

## Winchelsea Town Plan: Traffic and Transport Working Group

Peter Minshull  
A259T/A2070 Hastings to Ashford  
Highways Agency  
Federated House  
London Rd  
Dorking, Surrey  
RH4 1SZ

November 16<sup>th</sup> 2004

Dear Sir,

*re: Submission in response to A259T/A2070 Route Management Strategy  
Public Consultation Questionnaire*

This document has been drafted in response to the Highways Agency's Public Consultation exercise document, dated September 2004. In addition to our response to the primary questions raised, we have prepared two attachments for review, and included a third document, dating from January 2000, that covers the "Wider View".

Our Working Group has been established to provide input on Traffic and Transport matters for the Winchelsea Town Plan, whose terms of reference are based on the guidelines provided by the Countryside Agency. In addition to our own meetings we are conducting a programme of public consultation within the local area, ensuring that full- and part-time residents, visitors, employers and employees, all have the opportunity to contribute to the debate.

The unique heritage status of Winchelsea is widely recognised and reflected in the High Weald AONB Management Plan and elsewhere. The town and the surrounding area includes a large number of scheduled ancient monuments and protected land, hence any plans for transport engineering require very special care and investigation, and will be subject to many restrictions.

As the Agency is aware, the issues surrounding the A259T/A2070 Route have a long history, extending over a period of several decades. Extensive research programmes and consultations, most recently in the mid-1990s, have examined the problems and possibilities in great detail. In January 2000 a

local group of experts, operating under the name the “Wider View Group” prepared an summary of the history, status, problems, short term options, and solutions available. A copy of their excellent summary document is attached. Our Working Group strongly supports and endorses the views expressed in their summary, whilst recognising the need for ongoing review of the situation in the light of changes in the patterns of traffic, transport and urbanisation within the region.

The Wider View document is exactly that - taking a wider view than the immediate vicinity of the town of Winchelsea. We have also looked closely at issues and opportunities for achieving improvements to the A259T as it passes around the town of Winchelsea. Our primary concern in this connection is the safety of road users, and those crossing the A259T in order to access the town, public facilities, residential properties, adjacent roads and footpaths.

We have divided our specific comments into two sections, one dealing with Ferry Hill, and the other dealing with more general issues of safety around the town as it relates to the A259T. In both cases we have provided annotated photographic evidence in order to clarify our comments.

1. **Ferry Hill:** there are long standing and well understood problems associated with Ferry Hill, most of which are unresolvable without adopting ideas of the kind put forward by the Wider View group. This ‘pinch point’ is highlighted on the cover of the HA colour leaflet. Our summary document suggests limited widening of the upper section of the hill, as illustrated in the photographs. We also recommend the addition of a footpath in order to provide a safe route to a crossing point at the foot of the hill for pedestrians, and possibly cyclists. Current usage of Ferry Hill by pedestrians is extremely dangerous, but it is effectively the only direct route from the town to and from Winchelsea Station, the caravan park and residences in Station Rd, the Brede Valley and to the current (very indirect) National Cycle Route towards Rye. This proposed path route that we illustrate has been supported in the past by Tourism South East amongst others. We also would be in favour of extending our proposed Ferry Hill footpath/cycle path alongside the route of the A259T towards Rye/perhaps utilising or widening the existing footpath, assuming that safety standards could be met by such work.
2. **Safety Hotspots:** as part of a programme of examining Safe Routes to School and overall safety of pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and others we have identified a number of ‘hotspots’ along the A259T around Winchelsea. Several points are shown in the attached document. Road engineering operations that might reduce the risk of accidents at these hotspots, would be extremely welcome. Conventional signage is not the solution - if anything we are looking to reduce the excessive amount of such signage in and around the town,

in line with the current CPRE campaign, and both the Highways Agency and East Sussex County Council are being extremely helpful in this area for the roads that each manage. Subject to consultation, we would welcome sensitively designed engineering or landscaping activities undertaken by the HA that aim to: improve safety at hotspots; ensure compliance with existing speed restrictions (including the possible introduction of a speed camera or VAD device in the Rectory Lane section of the A259); reduce lateral effects from the road (vibration and pollutants affecting adjacent ancient monuments and archaeological sites, and excessive noise).

Our Working Group would very much like to be informed of any developments or detailed consultation programmes that follow on from the current Agency exercise. In the first instance please contact myself, as Chairman of the Working Group.

Many thanks for your consideration of our contributions

Yours sincerely

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encls:

Wider View Group Summary; Ferry Hill document; Safe Routes document