

Upton Bishop

TRAFFIC CALMING PROPOSAL

Brian Spencer | Parish Council Vice Chair | 6th December 2019 – Revision 2

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Summary

This document is a bespoke evaluation of the roads in Upton Bishop with the primary focus on Crow Hill and ways in which safety and traffic speed could be improved in the community. Appendix A contains the output on Roads and Traffic from the NDP meeting in 2018 and this strongly supports the ideas and proposals below.

The list of possibilities includes the following, but these will need costing to decide which are viable options;

- Install white gates at each of the four entry points to Crow Hill
- Improve the 30mph signs both at boundaries and in village
- Plant flowers and shrubs to indicate village entrance
- Remove the 40mph limit and extend the 30mph limit on the B4224
- Add white lines/red hatching to indicate narrowing of the road at each location – remove centreline
- Install signposts warning of the presence of play areas and community hall access
- Physically narrow the road and create a priority system – this could be done temporarily using plastic barriers to evaluate the effect
- Erect flashing 30mph signs
- Erect 20mph advisory signs within 200 yards of Crow Hill centre
- Speed bumps
- Review speed limits and signage at Phocle Green
- Request Stagecoach use smaller vehicles and educate their drivers on the dangers of speeding through rural communities
- Discourage 'short cut' mentality to reduce through traffic

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- Weight limit on B4221 and B4224 between A40 at Lea, M50 at Gorsley and A449 to stop large vehicles using the village as a shortcut, and all C roads (except for access)
- Install footpath between Spring Meadow and Moody Cow – bus stop
- Consider 'rumble strips' at village boundaries subject to noise review of adjacent houses
- Review all 'pinch points' on B and C roads and consider the need for footpaths and/or better passing places
- Review traffic concerns through Bromsash as these will likely be the same as the problems that Upton Bishop has on the B4224 from the A40

Introduction

For many years, the subject of speeding and the presence of large vehicles in the Parish of Upton Bishop has caused concern and has been raised many times at the Parish Council Meetings. All too often, the subject has simply been dismissed as being too difficult to deal with.

Specific suggestions, such as the moving or lowering of speed limits, have been declared as unattainable and, therefore, never pursued.

However, given the strength of feeling that is currently around the Parish, the Parish Council, supported by local residents, has decided to try and do something to improve the situation.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

At a meeting in November 2018, many parishioners stressed concern about the worsening situation. The Road and Transport summary from that day is contained in Appendix A and shows an overwhelming concern from the people who attended.

The NDP questionnaire response recently returned in 2019 strongly reiterates these views and the reviewing consultant stated he had never seen such strongly held views on traffic issues raised in any Parish.

In 2019, there have been two accidents in the Parish where young children have been injured. Both may have been avoided, or the consequences may have been less serious, if the vehicles involved had been travelling slower. (Just before Xmas 2019 a further accident happened in Phocle Green but, thankfully, no-one was injured).

Many parishioners complain of the dangers and worry of walking on narrow lanes with no pavements as lorries squeeze by and cars exceed the speed limit. Both the B4224 and the B4221 have long sections through village areas with no pavements or safe place to walk. The situation is clearly cause for concern.

Key Settlement Areas

There are several very small built-up areas within the Parish, some of only a few houses e.g. Hilltop and Tanhouse; but the main concentrations of population are at Crow Hill, Upton Crews and to a lesser extent Phocle Green; although this is just as badly effected by speeding traffic as the B4221 that runs through it has a 60 mph speed limit. This document will consider the specific issues at each of the three main locations and consider what options are available to try and address the problems, specifically speeding.

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Two common factors for all the settlements are the lack of footpaths and the low level of street lighting and whilst an improvement to footpaths and passing places would be welcome, feedback from the NDP Day suggests that most people would not want to see any increase in street lighting.

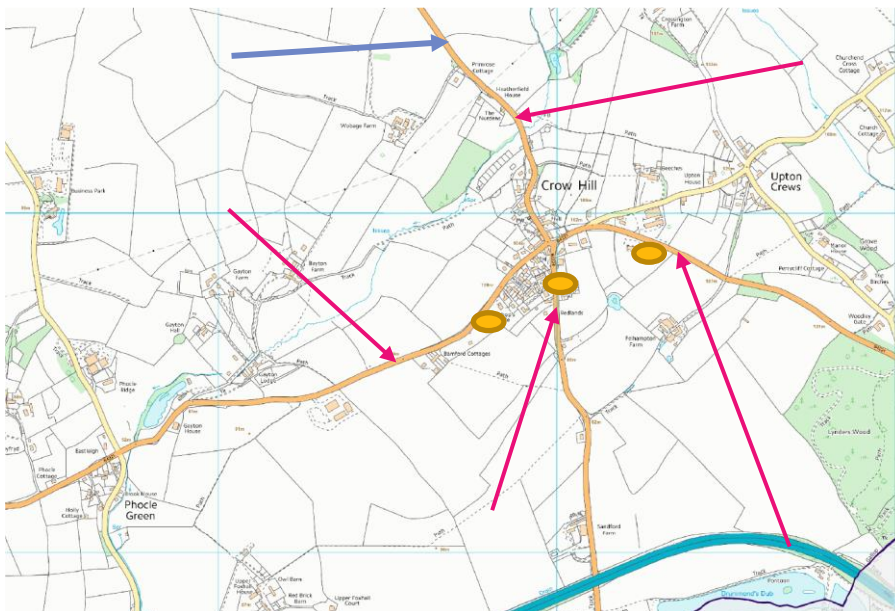
Crow Hill

Crow Hill sits around the crossroads of the B4224 Hereford to Mitcheldean road, and the B4221 Ross-On Wye to Newent road. The main landmark at this point is The Moody Cow public house and restaurant.

All four approaches to the settlement are fast, straight 60 mph roads. From the north and the east, the roads are downhill approaches whilst from the south and west, the approaches are uphill. This does not deter vehicles from speeding from all four directions, both into and out of the village, with cars, buses and vans regularly driving past the 30mph signs at speeds in excess of 40mph.



The 30 mph signs are situated at the edge of the settlement as indicated by the red arrows below, the blue arrow indicates the only 40 mph sign in the Parish;



There are play areas for children at each of the locations marked with orange, so it is a huge concern that vehicles entering the area at these high speeds are driving right past them. There are no warning signs to indicate to drivers that

these exist. Many villagers' driveways or cul-de sacs exit onto these roads so speeding vehicles dramatically raise the risk of an accident as a vehicle pulls out. To highlight the major issues, each approach will be considered separately.

The only indication that a driver is entering the settlement is a small notice displaying the words Upton Bishop and a 30mph warning. These signs are technically incorrect as the Upton Bishop settlement within the Upton Bishop Parish is adjacent to the church over 1.5 miles away. Drivers are actually arriving in Crow Hill.

B4224 Approaching From the North

Vehicles using this section of the B4224 are travelling towards or away from the A449 Ross-On-Wye to Ledbury Road. The road comes from the Old Gore Crossroads, a noted black spot, where there was yet another fatality in the summer of 2019. This is the subject of a separate investigation involving the Police and Herefordshire Council.

Coming into Crow Hill, traffic can easily reach 60 mph on the unrestricted road and enters the 40mph section on a steep downhill approach.

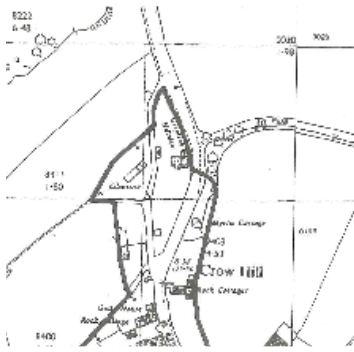


There have been many requests to move the 30mph signs to this position in an attempt to try and slow vehicles approaching down the hill. These requests have been rejected on the grounds that the settlement does not extend to this point although there are properties and their driveways adjacent to this section of road including Primrose Cottage, Heatherfield House and The Nurdens. It is difficult to

understand why this request cannot be addressed as the 40mph section contributes to the problems associated with the 30mph limit.

It is not clear that a 30 mph sign must be directly adjacent to a settlement. At Newent for example, there is a clear 400 yards between the 30 mph signs and the first turning into a business park. There are no domestic properties anywhere on the section of road, only a petrol station.

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This extract from the old Settlement Boundary shows this extending way past the current 30mph limit location, albeit only on one side of the road.

The 30mph section begins directly after the right-hand bend at the bottom of the hill with no prior warning. The picture below on the right shows the 30mph sign cannot be seen coming down the hill and the word SLOW is having no effect on approaching traffic. Vehicles driving at 40 mph have to brake to slow down as the 30mph sign comes into view on the bend, anyone driving faster has almost no chance of slowing sufficiently before the 30mph sign.



The road then climbs back up a steep hill towards the crossroads at The Moody Cow public house. This section is narrow and twisting, and vehicles speeding up this hill often pose a danger to vehicles travelling in the opposite direction, as well as pedestrians, as there are no footpaths.



Vehicles travelling away from the Moody Cow crossroads are travelling down the steep hill (shown in photographs) leaving the village and often speed up to over 30mph contributing to the problem. The 40mph section (see left) leaving the village encourages people to speed past the properties on the left for no obvious reason. Many of the properties along this section have poor visibility when pulling out.



B4224 Approaching From the South

Vehicles using this section of the B4224 are travelling towards or away from the A40 Ross-On-Wye to Gloucester road. The road comes past the South Herefordshire Golf Course and under the M50 before rising up to the village. Despite the bend in the road on this approach, vehicles regularly drive past the 30mph sign in excess of 40mph and make no attempt to slow down before reaching the crossroads.



This section is straight with no natural features to slow traffic, but a large number of properties are located on both sides. Vehicles speeding up this hill often pose a danger to drivers coming out of these properties as well as pedestrians because there are no footpaths.

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Every day, school children walk to the bus stop with cars speeding past. In addition, parents have taken to parking in Spring Meadow and Powell Croft waiting for the school bus creating further potential for an incident.

Balfour Beatty recently cleared the hedgerows on the west side of the road and there is ample room here for a footpath but the land needs levelling to allow this to happen.



There is an added concern here as vehicles pass the play area concealed behind the trees in the photograph. It was at this play area that a child was injured in 2019. A vehicle coming down the hill from the crossroads leaving the village was unsighted due to the slight left-hand curve coming away from the crossroads as a child ran across the road. Excess speed may have contributed to the accident.

Vehicles travelling away from the Moody Cow crossroads are travelling downhill leaving the village and often speed up to over 40mph while still well within the 30mph limit.

The B4224 is a direct link between villages on the A40 Ross to Gloucester Road to the A449 Ledbury Road and the road to Hereford. It is highly likely that vehicles, especially during the morning and evening rush hour, are using this route as a shortcut to avoid Ross, thus increasing the volume of traffic passing through the settlement.

B4221 Approaching From the West

Vehicles using this section of the B4221 are travelling towards or away from the M50 roundabout at Ross-On-Wye. The road comes past Windy Hollow, a small industrial complex, before rising up to the village. The section approaching the village is straight and vehicles regularly drive past the 30mph sign in excess of 40mph and make no attempt to slow down before reaching the crossroads.



The road is also the bus route for single and double decker buses and the author has witnessed them travelling into the village at 40mph. Despite sending video evidence of this to Stagecoach, the operator, the situation has not improved.

This section is straight with no natural features to slow traffic, but a large number of properties are located on the south side as well as another play area. Vehicles speeding up this hill often pose a danger to drivers coming out of these properties although pedestrians are better catered for as there is a footpath. Unfortunately, pedestrians do need to cross the road twice between Pomona Grove and Powell Croft to use it.

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On the left the footpath crossing at Pomona Grove by the play area and below the crossing at Powell Croft. There is no signage at either location.



As the road passes Powell Croft, it narrows noticeably, and two large vehicles have a problem passing at this point.



This photograph shows the road is barely wide enough for two cars to pass and causes problems for buses and lorries.



The tightest spot is at The Moody Cow and the situation is made worse as there is no footpath, putting both drivers and pedestrians at risk adjacent to the crossroads.

Vehicles travelling away from the Moody Cow crossroads are travelling downhill leaving the village and often speed up to over 40mph while still within the 30mph limit passing Pomona Grove, the play area and Bamford Cottages.

B4221 Approaching From the East

Vehicles using this section of the B4221 are travelling towards or away from Gorsley and Newent. The road comes west from Gloucester and is an alternative route to Ross and Hereford avoiding the A40.

It also links to the M50 junction at Gorsley and traffic uses this shortcut through the village to get to the Ledbury Road or the road to Hereford. This generates much unwanted through traffic.



Coming into Crow Hill, traffic can easily reach 60 mph on the unrestricted road as it enters on a steep downhill approach.

The 30mph section begins about 100 yards before the Millennium Hall, on the left in this photograph, where there is also a play area used by children and adults for playing football. Traffic leaving the Hall is on a steep rise and cars

speeding into the village at this point make it difficult for anyone leaving the hall to pull out.

Several recent speed surveys have been carried out along this section as a result of planning applications. There is hard evidence that cars are driving in excess of 50mph both into and out of the village along this section. The key finding of one of the surveys showed;

- Eastbound traffic, 85th percentile speed of 49.7mph (Out the village)
- Westbound traffic, 85th percentile speed of 46.1mph (into the village)

This survey was conducted about 300 yards inside the 30mph signpost!

Upton Crews



The problems within the Upton Crews area are somewhat different. The main C roads that pass through are very narrow with no footpaths and few passing opportunities. This is, however, a main route to an industrial farm, BSB, and there has been a lot of discussion with the owners to find ways of reducing the volume and size of the vehicles

using these lanes. Part of this plan does require larger vehicles to offload at Windy Hollow onto smaller vehicles and restrict movements to and from BSB. Whilst this is a very positive move, it means that there may be increased traffic movements in and out of Windy Hollow. Access to this site is through Phocle Green which has its own problems.

Phocle Green

This is a well spread out community, but it sits across the B4221 between the M50 roundabout and Crow Hill.



Phocle Green has signposts to indicate its presence but there is no reduction in speed on this section of the B4221. The main crossroad lies at the bottom of a dip with a steep slope down to it from both directions on the B4221. This inevitably means that traffic speeds past the junction at anything up to

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60mph quite legitimately. The second serious accident in 2019 in which a child was badly hurt was a vehicle collision on this section on the bends adjacent to the lake.

Since the first draft of this document a further accident has taken place when a driver lost control of his car heading down the hill through the same double bend again by the lake. No-one was hurt. The cross-roads can be seen in the background.



There are no 'Chevron Signs' denoting the severity of these bends.

Windy Hollow can be seen on the map midway between Phocle Green and Crow Hill on the south side of the road. There are no signs to indicate that lorries are turning in and out of the site.

Signage through Phocle Green is outdated and of poor quality and not adequate for a road with a 60 mph speed limit.

Possible Options

The Parish Council has already instigated a Community Speed Watch scheme, but this will need funding and will rely on parishioners giving up time to operate the equipment.

There are many options for traffic calming and traffic safety improvements, but these need to be in keeping with a small rural village. Most of these options rely on visual impact and education of people who live in, and pass through, the villages. These could include;

- Install white gates at each of the four entry points to Crow Hill
- Improve the 30mph signs both at boundaries and in village
- Plant flowers and shrubs to indicate village entrance
- Remove the 40mph limit and extend the 30mph limit on the B4224
- Add white lines/red hatching to indicate narrowing of the road at each location – remove centreline
- Install signposts warning of the presence of play areas and community hall access
- Physically narrow the road and create a priority system – this could be done temporarily using plastic barriers to evaluate the effect – the author has seen this done in Meriden in Warwickshire to slow traffic outside the local school
- Erect flashing 30mph signs
- Erect 20mph advisory signs within 200 yards of the crossroads at Crow Hill in all directions and near play areas
- Speed bumps
- Review speed limits and signage at Phocle Green
- Request Stagecoach use smaller vehicles and educate their drivers on the dangers of speeding through rural communities



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- Discourage 'short cut' mentality to reduce through traffic
- Weight limit on B4221 between M50 and A449 to stop large vehicles using the village as a shortcut instead of going to the end of the M50
- Weight limit on B4224 between A40 and A449 to stop large vehicles using the village as a shortcut instead of going to the junction at the end of the A40/A449.
- Weight limit on all C roads except for necessary access to businesses
- Install footpath between Spring Meadow and Moody Cow – bus stop
- Consider 'rumble strips' at village boundaries subject to noise review of adjacent houses
- Review all 'pinch points' on B and C roads and consider the need for footpaths and/or better passing places
- Review traffic concerns through Brossash as these will likely be the same as the problems that Upton Bishop has on the B4224 from the A40

APPENDIX A

Upton Bishop NDP
Open Day Feedback Comments, Views and Questions

Roads and Transport		
	Agree	Disagree
<i>Does lack of adequate local public transport in the Parish encourage the use of cars?</i>	5	1
<i>Do you have any concerns about the safety of walking, cycling and riding on our roads and lanes?</i>	9	-
<i>Are you satisfied with local transport?</i>	-	6
<i>Do delivery vehicles for internet shopping bother you?</i>	1	1
<i>Does the village need 20 mph and traffic calming?</i>	4	2
<i>Do we need better and more frequent buses?</i>	9	-
<i>Must we just accept that UB is a car based community?</i>	-	3
<i>Do we need more of our B roads surfacing</i>	3	-
Questions, Views and Comments		
SPEEDING and LARGE VEHICLES		
<i>Extend 30 mph to 40 mph at Wobage and enforce</i>	4	-
<i>Phocle Pitch needs speed restriction 30/40 mph and concealed entrance signs. Pot holes are getting bigger</i>	12	2
<i>No to 20 mph</i>	-	4
<i>No to speed bumps</i>	3	1
<i>20 mph on all roads through Crow Hill</i>	14	-
<i>A thorough review of how to reduce speeding by all vehicles is urgently needed</i>	2	-
<i>Large increase in lorries and HGBs coming through UB</i>	2	-
<i>Speed limit areas for Phocle Green and Upton Crews</i>	1	-
<i>Traffic speeding through village is not safe. Can we get something done?</i>	10	-
<i>HV traffic should be banned from Crow Hill past the chapel. It is narrow and dangerous and there are other routes</i>	3	-
<i>Different size properties should be built, 26 should not be built together. Speed limits and volume of traffic is very important</i>	4	-
<i>I have nearly been run down by 2 fast cars approaching the cross from Bromsash. I just want the bus</i>	-	-
<i>Speed check at Beeches not on B4224 as said at PC meeting</i>	-	-
<i>30 mph zone should be extended as far as the church</i>	2	-
<i>Sat Navs are directing traffic past Moody Cow. Don't know how to stop</i>	-	-
<i>Crossroads at Phocle Green dangerous. Traffic to be slowed and visibility improved</i>	2	-
<i>Concerns about business developments down small lanes road infrastructure cannot sustain. Yes to business but appropriate and sustainable</i>	1	-
<i>Better with less lorries on the very minor roads</i>	7	2
<i>Stop lorry access up to the Crews and Woodhouse Lane</i>	9	-
<i>Stop large lorries using short cuts to Ledbury Road. Weight restriction needed</i>	1	-
<i>The layout of the village and the maintenance allocated to roads and lanes are such that more heavy industrial traffic cannot be sustained</i>	2	-
PUBLIC TRANSPORT		

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<i>Transport poor but will remain so. Needs to go straight from Phocle Green to Ross</i>	-	-
<i>Any new development should be near the centre of the village to access public transport but not all in one place</i>	1	-
<i>To attract young families public transport needs to be improved</i>	-	-
<i>The bus route is very important, helps people who cannot drive</i>	-	-
<i>Buses not frequent enough</i>	1	-
<i>Bus times not suitable for those who work in Ross. Have to take and collect daughter every day</i>	-	-
<i>Why double or single decker buses. Why not minibuses every hour?</i>	5	1
<i>Better public transport would encourage people to buy houses here</i>	1	1
<i>Later buses from Ross, complete review needed, direct daily bus to Hereford needed</i>	7	-
<i>Probably have to accept this is a car based community. Difficult to see enough public funding to improve public transport</i>	1	-
<i>Car share scheme? Resident monitored. List of drivers and those needing lifts to Ross/hospital etc. all voluntary and part time.</i>	2	-
<i>More buses to link villages</i>	2	-
<i>We rely on cars and probably always will for convenience. Maintain vital bus service for non-drivers</i>	-	-
<i>It would be great to have a better bus service but there needs to be a critical mass of users.</i>	-	-
OTHER – ROADS and FOOTPATHS		
<i>Local footpaths should be improved and unblocked to encourage walkers. Dymock Wood a huge asset</i>	4	-
<i>Cycling in Parish is tricky – poor roads, cars do not all you room to pass</i>	-	-
<i>Car usage is mandatory for access to health care out of hours, therefore roads must be better maintained. Lack of lighting and pavements is very dangerous in winter</i>	-	1
<i>Access to Upton Crews can be via single track roads and may limit development size</i>	1	-
<i>Roads in bad state – over use of internet leads to too many delivery vans and less local shops</i>	-	-
<i>Can some verges be made into paths with kerbs?</i>	-	-
<i>Walking safety is surely no worse than many rural communities</i>	1	5
<i>Improve signage of public footpaths across private land and stiles</i>	7	-
<i>Keep all public footpaths open and clearly signed</i>	5	-
<i>Too much surface water in village (CH?) centre. Snow not effectively cleared from C roads isolating people in bad weather. Use oil and septic tank, broadband good, mobile rubbish</i>	-	-
<i>Lengthsman has not cleared access to paths on Phocle Pitch. Tony Chudz takes care of layby and verges. Should be done by lengthsman</i>	3	-
<i>Yes to resurfacing roads</i>	1	-
<i>Provision of electric charging facility</i>	2	2