

Traffic Study Update February 2020: New Pedestrian Access from West Hill Road to The Village Hall

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A new pedestrian access to the Village Hall was the most popular project arising from the Traffic Study. The benefits of this would be to encourage people to walk to the Village Hall and School rather than driving. Not only is this healthier, but it will help to reduce the heavy traffic around the Village Hall Car Park, Beech Park and McColl's car park at busy times such as school drop-off and pick-up. It will create a safer pedestrian route for parents and children to access the school, which is of paramount importance.

The Parish Council has been working with the Village Hall Trustees and Primary School to work up an acceptable design for this. This needs to be approved by a planning application to EDDC, and DCC Highways are statutory consultees.

In Autumn 2019 we held a pre-application meeting, and subsequently a site visit, with DCC Highways and EDDC. The advice from this was:

- DCC Highways are not prepared to authorise a "stop-go" arrangement around the beech tree, the "missing gap" in the West Hill Road footway;
- The speed humps are seen as essential traffic-calming measures;
- A pedestrian access to the Village Hall would be acceptable at any point along the Village Hall frontage. A guard rail is needed on the pavement, and possibly lighting;
- The design of the footpath inside Village Hall grounds is not a Highways matter, i.e. it is for Village Hall Trustees to decide.

A draft plan for the new access has been drawn up by our traffic consultants. The next stage is to carry out a road safety audit on the proposal, which is done by an independent company. We will also commission an Ecology report and Tree Report so that we can understand fully any implications of the work.

Before submitting the planning application, we will hold a community consultation event. This will be publicised on our website and social media, and by a leaflet drop to nearby houses. Residents will also have the opportunity to comment on the planning application once it is submitted to EDDC.

Cllr Margaret Hall

February 2020