

Weston Longville Parish Council.

Meeting of the Parish Council - Agenda

**Saturday December 9th, 2023, at 9.30am
The Carpark,
Hall for All, Church Street, Weston Longville**

I hereby give notice of a meeting of Weston Longville Parish Council and summon members to attend.

Dawn Clarke
Clerk to the Council
December 5th, 2023

The public and press are welcome.

1. Chair's welcome and to receive apologies for absence.
2. To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda and consider any requests for dispensations.
3. To agree to not the approve of the minutes of the meeting held on 13th of November 2023 and to note this will occur at the full council meeting in February.
4. Open forum for Public Participation: an opportunity to hear from members of the public.
5. Roads (Portfolio RH)
To agree response to NCC suggestions for mitigations to A47 traffic volume increases
6. Any other business (information only) and items for the next agenda.
- 7 To confirm the date and venue of the next meeting: Monday February 12th, 2024, in the Hall for All.

Dear Gavin,

hope all is well with you?

Thank you again for the work NCC and WSP have carried out thus far, in making some proposals that might mitigate the estimated traffic rises Weston Longville will experience if the A47 is completed before the Norwich Western Link. As you are aware, this is a very important issue for the parish and we want to get it as right first time as we can, taking into account the impacts through the village, on the side roads within the parish but also routes outside the Weston Longville parish. During our discussions, we generated some queries or adjustments to the existing proposals but also wondered whether there was any mileage in some other variants.

1. Improvements to Weston Hall Road, Porters Lane Junction with A1067

As you know we have long been lobbying for improvements to this junction, both in terms of safety and also in terms of traffic management to make it a more viable option to road users who travel on the HGV route. It is the view of the parish council that it is simply unacceptable for NCC to take a position that nothing at all can be done to improve the operability of this busy junction. This problem will be exacerbated immeasurably by the proposed mitigations in each of the assessment models put forward. In the past the Parish council has put forward a raft of options which would assist from roundabouts and traffic lights etc.... but these have all be rejected as too costly. We do appreciate budget constraints, however we also note the costs involved in the dualling of the A47 and the creating of the Western Link Road and in the context of necessary mitigations we do not consider it unreasonable for these measures to be revisited and welcome your thoughts on how to make that junction better and safer for road users and residents alike.

2. Estimate data splitting out Field Rd from Morton Lane

As you are aware, the PC has always had concerns as to the impacts that the more minor side roads may experience as we try to redistribute the traffic. It is significant for us to understand how the traffic would use these minor roads as they – like all the side roads away from the C167 – are single track with limited, unofficial, passing places and any additional loading is a sensitive matter for local residents.

As you explained to us on 1st November, the modelling allows us to compare options side by side as their impacts will all be calculated on the same basis. However, because several of the side roads start with actual bases rather higher than the model, it will be difficult for parishioners to make the leap. In particular this applies to the Field Rd / Morton Lane combination, and to Rectory Rd. The model uses Morton Lane – point 6 - but the location looks as though it may be on the lesser used section of Morton Lane – it's hard to tell on the map. However, the tables show Morton Lane with a base point of zero whereas the actual values for Field Rd are 240 and for greater used section of Morton Lane 424. For Rectory Rd, where the model has a base of 60, the actuals are 412. Is it possible to set the model to use the actual bases as this would improve understanding?

At various times in the past we have had measuring points at three places namely:

- Field Rd - in the Oct 2022 survey this was TSP15000-MS479 Weston Longville traffic count surveys - ATC Data Site 03 - C _ October - ,
- Morton Lane the reference from the 2019 NCC survey was at Dairy Farm C172 Morton Lane, Weston Longville, NCC ID NWL2, (X,Y co-ordinates 610892, 316789).
- More recently your assessment model you refer to measuring point 6 on the map in slide 6.

We know that some of the traffic entering Morton lane from the HGV route will fork through Field Road and turn into the village, and that a portion of that traffic is commuter traffic although we anticipate that currently this is a small proportion of that traffic. If changes are made to traffic flows that prevent traffic entering Marl Hill from either the east or the west we wonder if the diverted traffic would seek to use Morton Lane as a cut through to access the A47. For that reason we would be grateful if you could calculate the traffic impact in the modelling to show the impact on Field Road (and by inference the village) of such alterations. We would imagine this could be deduced by using the existing figures on the basis that if the traffic volume using Field Road is deducted from the traffic volume through Morton Lane at Dairy farm, what remains would (in approximate terms) represent the volume continuing east along Morton Lane and going on northbound along Marl Hill or eastbound towards Ringland.

3. More wide-ranging speed restrictions

There would be absolute support for their being a blanket 40 mph on all of the roads which are currently unrestricted within the parish. If this was implemented, does this affect the figures? We are aware that speed monitoring on the side roads shows an 85 percentile of 45 mph or less so it may make no actual difference on the ground, but it may affect the way in which sat nav systems calculate the fastest route. However, we have included the key restrictions in our additional assessments 8-11 below.

4. Changing the Priority at the Weston Green Junction

We are keen to slow traffic and make this junction safer for road users, noting that it is one of the biggest accident spots in the village. We recall that the options of a roundabout and of changing the priority to make the road sweep from north to west have been explored and rejected due to the level additional land required to make those changes in compliance with current highway standards. However we wonder whether it might be possible to change the priority so that Weston Green Road west and east has priority and the give way signage would move to north and south on Honingham Road and Paddy's lane. We do not think this is likely to impact on traffic volume but we would hope it will significantly impact on traffic speed at that dangerous crossroads.

We have been working with NCC highways to look at vehicle activated signage at this junction and would be grateful if you could explore whether this could be incorporated into the mitigations.

5. Additional scenarios

The additional scenarios we would like to see modelled are what we have called Assessments 8 – 11 – set out below:

Assessment 8

- a. Assessment 2 (traffic calming scheme, 40 mph speed limit between B1535 and A1067 where currently not restricted, 30 mph through Weston Green, closure of Weston Green RD) plus:
- b. No left turn into Marl Hill for Westbound Vehicles on A1067
- c. Narrowing of Marl Hill
- d. 40 mph speed limit Hungate Common, Rectory Road, Morton Lane and Field Road

The reason we would ask you to model this option is that it would divert traffic exiting the Broadland Northway looking to link with the A47 doing so via the village, requiring them instead to use the HGV route. We recognise that the volume of traffic entering the village by turning left into Marl Hill is 5 times greater than that which turns right into Marl Hill and wonder if this in and of itself would go a significant way to achieving the mitigation we are looking to achieve. We also recognise that one of the consequences of creating a no left turn might be that drivers seek to enter the village via Morton Lane/Field Road and we therefore ask for that to be modelled in option 9 below.

Assessment 9

- a. Assessment 8 plus:
- b. No entry to eastbound traffic up Field Road

Assessment 10

- a. Assessment 6 (previous traffic calming scheme plus 40 mph speed limit B1535 to A1067 where not restricted plus no right turn into Marl Hill plus closure of Weston Green Rd.) plus
- b. 40 mph speed limit Hungate Common, Rectory Road, Morton Lane and Field Road
- c. No entry to eastbound traffic up Field Road

This builds upon assessment 6 currently NCC's preferred option. We wonder whether mitigation could be used to lessen the impact on the Field Rd/Morton Lane combo by, for example, making it an no entry at the north end of Field Road such that traffic that turns off the HGV route down Morton Lane would have to continue along Morton Lane to come out at the Marl Hill crossroads, where it could then enter the village but only by traversing our existing traffic calming. This would act as a deterrent to traffic trying to loop back.

Assessment 11

- a. Option 2 (previous traffic calming scheme plus 40 mph restriction B 1535 by A1067 plus 30 mph through Weston Green plus closure of Weston Green Rd) plus
- b. Narrowing of Marl Hill
- c. Narrowing of Paddy's lane from the junction with the HGV route to Weston Green crossroads (perhaps nearer the Weston Green junction end of Paddy's Lane).
- d. 40 mph speed limit Hungate Common, Rectory Road, Morton Lane and Field Road

The reasons we request you to model these options is that we consider that they may provide a sufficient reduction in traffic flow through the village and the access routes the village to achieve the required mitigation without displacing significant volumes through the village at one end or the other which may be a better outcome for the centre of the village

although we appreciate that this may result in a greater volume of traffic on the HGV route. We need this additional data in order to ascertain whether there is a more proportionate and fair option than options 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7.

6. Design details

- The parish council unanimously agree:
 - that option 1 would not on its own offer adequate mitigation to the expected traffic increase; and
 - as a bare minimum, we would agree with option 2 subject to clarification of the specific physical measures and their placement within the village. Have you any additional details as to the specifics of exactly what and where you would install physical measures such as chicanes or raised pavements and their specifications? We know that previously there has been widespread support in principle but, of course, we and the parishioners would like to understand specific proposals so that we can assess the impact in terms of noise increase/reduction and road safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Following a life-changing accident to a parishioner on the section of the road between the end of Rectory Rd and our existing 'village gateway', we would particularly welcome anything that reduces the risk of people and vehicles falling from the roadside down into the culvert. There is a general recognition that the individual elements of our current chicanes are too far apart to make much difference to traffic speeds so we would want to see them made tighter, and anything new be more impactful.
- Finally – do you have a feel for how any narrowing of Marl Hill would be achieved. As part of the NWL, there will be a footpath implemented along the length of Marl Hill, would you see any narrowing as part of these mitigations ultimately contributing to that scheme? Our experience with the existing 'narrows' is that only double height kerbing prevents unofficial passing places from being formed, regardless of how good or close together the official ones are as people are unable or unwilling to reverse!

I apologise if this seems like a lot but the consequences for us – of no, or of the wrong, mitigations are very significant, and we want to try and get it right.

Our next Parish Council meeting will be 12 February 2024. We recognise that our requests may represent a significant body of work. Ideally, we'd like to have a further meeting with you to discuss the options prior to that parish council meeting but to make best use of that, we'd need to see the data a couple of weeks before we meet with you. This would mean us receiving the data in the middle of January, with a meeting scheduled with you at the beginning of February.

We all agree that at the meeting on 12 February 2024 we must make our decision as to which of the modelled assessments we would want you take forward to a detailed scheme and we reassure you now that we do not intend to ask for further modelling, not least of all because the projected timescales for the A47 dualling and the completion of the NWL do not allow for any further slippage in our decision making process!

Thank you so much and we look forward to hearing your response and reviewing the additional data in due course.

