

**Proposed Burwash Parish Council Business Plan  
for Traffic Management on A265 High Street, Burwash**

Prepared by - Burwash Parish Council Traffic and Transport Working Group

Prepared for - Burwash Parish Council

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Burwash Parish Council has been pursuing a strategy to calm the traffic passing through the High Street on the A265 for several years. Consultation with the local community on the Neighbourhood Development Plan, in 2017, identified this as the primary issue of concern in the community. Communication over a period with East Sussex Highways Department and Sussex police has elicited support in principle, from both parties. The parish council itself, in 2018, commissioned an engineering study into options for improvement<sup>1</sup> and a recent feasibility appraisal by East Sussex Highways<sup>2</sup> has been completed and followed up with a site visit by Mr. J. Vacks of the East Sussex Highways Design Group.

Arising from all of this work we are now in a position to propose a program of development going forward. The development program covers the implementation of speed retardation, other safety measures, and village gates in Burwash Village and in the Burwash Common and Weald area on and around the A265 highway. It is also planned to assess the feasibility for crossings in the villages when the new speed zone areas are in place. The Parish Council would expect to see these projects through to completion over a period of years.

The wider BPC strategy for local traffic and transport aspires to align this with concurrent developments of local village parking spaces and new cycle ways linking the villages of Burwash to Etchingham Station and Burwash Common and Weald to Stonegate Station.

The proposal is presented here as the initial part of a larger phased business plan. This plan is intended to provide the community with a safer, calmer and more attractive environment, in central Burwash village initially, with further steps to follow in Burwash Weald and Common, thereafter.

Many people have been involved in this process and we would like to thank them all for their interest and commitment. These include current and former councilors, volunteers to advisory groups and campaigns and the numerous residents who have contributed to surveys and other consultations.

This business plan recognizes the authority of the Highways Department at East Sussex County Council as the primary planning agency for highways development in the county. In addition to its central planning role the highways department makes provision for additional local initiatives under the Community Match scheme : *“ Community Match is an initiative created to enable Local Communities to apply for match funding to deliver additional highway projects. ESCC will be able to provide up to 50% of funding (up to a maximum value of £50,000), with the community providing the rest.”*

The proposal contained herein is subject to achieving a successful community match funding bid and those funds will be matched with Burwash Parish Council funding of the same order.

In response to community consultation arising out of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Parish Council envisages a phased overall program of local road enhancements spanning a number of years. This reasoning is based on the practicalities of delivery i.e.

- (a) the cost of all the segments of the plan are likely to require funding greater than that available any single year budget
- (b) the sequencing of the longer-term plan makes provision for development in Burwash Common and Weald, as the natural progression from an initial phase in Burwash village.
- (c) the wider program will address the need for crossings in due course. These developments would require the earlier phases of speed retardation to be in operation before the specific speed surveys, used to determine the site of future crossings, can be best conducted.

The Program addresses the criteria against which the lead ESCC Cabinet member for Transport and the Environment is required to review the proposal

- (i) Local need, benefits of the scheme: These are addressed in the introduction above and enlarged upon further in the section on
- (ii) How the scheme contributes towards achieving Local Transport Policy Objectives: Each objective is addressed in a section below.
- (iii) How deliverable the scheme is: This proposal has been costed to the detail available from the two feasibility studies already completed. This will be refined again following the design exercise to be conducted for a successful CMF bid. Furthermore, the Parish Council has resolved to cut its cloth to match the funding available, so that, if necessary, some elements can be prioritised over others when the final refined costings are complete. The business plan has been consulted locally and has the support of the community.
- (iv) What risks there are to its delivery. Economic viability and local support are addressed above. The remaining outstanding risks will be the delivery of high standard of work within budget, by the contractors. As this will be contracted through the highways department, we shall be reliant on their monitoring and governance over their contracts. The main likely catastrophic contingencies are damage to the highway through weather or motor vehicle incident, again this is a highways responsibility which has mitigation strategies available. C19 and or other pandemics remain the main societal disruption risks and these would need mitigation in terms of prolonging spending periods should works have to grind to a halt.

## 2. THE FUNDING PROCESS

Community match requires

1. That community identify the issue in question through appropriate consultation (as per para 1 above) and registers their interest with ESCC via and email to [Community@eastsussexhighways.com](mailto:Community@eastsussexhighways.com) (action completed --/--/-- ref Parish Clerk).
2. Applications are made by local groups (which include parish councils) with the support of their local member of East Sussex County Council, - (see appendix-7 Letter of support from Councilor John Barnes MBE).
3. Apply for feasibility appraisal - (application previously submitted, appraisal completed by Ian Tingley 20/05/20 and reviewed by James Vacks).
4. Include additional traffic survey information – (previously included and published in feasibility appraisal report).
5. Submit the following
  - Application form for Community Match Funding (Attached at app 8)
  - Business Plan (herewith)
  - Community Highways LTP3 Objectives (Identified in business plan)
  - Community Highways Funding Contract (available to download and complete at <https://www.eastsussexhighways.com/files/community-docs/Community%20Highways%20Funding%20Contract.pdf> )  
See Appendix 9
  - Community Highways Consultation Advice will be need to be activated by ESCC Highways

### **3. APPLICATION SUBMISSION, APPROVAL AND BUDGETING**

This application for Community Match Funding (CMF) is submitted using the appropriate form and with an appropriate business plan as recommended in the guidance. The application is seeking

(a) Appropriateness review by ESCC Highways Department – Burwash Parish Council has liaised with ESCC Highways over a number of years in developing these plans, which have arisen out of direct consultation with the community and their representatives. In doing so all relevant surveys, feasibility studies, site visits and reviews have been completed.

(b) Review by the lead cabinet member for Transport and the Environment - against the four criteria.

If the application is d a design cost will be agreed between ESCC HD and the Parish Council, and half of the cost up will be paid up front by Burwash PC. Once designed, the project will progress to the construction phase. The Parish Council/Community Group will again pay those costs up front. The council has planned its budget to accommodate these costs, sequencing expenditure in accordance with expected timelines.

#### **4. RESPONSIVENESS - HOW THIS PLAN ADDRESSES THE 10 OBJECTIVES OF THE EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN**

4.1 Improve strategic and local connectivity of communities to facilitate economic and physical growth and renewal. - This plan is part of a wider local transport strategy aimed at improving pedestrian, cyclist and motorist access to and through the villages and environs of Burwash PC., and encouraging environmental improvement with the provision of electric charging points.

4.2 Reduce congestion by improving the efficiency of the transport network and encouraging greater use of sustainable modes of transport. - This plan aims to improve traffic flow through the village of Burwash, through regulated priority flows which can be anticipated in advance avoiding current bottleneck blockages and reverse flows.

4.3 Improve maintenance and efficient management of the transport network. - This plan will assist in reducing damage to footpaths, damage to manhole covers and the related street surface deterioration, damage to houses and parked vehicles in the vicinity of the current traffic flow obstructions.

4.4 Improve road safety for vulnerable road users – pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders. It is currently possible to speed into narrow blind area or pinch points in the high street resulting in high risk situations from which there have been a number of non-fatal accidents. This plan is designed to significantly reduce the occurrence of these incidents.

4.5 Reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured in road crashes - There is a perception that councils wait for fatalities before addressing risk areas on roads. While this is unlikely, prevention is always hampered by its own success, when things don't happen they don't get counted, so they often don't count. The narrowest part of the high street (western end) in Burwash is perceived to present a safety risk to children and vulnerable older people in the vicinity, due to vehicles mounting pavements to pass each other. It is considered to be in need of remedial action.

4.6 Reduce greenhouse gas emissions, local air pollution and noise from transport - While surveys of exhaust emissions for the narrow area have recorded pollutant levels below recommended limits, individuals on specific sites have experienced respiratory symptoms, which they relate to traffic fumes entering their houses. Excessive noise and vibration is generated by heavy vehicles passing at speed, often at night. It is considered that remedial action will improve traffic flow, reducing this hazard. Traffic lane priority and improved signage will help to spread traffic out and reduce concentration of emissions.

4.7 Increase the resilience of transport infrastructure and services to the effects of climate change –The wider traffic and transport plans for Burwash Parish council include cycle ways, which will substantially improve cycling access to railway stations from across the parish,

and will support electrification thereby reducing dependence on oil powered motor vehicles for commuting.

4.8 Contribute to the protection and enhancement of the local natural and built environment – Burwash is in the centre of an ‘Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty’ and participates in the dark skies initiative. The majority of houses on the High Street are listed (many without foundations) and suffer excessive internal and external damage from vibrations caused by heavy vehicles, (this particularly relates to large vehicles speeding at night, and when the road surface is in a poor state). Plans for road speed curtailment and pedestrian crossings, primarily aimed at community safety will take account of protection and enhancement of the local natural and built environment, through a series of integrated strategies aimed excluding or where necessary minimising detrimental effects.

4.9 Improve access to jobs, services and leisure – The Parish Council are committed to retaining and supporting the local economy so that our communities continue to thrive into the future. Overall safety and accessibility through healthy transport initiatives will encourage more people to visit, work and live in the Parish, strengthening our ability to grow and flourish.

4.10 Improve personal health and well-being by encouraging and enabling increased physical activity through active travel – Currently the pavements and roads at pinch and crossing points in the village are unsafe, causing more people to resort to vehicle use for even short journeys. Residents have reported this reluctance to use local services in consultations. In conjunction with improved safe pedestrian and cyclist access, and reductions of specific risks to life and limb, the community will have increased opportunity to access local services and improve personal health and well-being.

## **5. STRATEGIC CASE**

Burwash Parish has been inhabited since prehistoric times. Burwash Village High Street makes up most of the Parish Conservation Area. The Medieval and Georgian homes and frontages – mixing hung tile finishes, white weatherboarding, wooden sash windows and tall chimneys – have earned Burwash its reputation as one of the most picturesque and historically significant villages in East Sussex and gives it its distinctive character.

Of paramount importance is the safety of people, on foot, cycling and driving through the village. The safety of our historic heritage must be our priority too. Brick pavements suffer from being driven over, with replacement bricks harder and more expensive to replace as do building facades from traffic vibration.

Along with national priorities for climate management and the regional transport strategy we must foresee increasing numbers of people getting out of their motorised vehicles to walk and cycle. To this end we plan to enhance the connectivity of our villages across the parish and to the stations. Safe and well signed traffic flow is a key part of our long-term strategy to enhance the space; preserving, retaining and growing its attractiveness to all.

## **6. HEALTH AND WELLBEING CASE**

By calming traffic speeds and flow, we aim to reduce stress and improve the health and wellbeing of residents. Traffic calming measures are central to our aim of reducing road rage incidents, lollipop person safety, near misses and actual accidents at crossing and narrow traffic points.

## **7. ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL CASE**

It is a Parish Council priority to strengthen the local economy and play our active part in contributing to the wider economy. Only 30 years ago nearly every property along the High Street was a shop, meeting local need. These businesses served the surrounding rural area and enabled the village to flourish and thrive economically. Keen to reverse the decline of local businesses the council works to actively retain premises for business use.

With the emergence of the 2020 pandemic, there would appear to be every possibility that substantial home working becomes a feature of society in the future. Not only is this likely to assist in reversing travel flows out from the capital to the Southeast, in line with the Regional Transport Strategy, but it is also likely to stimulate local peripheral economies to support their changing demographic features. The Parish offers many opportunities for business and tourism development and there are premises and land available for a wide variety of small business. It is therefore our strategy to welcome, promote, encourage and support more businesses to the Parish, aiming to keep our communities employed and thriving, while contributing to the economy of East Sussex as a whole. Ease of traffic flow and safety of pedestrians are both essential components for growing our local economy.

## **8. MANAGEMENT CASE**

Clear priority signage and safe speed limits that enable early warning for drivers of the need to drive carefully will minimise frustration and inappropriate driver behaviour and improve traffic flow. With the extended and reduced speed at the east end of the village drivers should slow earlier and be able to navigate the blind bends and approach the school crossing with more safety. This is specifically intended to reduce risk at the school crossing.

Drivers entering from the west, particularly those who don't know the area, will be properly and promptly alerted by new signage warning of narrow passing spaces ahead. The clarity of priority lanes will facilitate more ordered waiting compared with the current 'jump and see' situation. The clear lane prioritisation should ease the flow of vehicles out of the village and allow drivers to anticipate stop and go timing more easily. Furthermore, the predictability and enforced discipline should eradicate the arguments and inappropriate pavement mounting that occur at present. The addition of a build out at the western pinch point is an additional option supporting speed reduction and while also providing an easier place to cross.

## **9. THE PROPOSAL - FOR WHICH BURWASH PARISH COUNCIL IS SEEKING COMMUNITY MATCH FUNDING**

The proposal is to carry out modifications to the highway in Burwash, which are as follows

1. New speed limit reduction signs to accommodate 50/40mph, 40/ 20mph, 30/20mph at specified locations
2. Village gates at the sites of the 20 mph limits signs
3. Improved management of traffic flow through the structural pinch point at the western end of the high street.

Illustrations of locations and possible options are shown at Appendices 2

## 10. BUDGET PLAN

It must be stated here that all the expected cost elements for this project have been itemised in section 5 of the [ABSL-0829] feasibility study. However, they have not been costed in detail. The CJF process advises that successful applications are subjected to a design process where from itemised costing are derived. Burwash Parish Council has set aside funding for this project in its 2020 budget to the tune of £25,000 and has advertised this intention to the community. It is our understanding that the project is likely to be up to £50,00 and subject to receiving CMF, the parish will commit to spending up to their half of this amount. However, when the detailed costings become available, should they amount to a greater sum, the parish council will prioritise spending up to the amount available. Alternatively, should the detailed costs amount to a lesser sum the Parish Council will commit to spending up to the project cost. Hence, application is hereby made for the following

<i>Item</i>	<i>£</i>
20 MPH Illuminated Signage	
Village Gates (as per [ABSL-0829]) or appropriately planted hybrid	
Management solution for pinch point	
<i>Total estimated costs</i>	45,000 -50,000
<u><i>Total CMF monies to be applied for (50%)</i></u>	<u>25,000</u>

## 11. SUMMARY

This business plan / application is the culmination of a substantial body of work, carried out by successive community members, across the Parish of Burwash, over several years. It encompasses long held aspirations, reflected in the consultation of the neighbourhood plan. It is considered to be both effective and deliverable and is supported by the parish council and our local member of the county council. We therefore recommend it to East Sussex County Council Highways Department for Community Match Funding.

Appendix 1 Extract from Section 5 of [ABSL -0829] Feasibility Study itemising expected costs

Construction Costs

- 5.2 As previously discussed, these estimates assume that each measure will be undertaken independently from one and other. A cost saving will be made should measures be combined.
- 5.3 The estimate for the proposed changes in speed limits includes for traffic signing and road markings with coloured surfacing at regular intervals. Implementation of a scheme on this road is likely to require a road closure given that existing carriageway widths may prevent construction activities taking place whilst safely providing a route for traffic to pass. A closure would require a suitable diversion route that would need to be established and then maintained. Other elements that will influence construction cost include: -
- The extent of street lighting required for the zebra crossing.
  - The type of material to be used (specialist materials for a Conservation Area).
  - The extents of drainage needed for the zebra crossing to ensure the removal of surface water.
  - The requirements of diversionary works to existing underground utilities.

Design and Supervision Costs

- 5.4 The cost provided in Table 1 cover the development of the design from concept through to implementation of a scheme and post construction. Typical activities will include (where appropriate):
- i. Undertake speed and traffic flow surveys (if not done already)
  - ii. Procurement of topographical survey.
  - iii. Stakeholder consultation during design development.
  - iv. Preparation of preliminary design.
  - v. Undertake Environmental Review/Assessment.
  - vi. Undertake Stage 1 road safety audit.
  - vii. Provide support to the Parish during consultation process (assumed to be led by the Parish)
  - viii. Prepare detailed design.
  - ix. Undertake stage 2 road safety audit.
  - x. Preparation of contract documents (drawings and specification)
  - xi. Preparation of health and safety package to support construction phase.
  - xii. Site supervision during construction phase.
  - xiii. Undertake stage 3 road safety audit following completion of works.
  - xiv. Update health and safety documents and asset register post construction.
- 5.5 All the required measures will require changes to existing Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO). These support speed limits and parking restrictions and it would be necessary to follow a statutory process when changes are being made. The process in creating this comprises of a staged consultation process in which key stakeholders, such as the emergency services and members of the public can either support or object to the proposals being put forward. It is this statutory process which can take the time in the implementation of parking restrictions and alterations to speed limits, especially if objections are made. It is therefore recommended that in advance of commencing the statutory process, BPC have undertaken a robust public



Appendix 3 - Example of Village Gates at Walcrouch near Wadhurst



Appendix 4 – Area referred to as ‘Pinch Point in Burwash High Street approached from the west



Appendix 5 - Example of signage only giving priority over oncoming vehicles



Appendix 6 – Example of priority over oncoming vehicles with built out road obstruction and parking prohibited in near proximity.



Appendix 7 Letter of Support Councillor Barnes

To be attached here

Appendix 8 Application Letter –

To be attached here

Appendix 9 CMF Contract -

To be completed

## Community Highways



A partnership between:




**Community Match Funding Contract**  
Introduction

This document is required to be signed and submitted as part of the Community Match application. Both the applicant (Parish or Community Group lead) and the County Council will need to sign and authorise the document in order for any schemes to go ahead.

Parish/District	
Name of Community Group	
Contact name and details	
Scheme name	
Scheme description	
Statement on upfront payment of funding	
Agreement to payment up front	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Funding secured Yes/No	
Funding will be secured by : Date	

Community Group  
Signature

.....

Date

.....

East Sussex County Council  
Signature

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Date

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July 2017 Version 2

Community Highways – Community Match Funding Contract

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## References

1. [ABSL-0829] Feasibility Appraisal Traffic Management on A265 High Street, Burwash; Tingley I. Vacks J. 18 May 2020.
2. Traffic Feasibility Study, Highway Assessment of the A265 through Burwash; GTA Civils Consultant Engineers, 2017.