

## **SMALL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME - Staplegrave Parish Council**

### **'SLOW' on carriageway west of the entrance to Staplegrave Village Hall**

#### **1.0m cycle lane on north side of A358 from pedestrian crossing to A3027**

'SLOW' sign on the carriageway.

It is extremely hazardous for vehicles exiting from houses on the north side of the A358 between Westerkirk Gate and the mini roundabout with the A3027 and particularly so for the large number of cars frequently exiting at all times and wishing to turn right out of the very well-used village hall. This is due to the lack of visibility because of the two blind left hand bends to the west and some serious accidents have occurred. Many drivers actually chose to turn left and then turn 180 degrees at the mini roundabout (which is itself not a desirable manoeuvre) to make the turn they consider more safely.

Staplegrave Road is extremely busy with all types of traffic including heavy goods vehicles and this will now increase with the opening of the Northern Inner Distributor Road. During the periods of congestion the speed of the traffic is usually contained within the permitted 30mph speed limit. However it is frequently exceeded in quieter times and the police mount frequent radar speed monitoring positions by Brindle Close. Vehicle speeds seem to be increased after passing through the traffic lights at the Manor Road junction as drivers encounter the unbuilt up section past Hudson Way Park to the south and the open field to the north. While there are lighting columns at appropriate spacing to confirm the speed limit they do tend to be partially hidden in the adjacent trees and the provision of 'SLOW' on the carriageway would give a worthwhile reminder of the speed restriction and significantly improve traffic safety at this point. It is noted that 'SLOW' and yellow bar marks have been installed on the NIDR before right-hand bends, without the provision of accompanying signs on posts, and that the above section of Staplegrave Road, which is now an extension of the NIDR, requires the same provision before it's more hazardous left-hand bends.

#### **Recovery of full width of footway adjacent to A358 Staplegrave Road**

A 70 metres length of the footway on the north side of A358 trunk road east of Westerkirk Gate bus stop has reduced in width in recent years and can become impassable during the growing season due to the sideways growth of the hedge adjacent the footway. Each year the Parish Council requests the cutting of this hedge and the accompanying growth beneath but it often takes many weeks before this can be carried out. The path can become very dangerous with pedestrians forced into the road and it is no longer useable for prams and mobility scooters etc. Those that try are at a significant Health and Safety risk of going over the kerb and falling into the road. As mentioned above Staplegrave Road is extremely busy with all types of traffic including heavy goods vehicles travelling at or above the permitted 30mph speed limit. The footway connects Staplegrave village with its much used village hall. It also provides access to the only pedestrian crossing over Staplegrave Road for those

parents and children coming from the Cresswell Avenue and Greenway Road area and going to the Primary School.

A survey shows that the original tarmacked footway was 1.500m wide reducing to 1.170m where most confined by the adjacent hedge at the east end. However, the available tarmac for walking on has now been much reduced throughout its length, to about 50% in the worst case. (Please see the attached details). This is due to the road and footway being in a shallow cutting at this point and soil from this verge has been washed down over time to cover and obstruct a significant width of the path. The adjacent ground is covered with stinging nettles and brambles up to the hedge line. The covering soil needs to be dug out to uncover the original width of the footway and, ideally, some form of mini retaining wall (perhaps half paving slabs laid on the slope?) erected to prevent further future encroachment.

The adjacent hedge is very mature, particularly at the eastern end and it rises to some 5.0m above the footway. While it does to some extent stabilise the cutting it is suggested that it should be cut down to a height of say 2.5m, with the growth on the footway side trimmed hard back to restrict future growth. The adjacent field is, I believed, own by an Investment bank which is unlikely to object to any work being done.

An application for this work was originally submitted in October 2014 and the available usable width of the footway has reduced even more in the intervening period.

#### 1.0m cycle lane marked on the carriageway.

In addition, the provision of a cycle lane marked on the north side of the road only, between the pedestrian crossing by Westerkirk Gate and the mini roundabout at the junction with Greenway Road, would improve the safety for cyclists over this length and would also reduce the effect of the lack of visibility round the left hand bends by moving the traffic further away from the kerb.

The Parish Council therefore ask for these minor provisions to be included as a proposed Small Improvement Scheme in the next allocation of funds.

M N Clark, Chairman, Staplegrove Parish Council

August 2017.