

Notes of Place & Connectivity Meeting on 26th May 2020 via Zoom

Attendees: Robert Eggleston (RE), Janice Henwood (JH), Peter Chapman (PC), Simon Hicks (SH), Sylvia Neumann (SN), Robert Duggan (RD), Joe Foster (JF), Anne Eves (AE), Steve Cridland (SC), Liz Clark (LC)

Apologies: Matthew Cornish

General comments:

RE - a report on the Place & Connectivity Consultation would go to Full Council in June (date to be arranged) so all Councillors had an opportunity to feedback their comments. A summary of Councillor's comments received and contribution from Richard Light was circulated prior to the meeting.

JH - concerned about dual use paths for cyclists and pedestrians especially for those using mobility scooters/children double buggies etc., and cyclists as pedestrians will feel very vulnerable. Prefer the Sussex Way model of a stepped down path (project 8); can this model be used across the whole town?

All agreed where possible pedestrians and cyclists should be like Sussex Way, i.e. stepped down path, only default to dual use when not possible as per WSCC Cycling Design Guide. Northern Arc needs to be designed in accordance with guide.

Summary General Recommendations: The following comments be made to Mid Sussex District Council:

- a) where possible use the Sussex Way stepped down model to segregate pedestrians and cyclists and only default to dual use when not possible as per WSCC's Cycling Design Guide.
- b) raised tables at junctions with side roads should prioritise pedestrians, cyclists to avoid confusion over who has right of way. Alternatively consider moving raised tables
- c) Combine the delivery of the cycle way projects in conjunction with the Townwide Cycling & Walking Strategy (May 2020) which is being delivered as part of the Northern Arc Masterplan.
- d) Incorporate 20mph speed limits and other traffic calming measures in those areas of contention between motorists, cyclists and pedestrians.

Discussion points:

Project 1 – Burgess Hill to Haywards Heath Greenways

AE - western route is preferred option though shame one landowner is thwarting that route. Fox Hill is not a good road for cyclists and Theobalds Road residents not in favour.

JF - Theobalds Road residents concerned about reclassification of their road and potential to open up to additional housing. Does it have to be either/or route, or can both be delivered at some point in the future? How to link Valebridge Road into

town? SH advised route will go on path southbound by railway line into St Wilfrid's Road onto Mill Road.

SH – people will use Rocky Lane and improvements were needed on Rocky Lane especially in the dip with lighting/footpath.

RE - bridleway from Theobalds Road onto farmland, only access to/from a private residential road which is a bridleway where there is a restriction on right of way which may stop this route. Neither western nor eastern are ideal as they link to either side of Haywards Heath whereas Rocky Lane is more central.

JF - if not careful we'll get nothing.

RE - pressurise MSDC for western route and compulsory purchase the land. Northern Arc/Bolnere Village is best route. Fox Hill is a no go.

SH - eastern route is okay for pedestrians. Have the consultants properly assessed Rocky Lane as an option?

JF - could land from each side of the carriageway in Isaacs Lane and Rocky Lane be used?

RE/JH - suggested consideration be given to a third option to use Rocky Lane as neither the eastern or western routes satisfactory due to legal landowner issues.

JF - WSCC Cycling Design Guides mentions footways (as opposed to footpaths) must be designed to be used by pedestrians only – cycle users must be accommodated on the road or a dedicated cycle facility.

https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/13164/cycling_design_guide.pdf

RE - where space isn't an issue then stepped down path should be accommodated.

JF - Proposals are not proposing to compulsory purchase frontages that are adjacent to the proposed eastern route.

AE - use sealed surfaces for cycling. Not sure we can go back asking for a third option. Agree there needs to be segregation between cyclists and pedestrians.

RD - cyclists will want to use Rocky Lane.

RD - cyclists should be kept on the road and if not possible then they be segregated from pedestrians.

All strongly support a greenway route between Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath, recognise there are legal issues with both western and eastern routes so would like to request before any commitment made by the consultants/planners consideration is given to a third option near Rocky Lane as an alternative route between the two towns.

Summary Recommendation: The following comments be made to Mid Sussex District Council:

- a) the Town Council supports a greenway route between Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath and recognises there are legal issues with both western and eastern routes so would like to request before any commitment is made by the consultants/planners that consideration is given to a third option near Rocky Lane as an alternative route between the two towns.

Project 2 – Wivelsfield Railway Station Area

RD - lack of clarity in plan regarding a car park on the north side off Leylands Road. Better to integrate bike storage/lift facilities with a clear canvas for potential car park and make it simpler for travellers on and off trains.

RE - this is Network Rail land and it's not easy to negotiate with them.

SH - a layby could be created in the open space on the north side; people would need to cross the road to get onto the train.

RD - Bumpy Bridge/St Wilfrid's Road junction with Junction Road/Cants Lane needs connectivity improvements as there is no crossing.

SH - is a crossing needed at junction of Mill Road and St Wilfrid's Road?

RE - need to have ability to gain access to platform from new path between St Wilfrid's Road and the station without needing to go down to Leylands Road.

JF - declared a personal interest as he lives in Gordon Road. Gordon Road and Gladstone Road were not built for additional traffic and the car park area in Gordon Road was used as a drop off/pick up point which needed to be discouraged.

Summary Recommendation: The following comments be made to Mid Sussex District Council:

- a) the Town Council welcomes the proposed improvements at Wivelsfield Railway Station
- b) feels there is a lack of clarity in the plan regarding a car park on the north side off Leylands Road, west of railway line
- c) provision of pedestrian crossing across Junction Road from Bumpy Bridge to Cants Lane should be brought forward as part of this project
- d) there should be access to railway platform from proposed new path between St Wilfrid's Road to Leylands Road
- e) discourage drop off/pick up point in Gordon Road/Gladstone Road area.

Project 3 Burgess Hill Railway Station Area

JH - retaining wall between Keymer Court and access road to railway car park needs to be repaired, not a good first impression to Burgess Hill. RE advised that this is private land between Network Rail and the Keymer Court owner and agreed this needed to be resolved. . All agreed need to improve this entrance/exit from the railway line into Burgess Hill.

AE – query regarding crossing near Burgess Hill Girls and proposed Toucan crossing. RE advised that he understood that Burgess Hill Girls had offered to fund a

new crossing outside the school as Highways rejected it due to low number of accidents. Don't need two crossings.

AE – supported new refuge islands at Keymer Road/Silverdale Road/Junction Road roundabout.

RD – suggested that consideration be given to 4 way traffic lights at the Keymer Road/Silverdale Road/Junction Road junction instead of a roundabout and use Toucan crossing money to fund this. Would be safer for cyclists and pedestrians as well as drivers. Pedestrian crossing could be integrated into traffic lights.

RD – Keymer Parade, concerned delivery vehicles and cars will mount pavement if layby is narrowed and is detriment to shops to remove steps between the two levels. Concerned about 2-way cycling next to parked cars. Taxi rank outside railway station is a mess; do not agree to dual use path immediately outside station forecourt. Need to allow extra space for bike handle bars with wheelchairs/children's double buggies and street furniture – pinch points. At Wolstonbury Way/Station Road junction, will cyclists wait for cars at the raised table.

AE – going uphill suggest cyclists should be on the road as slower; get rid of parking bays outside the Railway Pub and use this area as a cycle path.

Some members suggested that Wolstonbury Way junction on Station Road should have separate cycle lane on each side of the road up to the Keymer Road/Silverdale Road/Junction Road/Station Road roundabout and then re-join Keymer Road dual use path. To replace existing roundabout at the junction with 4 way traffic lights to include pedestrian crossing.

Summary Recommendation: The following comments be made to Mid Sussex District Council:

- a) retaining wall between Keymer Court and access road to railway car park needs to be repaired, not a good first impression to Burgess Hill.
- b) review the cycle lane provisions from Wolstonbury Way junction on Station Road as the current proposals contain a number of potential hazards for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians .
- c) Keymer Parade, concerned delivery vehicles and cars will mount pavement if layby is narrowed and detriment to shops if the steps are removed between the two levels. Careful consideration needed for the aesthetic lay-out if the retaining wall is raised as a result of pavement widening.
- d) concerned about 2-way cycling next to parked cars, e.g. outside railway station forecourt and Keymer Parade, and need to consider pinch points between the different users (motorists, Cyclists and pedestrians. There is a need to revisit the proposals on this part of the cycle route to eliminate hazards.
- e) at Wolstonbury Way/Station Road junction a raised table at the junction may be regularly blocked. Issue of priority for pedestrians, cyclists or motorists needs to be satisfactorily resolved.

Alternative Recommendations – proposed by Cllr Robert Duggan

- f) consider feasibility of 4-way traffic lights at the Keymer Road/Silverdale Road/Junction Road/Station Road roundabout and integrate pedestrian crossing and use Toucan crossing money to fund this;
- g) withdraw the proposed shared pavements where feasible throughout Project 3 and replace with on-carriageway cycle lanes, particularly on the north side of Station Road in the eastbound (uphill) direction as a minimum

4. Burgess Hill Town Centre – Church Road & Church Walk

JH – do not like tree planters, trees need to be planted in the ground like before. Concerned about proposed species of trees – Lime trees produce sticky sap, Crab Apple trees drop their fruit – issue in Potters Lane where Crab Apple trees are already in situ.

RE – merit in having a mix of both planters and trees in the ground.

AE – doesn't like plants on bus stop roofs – watering, no real effect on reduction CO2.

RE – Sedum roofs need minimal care and will enhance the area.

SN – never had a loading bay before in Church Road so why are they proposing this? PC – delivery lorries currently park on the pavement outside Superdrug so proposed loading bay will formalise it. RE – keep pavement to pedestrians and cyclists.

Need to resolve the issue of priority at raised tables at junctions with side roads or set these back from the junctions..

JF - wanted to know thoughts behind the amphitheatre idea in Church Walk. No one supported the idea of an amphitheatre.

RE - explained there had been two scenarios presented to a working group - a massive interactive play area and a town square uncluttered for use for various events. The interactive play area was firmly rejected but the designers may be suggesting structures to reflect that this is an event space. The idea to have pebbled seating is probably because the designers have a brief to make the area appeal to all the senses and be an inclusive space. A completely open area outside the Town Council offices will look boring when not in use as there are not events every weekend. Could it be framed in some way to include Memorial Garden and extend the planting by the Post Office, making it a more attractive welcoming entrance into the town centre. South Bank has a ground level water feature which children love in the summer and then turned off for events.

JH – agree to a flexible open space, remove stone garden.

JF – 90% of the year there will be nothing to draw people down to this part of the town. Crawley has a water feature and children love it so why can't Burgess Hill have one, just need the facility to turn the water off/on.

JF – suggest research maintenance needed for Sedum roofs. Do not see what the issue is with tree planters, various styles available and can look interesting/better designs.

JH – do not like the Haywards Heath planters but the War Memorial trees are lovely.

PC – requested the street lighting is redesigned from Bandstand down to the Town Council offices so there is a clearer area for stage etc., e.g. Christmas event.

PC – seating/planting next to Theatre Club is disconnected from main Memorial Garden, suggested plants thinned out and add more seats.

RE – War Memorial low brick wall by Crescent Road/Way uninteresting and entrance is facing away from town centre so not inclusive. Would like entrance facing the town centre, make Memorial Garden bigger by bringing it out into Church Walk/next to Theatre Club, but have it as an area set apart/tranquil contemplation, plus additional seating. The existing roses should be retained but can be replanted as part of a larger garden area.

JH – agree with changing the entrance/frontage.

JF – do we want to encourage people into this area? What will it mean to future generations?

AE – keep tranquillity but more seating.

SC – War Memorial Trust funded the new gates and repairs to the wall and St George. They will need to be consulted on redesign. BHTC own the land.

RE – raised table crossing needed across Crescent Road/Civic Way from Church Walk to St John's Church and also at junction across Lower Church Road by St John's Church to St John's Park. Also need to formalise this entrance into St John's Park.

Summary Recommendation: The following comments be made to Mid Sussex District Council:

- a) support locating trees and plants in Church Walk and Church Road, though request use different species of trees as Lime trees produce sticky sap and Crab Apple trees drop their fruit and causes trip and slip hazards to pedestrians.
- b) the Town Council has the opportunity to choose the design of planters for the trees and plants. Preference for trees to be planted into the ground wherever possible rather than planters.
- c) a raised table crossing is needed across Crescent Road from Church Walk to St John's Church and also at junction across St John's Road by St John's Church to St John's Park.
- d) formalise the entrance into St John's Park from St John's Road.
- e) do not support the idea of an amphitheatre.
- f) Agree to removal of existing Stone Garden and provide a flexible open space, could it be framed in some way to include Memorial Garden and extend the

- planter by the Post Office to complement an extension to the Memorial Garden and make a more attractive welcoming entrance into the town centre.
- g) have a ground level water feature at the bottom of Church Walk which can be turned off for events.
 - h) request the street lighting is redesigned from Bandstand down to the Town Council offices so there is a clearer area for event staging.
 - i) seating/planting next to Theatre Club is disconnected from main Memorial Garden, suggest plants thinned out and add more seats. Retain all roses but transplant as part of an enlargement of the Memorial Garden.
 - j) War Memorial low brick wall by Crescent Road/Way uninteresting and entrance is facing away from town centre so not inclusive. Would like entrance facing the town centre, make Memorial Garden bigger by bringing it out into Church Walk/next to Theatre Club, but still have it as an area set apart/tranquil contemplation, plus additional seating. The War Memorial Trust need to be consulted on proposed works.
 - k) Review location of bike storage area so that the risk of opportunistic theft is reduced to a minimum.
 - l) Retain the Bandstand and 'Choochy-train' seat.
 - m) Seating and tree protection should be produced from sustainable materials (e.g. sustainable hardwood or recycled materials).

Alternative Recommendation proposed by Cllr Janice Henwood

- n) As a standard policy trees should not be planted in planters

5. Town Centre Western Gateway

RE – explained there are two cycle plans, i.e. Northern Arc and Place & Connectivity Programme which dovetail together – www.burgesshill.net – cycleway feasibility.

PC – proposed change to 4-way traffic lights at the McDonalds roundabout will still hold up traffic at the junction as people queue to get into the drive thru. Moving the pedestrian crossing to integrate with the traffic lights will result in people crossing through the traffic – desire line.

RE – want to resolve the traffic issue into McDonalds drive thru, it needs a 2 lane solution. A meeting is arranged this week with the owner and planner of McDonalds plus Leader, Ward Councillors and Steve. Discussions at MSDC of McDonalds buying car park land off the District Council.

JF – is it modelled? Is it going to improve traffic flow? Is there any data to back the proposal to change the roundabout to 4 way lights?

RD – north side of Queen Elizabeth Avenue – segregate cyclists and pedestrians with a stepped cycle way/path.

LC – concerned about removal of pedestrian guardrail in Station Road by MSDC car park. RE – to widen footway the guardrail will be in the way, there are better ways to make safe for pedestrians, i.e. safety audit and better design.

Summary Recommendation: The following comments be made to Mid Sussex District Council:

- a) the 4-way traffic lights at the Station Road/Queen Elizabeth Avenue/Civic Way (McDonalds) roundabout will not resolve the issue of traffic backing up and blocking access to McDonalds drive-thru, suggest a 2 lane solution is created off Station Road using part of MSDC car park as part of any plan.
- b) Ensure that there is a cycle
- c) take into consideration Metrobus' comments and revisit proposals for Queen Elizabeth Avenue and McDonald's roundabout to prioritise bus and cycle usage.