

Road Safety in Brundall

Road safety in Brundall continues to be at the forefront of concerns in the village. The village is situated just off the A47 and with recent developments, there has been a perceived increase in traffic. There have also been some reported accidents in the village involving cyclists and children.

To explore options the Parish Council on 25th October set up a working group focus on the traffic and road safety problems in Brundall and put together options/solutions.

The working group held their first meeting on 9th November 2021 at 9am. They met at the top of The Dales around 8:45 am where they could observe traffic around the school run. From there, they proceeded to walk westbound down The Street towards Finch Way and spent some time observing traffic at the mini-roundabout.

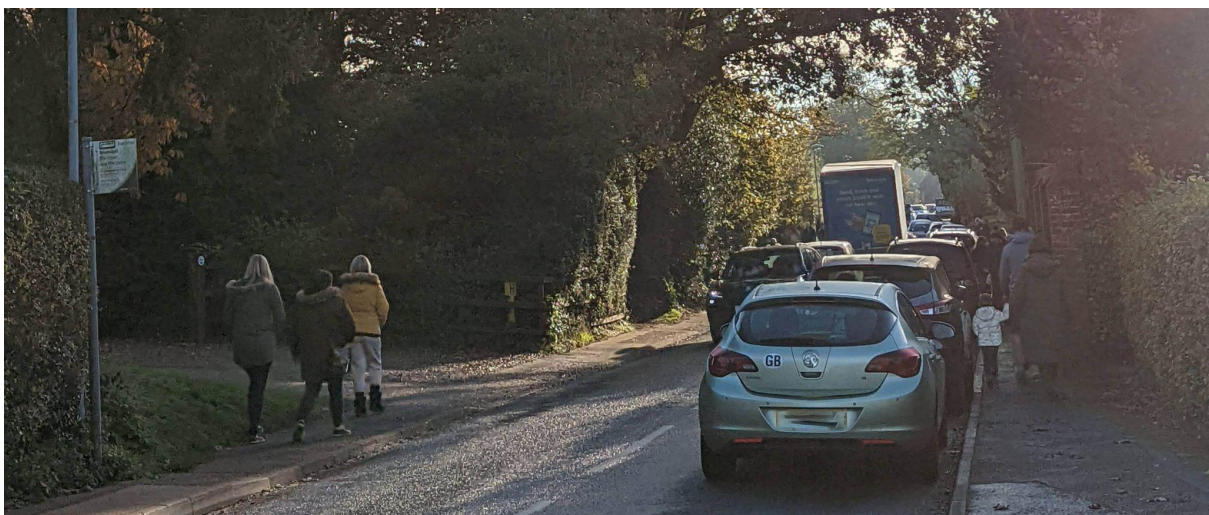
It is expected that further meetings would be held to walk different parts of the village will take place in the coming weeks. Below are the thoughts from the working group based on the one meeting held.

Current Plans

The Parish Council is currently awaiting double yellow lines to be installed on The Street and Highfield Avenue. These double yellow lines will help to ease congestion around Braydeston Avenue, particularly around school pick up and drop off.

Brundall School has two entrances and is currently asking Key Stage 2 children to enter via Braydeston Avenue and the Key Stage 1 children to enter by the new entrance on The Dales.

The Council is currently awaiting a feasibility study for a pedestrian crossing in this area to help families cross the road. During the observations, there was a significant build-up of traffic around the Braydeston Avenue junction with parking by the side of the road.



Families were observed crossing the street to make their way either down Braydeston Avenue or The Dales. It was noted that the double yellow lines would help with fewer vehicles trying to pass through a tightened space but without the addition of the crossing, it could cause traffic to be travelling faster and could cause further problems.

It was agreed that the Clerk should continue to push Highways for both the double yellow lines and the results of the feasibility study for the crossing.

Enforcement

As discussed at the Parish Council meeting on 25th October. Enforcement of the current traffic restrictions in the village needs to improve. When the new yellow lines are installed, the village will not see the improvements it hopes for if the rules are not enforced. In the time the group stood at The Dales they observed a car parked on the double yellow lines as well as a car dropping off on the zig-zag lines outside of the school.

They also spent some time watching the flashing sign on The Street to observe the amount of Traffic breaking the 20mph limit. Many cars were triggering the sign and the council's analysis of the data showed 85% of traffic was exceeding the speed limit. An average speed of 27mph was regularly recorded between 4 and 5 pm.

It is recommended that the council contact West Norfolk to ask them to visit and enforce the double yellow lines in the village and to work with the Police to request they do speed enforcement on The Street.

The Dales Speed Limit

Brundall School now has a new entrance gate on The Dales next door to the Drs Surgery. It was observed that the 20mph Speed Limit actually ends before the school gate. Drivers will often speed up as they enter a faster speed limit zone. This could cause a car to be accelerating as it passes the school gates. When you add the Doctors car park into the mix as well this could be a potential problem.

It is recommended that the council investigates increasing the 20mph speed limit zone to include the school gate.



Narrowing of Street at The Charity Shop

It was noted that there had been previous conversations at council meetings in regards to narrowing the street outside The Charity Shop. The road naturally narrows slightly and by narrowing it further and introducing a priority system it could have some benefits to calming traffic in the village. The conclusion in the past has been that it would impact on Boats coming through the village. This would be an expensive project and a way for boats to travel through the village would still need to be found.



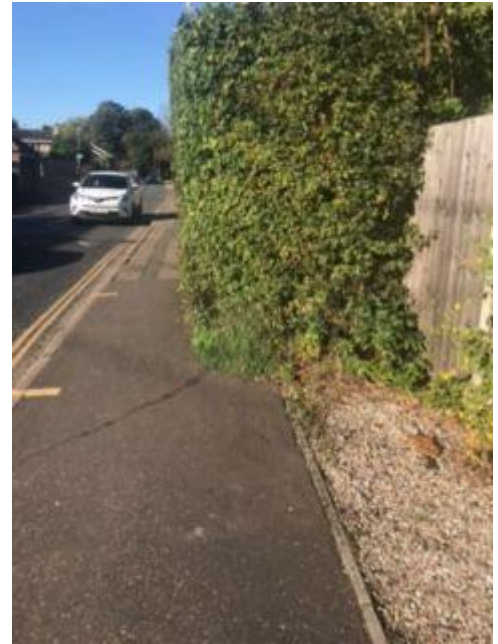
Working With Local Businesses

Local businesses can have an effect on road safety in the village. Recently the Post Office has upgraded to larger vans which appear to no longer fit on the car park at the Co-op. There are also regular deliveries that occur at businesses in the village. One recommendation could be for the Clerk to contact businesses to ask what their plans are for road safety around their premises.

Obstructions on Pavements

Overgrown hedges can cause what are small pavements to become even smaller. There are multiple locations along the street where the hedge has been permitted to encroach over the pavement making it difficult for pedestrians. In some situations, it is down to a single file leaving a parent of a small child needing to walk behind the child.

The Council should investigate the options on how to deal with overgrown hedges.



Pedestrian Crossing Locations

It was discussed that in the future the Parish Council may wish to look at a second pedestrian crossing on the Street. If located opposite the Florists then this could help to slow traffic down as it enters the 20mph speed limit. It would also provide a safe crossing space for those wanting to use the shops and also for school children. The speed table outside the row of shops is already used by some to cross as it feels a natural spot.

This was concluded to be a long term project that could be considered in the future.

Speed Awareness

One of the things that stood out most on our walk is just how easy it is to drive through the 20mph speed limit and potentially have no idea you are in a 20mph zone. We stood at the mini roundabout for some time, approaching it as if a car and it was noted that there was only one 20mph sign. This sign is on the mini-roundabout at the time when a driver would be looking right to check for traffic. It was also next to a shrub that currently has shed its leaves but come spring/summer would impede the view of the sign. It is also directly behind the sign for the speed tables.



As we observed traffic approach the mini roundabout it was very noticeable how few slowed down as they approached and entered the 20mph zone and the roundabout itself.

If a driver missed the 20mph sign outside the shops there is no more signs to tell you that you are in a 20mph zone until you hit the flashing sign at the top of the Dales. This means you will have driven through a large proportion of the 20mph signs before you see a second sign.

It was discussed that a large proportion of traffic that travels through the village would enter the 20mph zone at this point. Options could be investigated to make the fact you are entering a 20mph zone more obvious. This could include extending the 20mph zone away from the Mini Roundabout to allow for better clearer signage.



Red road markings could be added to the road as you enter the 20mph zone and if possible repeated through the village. Increasing the number of 20mph signs on the street would also help to try and make it more obvious to drivers they were in a 20mph zone.

Mini- Roundabout Layout

As mentioned previously, the mini-roundabout at Finch way does little to slow down traffic as it enters the 20mph zone. Traffic is able to drive straight through the road as if there is no roundabout. It was discussed that if travelling Eastbound the pavement was widened on the left and the grass verge on the right was narrowed this could help create more of a chicane for cars as they enter what is currently the 20mph zone.

This would, of course, be an expensive project but is worth mentioning.

Conclusions

With an unlimited budget, there would be many schemes that could be implemented in the village to improve road safety. Also discussed were the options of chicanes, using parking bays to slow traffic, Parklets, removable bollards and others.

The group felt that key to any plans to manage traffic on The Street was to create a zone that as you drive through it's very clear you are in a 20mph zone. By moving current signage, adding more and red road markings it could be made much clearer to drivers the speed limit.

Since the meeting, the deputy clerk has contacted highways to gain some information around 20mph zones. The information received suggests that entering a 20mph zone from 30mph the sign should be clearly visible from 30m away. It also suggests that repeater 20mph zones must be 50m away from the speed tables. However, it does also state that street lights with no repeater signs would be a 30mph zone.

More specific clarification will be sought from highways to clarify the rules for our situation. It does show that road markings can be used in conjunction with terminal signs. Our new district councillors have been in contact with Highways about other areas so the group would be keen to discuss our issues with them to see if they would be able to support us.

The document from highways can be found here: <https://b.link/highwaystrafticsigns>