

# Lacock Traffic Management Plan: Stage 1

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Produced by the Lacock Traffic Survey Group

## Introduction

Lacock has seen a marked rise in recent years in the volume and speed of traffic travelling into the village, exacerbated by the through traffic now using Lacock as a short cut to the A350 from Melksham and from the A342 Devizes Road at Sandy Lane. The issue affects all of the Parish roads, and raises serious concerns over safety and the impact on quality of life.

In response to these concerns, and in order to improve understanding of the situation, a voluntary team of local residents formed the Lacock Traffic Survey Group in 2016. The aim of the LTSG is to identify and prioritise the issues relating to traffic in the community, and to propose measures which will contribute within a coherent plan for traffic management.

## Background

The initial work of the LTSG sought the opinion of village residents regarding the impact of traffic on their quality of life, and gathered quantitative data on the number of vehicles using the village roads, in particular during peak times. This work is summarised in a survey report delivered to Lacock Parish Council and to members of Wiltshire Council and others in September 2016<sup>1</sup>. The findings have also been communicated via the Parish magazine.

The survey provides a clear message that road safety and quality of life is significantly impacted by the volume and speed of traffic across the community. There is wide concern regarding pedestrian safety for residents, workers and visitors, and that pedestrian facilities are inadequate in several areas across the Parish; in particular, this leads to Community Severance between the residential areas of Lacock, Notton and Bowden Hill. Inappropriate parking and coach unloading is also perceived to be creating safety and pollution issues.

The Lacock traffic survey was discussed briefly at the Corsham Area Transport Group meeting in November 2016, and it was recommended that the LTSG prioritise the issues. As a result of this advice, the LTSG have produced this Traffic Management Plan which sets out a number of potential measures to address the major issues identified in the survey.

Any measures adopted will need to be considered within a structured approach, and those identified here may need to be provided in stages. Some of the measures are likely to be simple to implement, and within the resources available to the Parish Council. Others will need higher approval and may require financial support from county or regional budgets.

This Stage 1 paper seeks to address the immediate traffic issues within the Lacock and Bowden Hill communities, and sets out an initial suite of measures to be implemented.

A second stage plan will be necessary to ensure that the needs of Lacock and Notton, including Corsham Road, are integrated into the wider road infrastructure plans for the local area, including the eventual dualling of the A350 carriageway, and the creation of new roads for the expanding communities in Melksham, Showell, Chippenham and beyond.

## Vision

To create a safe, quiet and clean residential environment for residents, workers and visitors in the historic Parish of Lacock, including Notton, Reybridge and Bowden Hill.

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<sup>1</sup> Lacock Traffic Survey Group: Traffic Questionnaire and Traffic Analysis Report dated 14/09/16

## Overview

The three main issues of traffic speed, traffic volumes and road safety are related, in that reducing traffic volume and reducing traffic speed may be achieved through the same mitigation measures, and these should also directly improve pedestrian safety. For planning, secondary factors such as improving the environment and addressing parking and coach unloading etc. will also be taken into account when proposing specific measures.

## Reduce Traffic speed and Volume

Traffic in Lacock can be broadly split into two distinct groups; commuters using Lacock as a rat run, and visitors to the village. The measures proposed need to address each of these.

It is imperative that the implementation is planned in such a way as to avoid undesirable side effects. The proposed measures must strike a balance between the need for restrictive action, for example those which aim to deter drivers from using the village as a short cut, and the need to ensure that residents and users needing access are not unduly delayed or inconvenienced on their bona fide journeys through the local road network.

## Outline Plan

The attached schematic map shows the deployment of traffic calming measures across the Parish locations. The measures identified by numbers on the map, are discussed below:

## Zoning

The geographic separation of the residential areas of Lacock and Bowden Hill (and Notton) effectively drives the need for separate and independent measures in these areas. Similarly Cantax Hill, Hither Way and West Street have separate needs because of the particular traffic issues on each of these roads.

It is proposed that Lacock Village forms one zone covering the area bounded by Cantax Hill, Melksham Road and up to the River Avon towards Bowden Hill. The second zone will be Bowden Hill itself, from the river up to the Forest Lane Junction. The third zone will be Notton and Corsham Road, including the A350 'Whitehall' junction. As noted above, this zone will be dealt with separately in a Stage 2 Plan, and is not considered further here.

### 1 Village Gateways

By employing psychological traffic calming measures to deliver the message to drivers that they are entering the residential zones in the parish, average speeds are understood to drop.

Village Gateways are proposed for each of the zones, Lacock, Bowden Hill (and Notton), located at each of the (1) indicators on the map. It is assessed that there would be much less impact if the Gateways were simply placed at the three main 'accesses' to the parish, i.e. on Cantax Hill, Melksham Road and on Bowden Hill, because of the distance between them.

It is generally accepted that traffic is not, generally, exceeding the current speed limit, but the speed travelled is considered to be too fast for the roads in the village. Consideration should be given to marking these gateways with a 20MPH recommended limit.

### 2 West Street/High Street Junction

Specific action is urgently required at the junction of West Street with High Street. This was highlighted by many survey respondents as being of significant concern, given the speed of traffic at this point and the ambiguity of the traffic priority and right of way. Professional advice is required as to the specific measures which would be appropriate here.

### **3 Restricted Access/Access Only**

During previous roadworks on the mediaeval Abbey river bridge, many drivers from Bowden Hill simply diverted their route to and from the A350 via the single carriageway Bewley Lane and Mons Lane through Reybridge. It is anticipated that drivers would adopt a similar practice to avoid perceived delays caused by the traffic calming measures in the village.

To deter this, it is proposed that Access Only signs are placed on Bewley Lane and Mons Lane, reducing the temptation to use this alternative route.

### **7 Improve Pedestrian Safety**

Pedestrian safety was noted as a major concern for survey respondents, in particular in the areas of Bowden Hill, Hither Way, Cantax Hill and Melksham Road. Traffic speed, and the lack and/or inadequacy of pedestrian facilities at these points, were of particular note.

There are very narrow pavements on Cantax Hill. Traffic at the top of the Hill as it enters and exits the village tends to be travelling at or above the 30mph limit. The hill itself, and the double bend in the road, mean that forward visibility is limited.

Both Hither Way and Melksham Road have no pavements and, similar to the above, traffic tends to move more quickly than the prescribed speed limits at these access points to Lacock village.

There are no pavements on the roads on Bowden Hill. Traffic coming down the Hill from Sandy Lane tends to travel well in excess of 30mph, and several near misses have been noted at the junction with Forest Lane. On The Wharf, and on Bewley Lane, the road is very narrow and pedestrian safety is particularly compromised.

In addition, there is no provision for pedestrians on Abbey Bridge (see below).

Safe, contiguous pavements, and certain pedestrian-only routes, would reduce the resulting Community Severance between Lacock and Bowden Hill. (Similarly, Stage 2 will need to provide for Notton, Corsham Road and Folly Lane (West) communities who are separated by the A350 from the remainder of the Parish).

The measures to be adopted at each of these points could be horizontal or vertical deflection devices, but the specific measures required are not defined here. This could include a combination of speed humps, islands/refuge, pinch-point/build-out, chicane, rumble strips, coloured surfaces etc. In addition, a formal review of average speeds at these points may indicate that vehicle activated signs, or speed cameras, are appropriate.

The determination of the optimum viable measures to be adopted at each point will need professional guidance and support from the CATG and Area Traffic Management bodies.

### **8 Vehicle and Pedestrian Separation**

There is no walkway on the mediaeval Abbey river bridge, and the single lane road over the bridge is quite narrow at some points. The speed limit is 40mph and vehicles travel very close to pedestrians, who are obliged to give way or to wait, until traffic has passed.

Some form of vehicle/pedestrian separation is required here, to link with the pavement provided to the west of bridge towards Lacock, and linking to the new pedestrian facilities required in Bowden Hill.

## Next Steps

The next steps are critical to ensure that this Stage 1 Plan is implemented:

1. Categorise and prioritise the issues and recommended measures.
2. Seek PC approval for the issues and priorities.
3. Shepherd the issues through the CATG for Area Board approval and funding.
4. Monitor planning progress and implementation.
5. Provide feedback on the effectiveness of implemented measures.
6. Deliver Stage 2 Plan.

## Prioritise Issues

**4 5 6 7** Pedestrian safety is of the greatest importance to the community. It is recognised that to resolve the issues set out in items 4 to 7 above, which specifically address these concerns, will need further guidance, and agreement on funding.

**2** Item 2, West Street/High Street junction, also needs urgent action and review.

**1** Item 1, Village Gateways, is a simple candidate for early installation. Their impact would be immediate, and the cost relatively small. Agreement on implementing signage at these points which recommend 20mph limit is also a straightforward and cost free measure.

**3** Item 3 may need wider consultation, but the implementation of a measure to restrict access on Bewley Lane and Mons Lane would be straightforward. At the least, it is considered that this could be adopted as an 'experimental scheme' in the first instance.

**8** Item 8, providing pedestrian separation on Abbey Bridge is of high importance for pedestrian safety. It is also important from a community perspective, given that the current lack of facility here deters pedestrian communication between Bowden Hill and the village.

## PC Approval

The PC has been most supportive of the work conducted by the LTSG, and it is anticipated that this will continue. In order to progress the measures set out above, the PC must approve this Stage 1 Plan, in order to pave the way for the implementation of solutions.

## CATG and Area Board Approval

The PC is requested to take forward the proposals and to shepherd the issues, initially, to the CATG, and subsequently to the Area Board for further guidance and implementation as appropriate.

## Monitor and Feedback

The PC is requested to monitor progress on planning and implementation, and to provide feedback on the effectiveness of implemented measures.

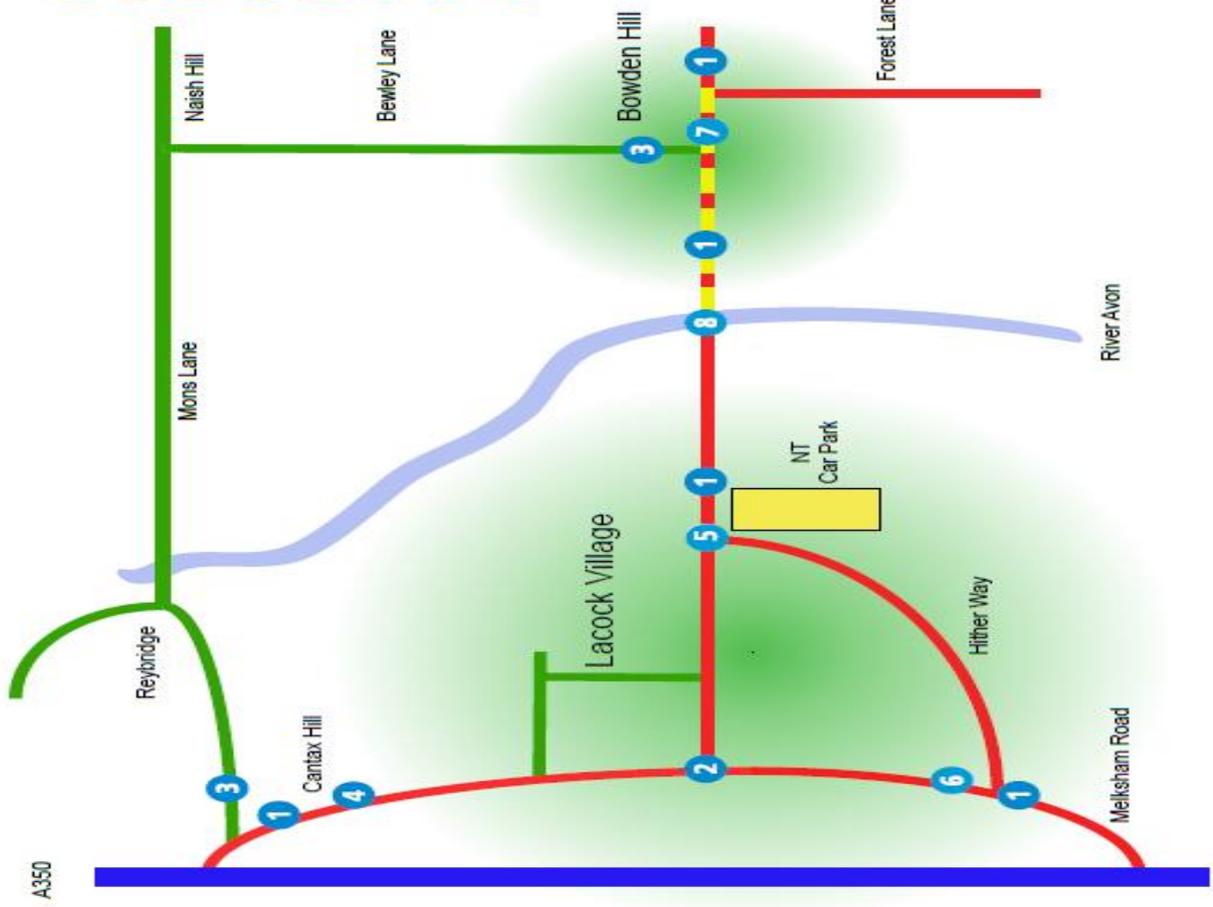
## Stage 2 Plan

In due course, there will be a need to address the further needs of Lacock Parish, including Notton and Corsham Road. This will have to address the dualling of the A350 carriageway, which will have a major impact on access for the village to the local road network. In addition, there will be a need to assess the potential impact of the proposed A342/A350 Link Road, and other new roads which will be needed to support the expanding communities in Melksham, Showell and Chippenham, and beyond.

Att: Lacock Traffic Management Plan : Stage 1 Map

**Psychological Traffic Calming Measures**

- 1 Village Gateways See Note 1.
- 2 West St./High St. Junction safety Improvements
- 3 Access Restrictions
- 4 Traffic Calming - Cantax Hill See Note 2.
- 5 Traffic Calming - Hither Way
- 6 Traffic Calming - West Street
- 7 Traffic Calming - Bowden Hill
- 8 Abbey Bridge vehicle/pedestrian separation



**Notes**

1. Speed restrictions within the village gateways (Lacock and Bowden Hill) set to 20mph.
2. Traffic calming measures for Cantax Hill, Hither Way, West st. and Bowden Hill will also include improvements to pedestrian safety where necessary and as appropriate.

**Key**

- █ A Roads
- █ Two Way Roads
- █ Single Track Roads
- █ Shared Vehicle/Pedestrian Roads
- █ Traffic Calming zones - Lacock, Bowden Hill

Lacock Traffic Management Plan Stage 1 Map