitted, a letter of support from County Councillor is awaited.
- A TRO will be required and the cost for this could be £10,000, other costs will include new signage and potential road closure to install.

#### **40mph buffer zone**

At the August 2023 Parish Council meeting, Councillors asked for information on installing 40mph buffer zones on the approaches to Queens Street and Laxfield Road. Councillors considered that buffers on New Street and Wilby Road approaches would not be necessary as the road layout naturally forces vehicles to slow on the approach to the village.

The Suffolk guidelines on this are as follows:

*In respect of village 30mph limits in some circumstances it might be appropriate to consider an intermediate speed limit of 40mph prior to the 30mph terminal speed limit signs at the entrance, in particular where there are outlying houses beyond the village boundary or roads with high approach speeds. For the latter, consideration needs to be given to other speed management measures to support the message of the speed limit and help encourage compliance. Where appropriate, such measures might include signing, centre hatching or other measures that would have the effect of narrowing or changing the nature and appearance of the road.*

The requirements and costs:

- A TRO would be required, but can be added to the 20mph zone TRO at no additional cost. Other costs would be new signage and potential road closure to install.
- The gateways mentioned in the original proposal would help to satisfy the requirements in the guidance. However, gateways cost approximately £3000-£4000 each (installed) and it is possible two would be required at each site, as a minimum thick white lines to give the impression that the road narrows should be painted at the 30mph entrances.
- Evidence in the form of traffic surveys, both at the point where the new 40mph buffer area would start and at the 30mph start point, would be required. This would be 4 surveys at a total cost of approximately £1000. Suffolk highways would not be able to carry out surveys until after October due to the number of requests they are processing for surveys – partially due to having to reassess road as part of the ETRO in Eye. There is a possibility that some of

the surveys already undertaken on the Laxfield Road by Suffolk County Council may be considered sufficient.

- One possibility would be:
  - to start the 40mph just after the Fressingfield turning on the B1118 leading to Queens Street, with painted lines at the 30mph sign.
  - to add a 40mph buffer on the B1117, and bring the 30mph nearer to the village (and houses) on the Laxfield Road, with painted lines at the 30mph sign.

### Other matters considered

#### Speed Indicator Device (SID):

SIDs have been considered by the Parish Council in the past. 3 locations were identified as suitable and posts were installed, however the guidelines for what could be purchased limited the choice and the idea was left to lapse – the locations are currently being used for the temporary VAS signs installed by Highways on a rota basis.

Suffolk County Council has updated their advice as follows:

*When we started the SID scheme we did have a preferred type of unit, however, there are now so many such devices in the market now that we leave the decision up to parishes. Our only requirement is that the device displays the actual speed of the vehicle detected. The units can use colour to denote whether the vehicle is within the speed limit or above the speed limit. We also don't have a problem if the unit having displayed the speed then either displays a smiley face or a sad face etc.*

Solar powered systems also seem to be allowed now, as there are many new solar powered signs in the area.

Estimated costs of a SID are: approximately £3000 inc brackets plus an installation cost. Additional cost for solar panels.

The advice is not to leave a SID in any one location for more than 4 weeks as drivers become immune to it. If the SID is to be moved around the 3 locations, then a team of volunteers would be required to do this. Downloading the data would also be needed and a laptop with the necessary software may need to be purchased for this. However, there are SIDs that remain in the same location and are solar powered to save having to take them down to charge the battery.

Examples of SIDs:



**Railings and bollards:**

Suffolk highways were asked to comment on the installation of pedestrian railings outside the primary school and heritage bollards on the junction.

The following comment was received from Suffolk highways:

*The DFT and ourselves are not keen on installing barriers or bollards as these reduce footway width and also more street furniture that has to be maintained, however, I will have a measure up tomorrow. I would say that the yellow lines are the best way forward on the junction.*

The Highways representative and the Clerk measured the pavement and it was noted that the installation of the railings would make the pavement too narrow.

**Recommendation:** that the Parish Council holds a public open event and invites the residents to comment on the options available.

Options for consultation :

- 20mph zone on Queens Street,
- 40mph buffer zones on the approach to Queens Street and Laxfield Road,
- double yellow lines at the junction,
- SID,
- Volunteer team for moving SID around 3 x locations.

### From June 2022 meeting:

**Motion:** The project outlined in this document is proposed for consideration by Stradbroke Parish Council.

Title of Project:	HIGHWAYS SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS
Name of proposer:	James Hargrave
Name of seconder:	Antony Bush
Date:	9 <sup>th</sup> May 2022
Timeline:	By Spring of 2023
Project objectives:	To bring forward a Traffic Regulation Order to:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a 20mph zone in the conservation area</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install double yellow lines on the corner of Queens St / Church St</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install gateways at the 4 x entrances, with speed roundels on the road and thick white painted lines to identify entrance to village</li> </ul>
	All of the above to improve highway safety within the centre of the parish
Project benefits:	Improved highway safety for all residents and user of parish roads
	Safer centre of the village, in particular near the primary school
	Shows residents that the Parish Council is listening to their concerns
Stakeholders:	All residents
	All visitors to Stradbroke
Included in proposal:	20 mph zone
	Gateways & speed roundels
	Double yellow lines
	Traffic survey/report
Excluded from proposal:	HGV ban
	Additional speed roundels painted on roads
	Buildouts
Who is responsible:	Parish Council will work with Suffolk County Council Highway Dept.
Estimated budget requirements:	£70,000
	NP CIL £20,000
	SCC/MSDC CIL £50,000
Key Risks:	SCC prevent the work
	TRO unsuccessful at consultation
	May not have the desired improvement on safety