



Traffic Questionnaire Response

**Collated results, comments and summary concerning
Lower Farm Road traffic consultation undertaken by
Ringshall Parish Council, February-March 2023.**

Report For Consideration by:

Ringshall Parish Council's Ordinary Meeting on Tuesday, 28th March 2023.

Objective of Survey: To respond to a request from residents living along Lower Farm Road, Ringshall, who seek Ringshall Parish Council support for calls to extend the area covered by an existing 30mph speed limit to incorporate new and existing homes that lie outside the 30mph speed limit and are within a 60mph limit, following linear development.

Questionnaires were delivered to 82 properties which have driveways directly onto Lower Farm Road or are part of a development with a road exit onto Lower Farm Road only. This questionnaire included all properties along the length of Lower Farm Road (east) from the B1078 road to Lower Farm Road, Broad View Farm (west) end, all within the Ringshall Parish boundary.

Summary of Feedback:

- Of 82 questionnaires delivered on or around 4th February 2023, a total of 57 were returned completed up to the closing date of 1st March 2023. This represents more than 69.5% of the forms delivered. 25 were not returned.
- All 57 returned were from Lower Farm Road residents.
- 55 had concerns about the speed of traffic travelling along the road.
- 50 were drivers/road users aged from 45-65+.
- 55 were car drivers. 40 walk on the road to get to existing public footpaths as there is no footway (pavement).
- 52 people stated that drivers ignore the 30mph, particularly near the current 30mph speed limit signs on entering and leaving the speed limit zone, posing a danger to people living and walking on the roadway.
- 33 people stated that pulling out of driveways is “Always” or “Regularly” a problem due to no 30mph speed limit or speeding drivers ignoring signs.
- 51 residents stated that they want the speed limit moved westward to include all homes that are outside the existing 30mph speed limit.
- 47 replies said that white village demarcation gates would be helpful.
- 52 stated they would also like to see an additional Vehicle Activated Speed Indicator Display (SID) used along the road to complement Ringshall’s existing device.

Background:

- The majority of Lower Farm Road residents believe very strongly that current speed reduction measures have helped but not resolved the issues concerning road and pedestrian safety. A proportion of drivers heading to and from the direction of Great Bricett break speed limits and endanger other road users, including pedestrians, especially at the west end of Lower Farm Road. A total of 10 properties, made up of two older houses, six new bungalow properties and two future development plots are currently sited outside the 30mph speed limit at the west end. These homes have an estimated potential maximum occupancy of at least 30 people collectively, including children and older citizens. Vehicle accidents regularly occur on a bend near the homes – outside the 30mph speed limit sign.
- Lower Farm Road is used as a main access route to the strategic operational Army airfield known as Wattisham Airfield, Wattisham Flying Station, or Wattisham Airbase, where Apache Attack Aircraft are based. Due to weight restrictions on a watercourse bridge at The Street, Great Bricett, Lower Farm Road is the preferred access road to and from the Airfield.
- Lower Farm Road is classified as a 'C' road and is also used by residential and commercial traffic, farm tractors and machinery and for recreational use by horse riders, cyclists and walkers. Large military vehicles including, equipment carriers, military fuel tankers, helicopter low-loader transport vehicles, military convoys, and private vehicles travel along this road to and from Wattisham Airfield. There are up to 2,500 troops and staff based there, many living in Service Family Accommodation (SFA) within Wattisham Airfield or just outside, in Ringshall and Great Bricett parishes, and in other types of accommodation at Hadleigh and in the Ipswich areas. Approximately 140 SFA homes outside the base perimeter are in the Parish of Ringshall.
- The Airfield has recently been assigned for military use for a further 25 years. The Ministry of Defence has plans to demolish an existing accommodation block on the Wattisham Airfield site and provide a new block of Single Living Accommodation (SLA) with up to 168 bed spaces for Junior Ranks, replacing the former outdated accommodation which had equivalent capacity.

- The base is also home to the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service Training Centre and the site of Wattisham Station Heritage Museum. Members of the Army Gliding Club and Wattisham Clay Target Club also travel to and from the Airbase along with those attending a recently introduced attraction at Wattisham Airfield, of fast car driving experience days which takes place on a few weekends over the year.

Summary:

- As a matter of road safety, all homes and residents, living, walking, driving, and riding horses, motorcycles and bicycles on this road should be equally protected by a 30mph speed limit. This includes adults and children going to and from: 1) Ringshall Primary School; 2) a new village play area; 3) events at our popular village hall; 4) and those exercising and walking to and from public footpaths along the unpaved roadway in a 60mph speed limit. This is particularly important on a road with no footway (pavement) at its west end, a sharp bend – compounded by water run-off caused by a reported land drainage issue – and impaired sight lines along the roadway at the west end which have led to a number of accidents and concerns over residents' safety.
- Also the existing 30mph signs are now regarded as sited too close to pre-existing homes and driveways and other new-builds which have taken place as development infill along the road. Because there is now no buffer zone between new builds within the 30mph zone and the signage, vehicles accelerate early on leaving the village and deaccelerate late when entering the village when they see the approaching signage.

Conclusion:

- **Based on the findings of the questionnaire, the majority of Lower Farm Road residents who live along and use Lower Farm Road daily or regularly indicate that, subject to further discussion, Ringshall Parish Council should seek an extension of the 30mph speed limit at the west end of Ringshall towards Great Bricett so that all existing, new and proposed building development fall within a 30mph speed limit. This would also provide a buffer zone to existing and new properties that are already within the existing 30mph limit.**

LOWER FARM ROAD, TRAFFIC QUESTIONNAIRE REPLIES:

(Personal Identifiers Redacted for Privacy)

Question 1: Are you a Lower Farm Road resident?

Yes: 57 No: 0

Question 2: Do you have concerns about the speed of traffic travelling along Lower Farm Road?

Yes: 55 No: 2

Question 3: What age group are you in?

17-24: 0 25-44: 6 45-64: 26 65+: 24 Prefer not to say: 1

Question 4: Do you drive a car, ride a motorcycle or bicycle along Lower Farm Road?

Car: 55 Motorcycle: 3 Bicycle: 21

Question 5: Do you regularly walk on the road, towards or from the Great Bricett direction, to join designated public footpaths in the present 60mph zone?

Yes: 40 No: 17

Comments:

- To get to the last 2 bungalows towards Gt Bricett on the left [REDACTED].
- No, because it doesn't feel safe, and there are no pavements.
- [comment said no to question of joining public footpaths, but otherwise yes to walking on the road to/from Great Bricett direction.]

Question 6: Is there an issue with drivers ignoring the speed limit along Lower Farm Road (west end), specifically when they enter or leave Ringshall at that point?

Yes: 52 No: 1 Don't know: 4

Question 7: Is it difficult to pull out of your drive in Lower Farm Road because of what you believe to be speeding drivers or because you live outside the 30mph limit?

Always: 9 Regularly: 24 Occasionally: 11 No: 11 Other: 1

Don't know: 1

Comments:

- Vehicles travelling around the bend at speed.
- Both. Just outside 30mph limit, speeding drivers approaching from bends, very close by time at 30mph sign.
- Both, just outside 30mph limit, speeding drivers approaching from blind bend (from camp direction), often vehicles are very close by the time you are in 30mph limit.
- We avoid the rush hour.
- When visiting [REDACTED], it is difficult to pull out towards the village of Ringshall as vehicles from Bricett direction approach around the bend at speed. Also we have to be careful out of our drive [REDACTED] in the 30 limit.
- I have reversed out of my drive and driven off only to be overtaken by a car coming up the road from the base/Gt Bricett direction. This has happened more than once over the years.
- Always – I live outside 30 limit.
- Sometimes after carefully pulling out of our drive in our vehicles, cars travelling too fast are on our tailgate.
- Not at our part of Lower Farm Road (east end) so I can't answer for the west end.
- We are lucky to have a wide driveway and it isn't an issue to access safely.
- We are in the 30mph zone but drivers are regularly coming through exceeding 30 mph. SIDS evidence supports this. We do have to be careful pulling out of our drive.
- [REDACTED] Cottage is on a blind corner on both sides. Also difficult to cross the road with a child.
- No, I always reverse into my drive to make it easier to pull out.
- Constantly drivers coming down road too fast.
- The limited visibility requires caution but I haven't had an issue with speeding drivers.

Question 8: Would you like to see the 30mph speed limit extended further along Lower Farm Road (west, towards Wattisham Airfield and Great Bricett), Ringshall, to include all homes along this road which are currently outside the existing 30mph speed limit?

Yes: 51 No: 4 Don't know: 2

Comments:

- Would also like the footpath extended to include the new developments. As a pedestrian who has hearing issues, difficult to hear approaching vehicles, particularly electric cars.
- Definitely – all homes should be included, plus a bit.
- Yes, even all the way to Great Bricett.
- Extension to 30mph will enable expansion of BUAB (Built-Up Area Boundary) and increase in housing development.

9: Would you like to see half-gates (white gates marking the entrance to Ringshall at the west end of Lower Farm Road) to demarcate the start of the residential areas?

Yes: 47

No: 7

Don't know: 3

Comments:

- We feel this will have no effect on slowing traffic down when entering the village! The road is mainly used by regular users who know the road, so we feel this will not stop them speeding!! The gates will just become a maintenance cost to the Parish, with NO BENEFIT. We feel some sort of physical traffic calming would work.
- An extra cost. I don't think they would improve the situation.
- Not sure they would improve situation.
- Excellent idea.
- Not sure what is meant by 'white gates'.
- Anything that would help to make the road safer.
- Hadn't thought of this but could only be a good idea.
- Yes, provided these are before the houses on the left of the road from Wattisham – Broad View Farm, etc.

Question 10: Would you like to see an additional Vehicle Activated Speed Indicator Display (SID) device deployed in Lower Farm Road's 30mph area?

Yes: 52

No: 5

Comments

- Certainly until 30 mph limit can be extended.
- Yes, but unsure it changes driver habits.
- Yes, at regular intervals so that you are aware of your speed in a non-confrontational manner.

Question 11: Any other relevant comments?

- There have been numerous undocumented accidents along the bend at bottom of Lower Farm Road where it is 60mph – it is clearly hazardous and something needs to be done about the speed at which people drive.
- Consider: speed camera; community speedwatch; speed humps; use of dashcam footage; police speeding op. I have seen a car from the base pass a speed indicator at 47mph. I have seen base cars on Barking Tye at 60+mph. Signs alone do not stop the young guys with money to spend on cars. The base needs to grip their staff. *Only* speed cameras or deterrents with *actual teeth* will stop this. A sign or a 30mph lollypop doesn't achieve anything. [this is from a serving police officer in London].
- Not all speeding traffic is from or to the "Base". Agreement with Bricett PC for 30mph limit to be extended is needed. Notable that Suffolk CC has considered it unsafe for children to walk from Camp to Ringshall Primary School as stretches of the road, no path and not safe, certainly as traffic leaves 30 mph when increasing their speed in 60 mph zone.
- Suffolk CC has considered it unsafe for children to walk from Wattisham Airfield to Ringshall Primary School. James Gough (headteacher) has stated stretches of the road with no paths, was not safe. Agreement/consultation with Bricett PC for speed limit to be extended to link with Bricett (the current 60mph limit be made 30mph).
- We are particularly concerned about walking along the very narrow pavements along Lower Farm Road (treacherous with a pushchair). Perhaps if the 30mph limit were extended, some vehicles may slow down. I truly believe there will be a pedestrian accident, perhaps involving a child.
- The issue with speeding on Lower Farm Road is a difficult one to resolve. There is a regular influx of young drivers due to the base. The speed indicator device is a brilliant tool not only for the young drivers but the residents as well, sometimes, particularly with the modern cars, you are not always aware of your speed.
- It's a shame that pathways haven't been part of any of the newer homes (along Lower Farm Road) that have been built in recent years. Opportunities missed.
- It would be great to have the police in the village at peak times to enforce the speed limit.
- As the village has been extended towards Bricett along Lower Farm Road, the path runs out at the last house on the right, but there are properties beyond that so a path is needed as I have to walk on the road to get to last bungalows on the left.

- On the assumption that most vehicles drive at just over or a lot over 30mph in a 30mph zone, why not turn Lower Farm Road into a 20mph zone throughout, as at Creeting St Peter and Anglesey Road, Ipswich. My assumption being that traffic may not manage 20mph but would slow down significantly ... maybe to near 30mph and below. Lower Farm Road would become a quieter lane and more pleasant to walk, travel, cycle along and safer too. Also, insist the base traffic only use the Gate Entrance at Nedging = unlikely but not impossible.
- Cars with loud exhausts and music playing too loud are a disturbance late at night. Where are the police and speed enforcement vans. The Army should take responsibility for their staff in the surrounding villages. We can not have our windows open at night, even in the 40C heat because of the noise.
- I believe more accommodation is planned at the camp, which means more traffic.
- We totally support the efforts and commitment by the Parish Council on this subject. Thank you.
- We live at [REDACTED] (just before the 30mph sign) and the traffic is regularly speeding past our property which makes it dangerous when I take my young grandchildren [REDACTED] or a walk 3x weekly, as very often I can be stood for 10-15 minutes before it's safe enough to walk and turning out the drive in the car can be difficult when cars are speeding at 60mph++ even though they should be braking at that point due to close proximity of the 30mph sign.
- Broad View Farm/Border Cottage area of Lower Farm Road has regular accidents caused by speeding vehicles travelling at 50-60mph as they approach this sharp bend. The road surface here often has black ice and nearly always has surface water seeping from rising land on the developed side of that area and from an inadequate ditch.
- As a matter of civilian safety all homes and residents living, walking, driving or riding on this road should be equally protected by a 30mph speed limit to ensure the safety of Ringshall village residents. These include adults and children going to and from the primary school, new play area and village hall events who lawfully go about their business enjoying exercising and walking to and from public footpaths. This is particularly important on a road with no footway (pavement) at its west end, a sharp bend – compounded by water run-off caused by reported land drainage issues – and impaired sight lines. Large agricultural vehicles also have to share this road with other vehicles and they too should be protected from fast drivers.

- Footpath should be extended to at least Broad View Farm and ditch between Broad View Farm and Walnut Tree Cottage needs cleaning out, as water comes round bend all the way to drains at Walnut Tree Cottage because ditch is blocked and drain can't cope in heavy rain.
- We do not want the village 30 'zone' moved. This will lead to more housing in an unsustainable area. SCC highways have already approved the 4 bungalows in a 60mph zone as well as the various developments built and proposed at Broad View Farm. It will lead to a continuous row of houses from the current '30' sign to Great Bricett! We will end up as one big village (Ringshall + Great Bricett).
- The problem of speeding vehicles is also very much a problem at the other end of Lower Farm Road. This is from the junction with the B1078 up to and going past Ringshall School. There is also a problem with many cars having excessive exhaust noise.
- There should be more responsibility taken by the MoD for the conduct of the drivers going to and from the base (Army and Civil Servants).
- We feel it is important to regulate the speed through the village through to Bricett/Wattisham. It gives consistent messaging about speed – 30mph only – and reduces confusion for everyone.
- There are approximately 10 horse/pony riders regularly use the road to exercise. New Highway Code states to pass horses at no more than 10mph. Some just carry on as if they haven't seen us, even though we are all in hi-vis. We have to use the roads as there are no bridlepaths. We do have accompanied horse/rider signs both end of the village, children walk to school and have to cross the road on a very narrow pavement. Animals have been killed on this road – how long before a child, God forbid? It would be a good idea to have the whole road from the base to the B1078 30mph.
- School 20 Plenty signs are regularly ignored – make them much more visible.
- I don't think it (30mph extension) will make any difference, so I've said No to save costs.

- I don't think it (additional SID device) will make a difference, so I've answered No on cost grounds.
- I would like to see the 30mph limit extended all the way to the Wattisham airbase.
- Crossing Lower Farm Road is difficult, particularly at West End, e.g. just crossing to visit neighbours. Where the footpath moves from one side of road to the other – visibility is not good. Can be difficult with grandchildren, especially if car exceeding speed limit.
- Very annoying that cars park on paths and pedestrians/children have to walk on road and to have cars pass very fast – it's dangerous and an accident waiting to happen.
- As a resident of Lower Farm Road, we know how fast traffic goes along here. Both ends are bad, coming off Bildeston Road they cut the corner on the wrong side at speed, very few take notice of the 20 speed limit by the school area. With limited paths and having to cross the road it can be very dangerous, especially with children. Whilst a SID can be useful, many don't take notice of it and carry on way above the limit. A Gatso camera would be better as would traffic calming along the road. A lot of drivers also think the speed limit doesn't apply at all hours. Maybe we could have a meeting with residents, councils and police about this!
- I think there should be a pedestrian crossing from the village hall to the school.
- I think that any resident living within the boundaries of Ringshall should have the benefit of a 30mph limit.
- Rather than an additional SID which can be ignored, the council should look at: a) priority chicanes to slow traffic, b) speed bumps.
- Speeding is an issue through the entire village. We walk to the primary school and daily see drivers well over the 30mph limit. It's a huge concern.
- If people aren't observing the current 30, extending that won't help. Better enforcement as opposed to extension. We would not welcome the additional development that would be enabled by a 30mph extension towards Great Bricett.
