

BRISTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Office
Briston Pavilion, Recreation Ground,
Stone Beck Lane, Briston,
Melton Constable NR24 2PS
Telephone: 01263 862638
Email: parish-council@briston-norfolk.org.uk
Website: <http://bristonparishcouncil.org/1&1>

Traffic Review in the Parish of Briston

October 2020

Briston is identified as one of the 4 Large Growth Villages in the NNDC settlement hierarchy as defined in the North Norfolk Local Plan. Based on ONS population estimates ^[1] the population of Briston has grown by 30% of the period mid-2001 to mid-2019, to 2623 people. The village is amongst the largest in the District and warrants a review of traffic to reflect today's population and traffic levels.

Briston Parish Council requests that such a review of traffic in the Briston vicinity is undertaken as a priority by Norfolk County Council Highways Department with the objective of encouraging reduced traffic speed and compliance with established speed limits throughout the Parish.

Speeding traffic is believed to be a significant and increasing problem in the village and measures are required to either reduce speed limits or encourage compliance with the existing 30 mph limits in numerous locations. The topic is raised with the Council regularly by parishioners as there is a widespread and strong perception that speeds are at their greatest during peak work commuting times both in morning and afternoons which unfortunately co-incide in part with times when pedestrian traffic to and from school is also at its highest. Thus, creating high risk situations.

This Parish Council review addresses 3 main areas of concern and lists the Parish Council's suggestions for improvement in relation to traffic:

1. entering the village from the northerly direction (Holt/Horseshoe Common Rd) and southerly direction (Reepham Road)
2. traversing the village along the B1354 in both easterly and westerly directions.
3. passing through the residential areas of the village predominantly along Church St, Hall St and the Lane

In general, existing signage is inadequate and ineffective in reducing traffic speed to established limits for all classes of vehicles including cars, commercial vans, buses, heavy goods vehicles and agricultural traffic.

1- Traffic entering From North and South directions

From the northerly direction, note there is no pedestrian footpath in the village along this road

- Installing Village gate style signage on Horseshoe Common Road will reinforce the entrance point to the village and the 30mph limit.
- Install a cross roads junction sign in addition to the existing Stop sign on Horseshoe Common Road.

From the South, there are no pedestrian footpaths in the village along these lengths of Reepham Road or Craymere Beck.

- Introduce an outboard 40mph limit, prior to the 30mph village limits on Reepham Road to give advance notice to drivers that they are entering the village's residential areas. The road is long and straight and improved warning of village limits are needed.
- Install Village gates to emphasise the 30mph limit and entrance to the village on Reepham Road.
- Consideration of a traffic calming chicane giving priority to outbound traffic on Reepham Road.
- Move the existing 30mph limit sign on Craymere Beck, further outboard and away from its junction is Reepham Road to increase warning of the junction.

Historically traffic approaching the village along the Reepham Road does so at high speed and calming measures have been requested by residents.

2 - Traffic traversing along the B1354

The Parish Council acknowledges the status of the key arterial B1354 road and its importance in carrying heavy goods vehicle traffic, buses and agricultural traffic through the village. It is recognised that although desirable its not possible to introduce either weight or width limits along this road.

However, attention is drawn to the fact that the road is relatively straight and thus provides no natural curvature as a means to limit traffic speed. Additional signage to alert and remind drivers to the current 30mph limit and busy junctions is a potential way to help achieve compliance with existing limits. Along this length of the B1354 there is one major cross roads and 2 significant T junctions together with numerous residential, commercial and agricultural driveways and the entrance to Astley School and 4 bus stops. Footpaths along many lengths of the B1354 are narrow.

Looking to the future the Fakenham Road, B1354 hosts two Policy DS1 designated sites allocated for residential development of a combined total of 80 dwellings. References BRI01 and BRI02. The sites are to the south side of the road and either side of the Astley School. This prospective development must be taken into account when considering the arrangements along this road

A number of proposals to achieve improved compliance with speed limits are put forward for Highways review and consideration.

For Westbound traffic: –

- Village gate style signage on the B1354 at the eastern perimeter of the village to emphasise the entrance to the village and the 30mph limit.
- Additional 30 mph signage before the Holt Cross roads. This section of road has no residential drive access and gives the impression of open road thus leading to traffic speeding up.
- Signage to show the acute angle T junction with West End on the right. This is a difficult junction for emerging traffic and collision risk increases when traffic speeds along the B1354.

Approved by Briston Parish Council 2 November 2020
Minute 2020/194 refers

- More emphatic signage to indicate the village centre on the left at the Holt cross road is desirable. A high percentage of traffic is traversing the village along the B1354 and advance notice of the junction and traffic turning into the village, crossing the B1354 or emerging at the junction is needed.
- A permanent 20mph limit along the length of road currently served by the 20mph peak school time limit indicators adjacent to Astley School. This section of road is very straight but has numerous business and residential properties where traffic emerges onto the road.

For East bound traffic: -

- More emphatic signage located prior to Nursery Farm Barns to indicate the village centre on the right side along Church Street. This junction is at particularly high risk for traffic exiting the B1354 as side road Church St is narrow, and has a blind right curve, frequently needing traffic to stop mid junction due to oncoming buses, heavy goods vehicles or agricultural traffic heading north up Church St. The pavement at this location is dangerously narrow and hazardous, especially for school bound families with young children and push chairs as northbound traffic has to squeeze tightly into the kerb when oncoming traffic appears. On this pavement there is no possibility for pedestrians to pass each other without stepping into the road. Traffic heading east along the B1354 must be made more aware of the junction and traffic slowing or stopping to turn at the junction.
- Signage to give advance notice of Holt cross roads is desirable. The line of vision for traffic crossing the B1354 heading south at the Holt crossroads is limited by the angle of approach of the road and the hedges bounding Crossways Farm. Improved signage on the B1354 will enhance awareness of the junction.

3 – Traffic passing through the prime residential areas along Church Street, Hall Street and the Lane

This area is particularly at risk for many reasons. The roads serve as the principal north-south routes through the village and pass through the main residential areas. Furthermore, at some locations numerous cottage style houses have front doors opening directly onto the road.

The route attracts a concentration of agricultural and heavy goods traffic passing through and is a bus route

Throughout this area of the village pavements are either absent or not continuous along one side of the road at many locations, forcing pedestrians, including elderly residents, and school bound pedestrians either to walk in the road or cross it from side to side to remain on a pavement.

On road parking is dense in two notable locations around HV Graves stores and at the Co-op. At these locations junctions and oncoming traffic is frequently obscured by “ad hoc” roadside parking. Even where off road parking is provided access to the road is often poorly sighted due to parked vehicles. Risks are further introduced by vehicles reversing onto the road to turn and 3 point turning in the road.

Immediately adjacent to HV Graves store is the junction of the Lane and Church Street. At this location the Lane by the Congregational Church proposes particular problems associated with it’s width, absence of pavement and parked vehicles and being a busy pedestrian area for people moving to and from the shop and walking to and from school. It’s high risk because the Lane offers an attractive short cut to and from the south side of the village to the Fakenham Road heading west and access for school traffic and general traffic approaching from Melton along Fakenham Road. The traffic mix is typical of the village comprising, private cars, commercial vans, heavy goods vehicles

and agricultural traffic. The junction is one of the busiest hubs in the village for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic alike.

Some lengths of the mentioned roads are narrow, curved and effectively single track due to on road residential parking. With no sight of oncoming traffic at numerous locations.

All these stated factors result in the Parish Council requesting the Highways Department to review traffic flows and pedestrian flow through the village's residential areas and: -

- to consider the creation of 20mph limit zones along key lengths of the roads and/or
- to introduce chicane calming features at the most critical locations.

Conclusion

The Parish Council is not in a position to provide a fully quantified analysis of traffic types, and pedestrian flows or volumes or speeds and the variation thereof throughout the day or to have a measure of traffic growth over recent years. For this reason, Briston Parish Council asks the Norfolk County Council Highways Dept. to commission an appropriate review and consider the proactive and reasonable suggestions included herein and take steps to enhance road safety in Briston village and to provide the village with the traffic control measures it needs.

Ian Chilton – Chairman Briston Parish Council

Reference [1] – Office of National Statistics – Parish Population estimates for mid-2001 to mid-2019 ...