
Project:	Aberford Masterplan	Job No:	60188363
Subject:	Traffic Management Section of Aberford Masterplan		
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Introduction

AECOM has been commissioned by BlueFish Regeneration Ltd to prepare a Traffic Management section of the Masterplan for Aberford and District Parish 2010-2020 document (Aberford Masterplan).

The Aberford Masterplan will set out the Parish Council's strategic direction with regards to development up to 2020 within the Aberford District and its priorities and aspirations.

This document has been prepared in consultation with Aberford Parish Council, Leeds City Council and BlueFish Regeneration Ltd.

Background

Aberford is a small village approximately 16km east of Leeds city centre and is immediately west of the A1 (M) and north of A1 (M) Junction 44.

Predominantly residential in nature, the focus of the village is Main Street, which itself bisects the village and runs from north to south with good forward visibility. Main Street has 25 residential roads taking access from it and many dwellings frontages open directly onto the road.

With regards to speed restrictions along Main Road, a speed limit of 30mph is in place for traffic travelling northbound and southbound through the village. This restriction is introduced immediately north of the three arm priority Great North Road/Football Field Access junction in the south of Aberford and this changes to the national speed on exiting the village to the north. In addition, there is also a speed activated variable message sign in the north and south of Aberford as traffic enters the village.

To the north of Aberford, the 30mph speed limit is introduced approximately 1.2km south of the A1(M)/A64 grade separated junction.

Pedestrian footways are present along the majority of Main Street to either side of the carriageway, however this provision is reduced in some locations to one side of the carriageway, notably on the periphery of the village to the north, leading north of Greystones Close out of Aberford and to the south starting 100m south of the Young's Court junction out of Aberford. Street lighting is also provided along Main Street starting in the south of Aberford at a point immediately north of the change in speed limit signage and in the north of the village at a point north of the Great North Road/Haverthwaites Road junction.

With regards to crossing facilities, there are dropped kerb crossing points at several junctions with Main Street including Cattle Lane, Lotherton Lane and Highfield Road and residential roads leading from Main Street north of Highfield Road, although no tactile paving is in place.

Dropped kerbs and tactile paving are located on the Young's Court, Beckside, Wind Mill Rise and Field Lane (adjacent to the Arabian Horse pub) approaches to their respective junctions with Main Street. However no designated crossing point of Main Street is provided at these locations.

Towards the centre of the village and around the school and church, there are footways to either side of Main Street approximately 2m wide, although no designated crossing is in place.

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There is limited car parking provision for some dwellings, notably within the vicinity of the school, church, car garage/show room and village hall, towards the centre of the village. Consequently, parking occurs sporadically along either side of Main Street, clustering around the centre of the village and around the Becca Lane, Beckside, Wind Mill Rise, Cattle Lane and Lotherton junctions with Main Street.

Despite the prevalence of on-street car parking around the school and church in Aberford, keep clear parking restrictions around the School Lane school access and the village shop are in place and appear for the most part to be adhered to. There is also off-street parking for the church on the site frontage for approximately 5 vehicles which again for the most part appear to be regularly used.

Double yellow parking restrictions are also in place on the western edge of the Field Lane approach to Main Street, adjacent to the Arabian Horse pub and anecdotally these appear to be adhered to for the most part. However, high levels of on-street parking do occur around this junction and that of Main Street/Becca Lane where parking restrictions are not in place, although the carriageway width of approximately 8.8m permits the passage of traffic in both directions, even when vehicles are parked on-street.

Continuing towards the north of the village, it is noted that on-street parking is less prevalent particularly north of Highfield Road junction.

There are a number of grass verges adjacent to sections of Main Street. On entering the village from the south and within the vicinity of the football pitch, highway verges of approximately 3.5m wide are present either side of Main Street.

There is also a further verge of approximately 3m width immediately south of the three arm simple priority Young's Court/Main Street junction and it is noted that on-street parking occurs around this junction. In addition, immediately north, there is a further verge south of the Lotherton Lane/Main Street junction which narrows from 2m to 1m outside of the terraced cottages. Again, on-street parking does appear to occur in this location. A verge of approximately 3m on the eastern edge of Main Street opposite Cattle Lane is also in place.

With regards to road safety and traffic speeds, traffic speed data was obtained from Leeds City Council for Main Street between St John's Close and Pinfold Close from 29th October - 6th November 2007 (**Appendix A**). This information indicated that the average speed is some 3-5 mph in excess of the 30 mph speed limit. However, a breakdown of daily traffic speed data would indicate that speeds regularly exceed 35-40mph with some instances of vehicles travelling in excess of 50-60mph. Traffic speeds are clearly a concern to local people and affect perceptions of safety for pedestrians and other road users.

Accident data was obtained for the period 01/01/2005 – 01/12/10 (**Appendix B**). This information indicated that during this period there have been 6 accidents along Main Street and its junctions with adjoining roads. On balance it is not considered that this represents an underlying road safety concern and from the information provided it cannot be determined whether any of these accidents were the result of speeding.

Notwithstanding this, of the accidents occurring, two occurred during the peak AM and PM periods of 0800-0900hrs and 1700-1800hrs. Three of the accidents did occur in the vicinity of Becca Lane/Main Street junction, which experiences a significant level of on-street parking and one of these accidents occurred as a result of a vehicle rear shunting another car as it was forced to stop due to parked cars, in order to allow a third car to pass in the opposite direction.

With regards to public transport accessibility, the village is currently served by the 64, 64A, 173 and 174 bus services. The 64, 64A operates from Gildersome to Aberford via Leeds twice per hour Monday-Saturday and once per hour on Sundays, while the 173 and 174 services operate to and from Wakefield to Wetherby every two hours Monday to Saturday with no service on a Sunday.

Given the limited footway widths along Main Street, bus stops predominantly comprise a flag and pole with bus cages such those located around the Highfield Road and St John’s Close junction with Main Street and those along Cattle Lane. There is a however a bus shelter at the stop immediately north of the Main Street junction with Rein Court.

There are no designated cycling facilities around Aberford, however with reference to Sustrans information there is a proposed walking/cycling route along Main Street. This route is illustrated in **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1 – Cycling Facilities



Local Traffic Issues

In order to ensure the transportation element of the Aberford Masterplan remains focused on the needs of the community this document was prepared in consultation with the Parish Council and with consideration of the findings of the Aberford and District Parish Plan Appendix 1. This process has ensured that the Masterplan addresses the areas deemed to be most in need of attention given the priorities and concerns of residents.

Firstly, following discussions with the Parish Council, the following transport related issues were raised as priorities:

- Bus service and accessibility – greater information on the destination of services within Leeds City Centre and route changes would be desirable;
- A community bus to Garforth - to provide accessibility to the Rail station, shops and Garforth College to improve the accessibility of the village for commuters and residents;
- Potential re-routing of the Coastliner bus service to York from the A64 York Road; and
- Reduction in on-street parking levels and school pick up/drop offs;
- Rat running through village to the A1 (M) from villages such as Sherburn in Elmet and Barwick Elmet.

Secondly, the Aberford and District Parish Plan Appendix 1 – “Planning for Real” provides a good insight into issues considered important to the residents of Aberford. The document was produced in 2002 through various means of public consultation and the relevant issues regarding traffic can be summarised as follows:

- Speeding in the village – the popular suggestion speed bumps was strongly opposed;
- Parking – high levels of parking in the village centre associated with school pick up/drop offs;
- Road safety – Lack of school patrol or pedestrian facility;
- A1(M) - Increased traffic through village associated with the A1(M);
- Resurfacing on Main Street;
- Improved street lighting;
- Weight restrictions on traffic through Aberford; and
- School crossing patrols on Main Street.

Thirdly, discussions with Bluefish Regeneration Ltd provided further opportunity to gauge further insight into the issues of most concern to the local residents of Aberford.

In summary, the issues below are considered by AECOM to be the most significant for the village and its community:

- Traffic speeds along Main Street;
- On-street parking along Main Street;
- Accessibility; and
- Pedestrian facilities.

Various measures considered appropriate for addressing the issues raised above are discussed in the following section.

Recommended Transport Related Measures

In respect of the transport related concerns and issues considered within Section 3, there are a number of potential measures which could be implemented to help address these matters. These recommendations are discussed below.

Speed Reduction Along Main Street

In order to reduce traffic speeds along Main Street, the implementation of a speed limit of 20mph beginning immediately after the junction with Becks Lane to a point immediately after the village green area opposite Becca Lane could be explored to reduce traffic speeds within the vicinity of the village centre and the school. This speed restriction would also operate in addition to the 30mph speed limit in place towards the periphery of the village and is in line with the increased application of 20mph zones across the UK.

Manual for Streets 2 (September 2010) notes the policy shift towards introducing more 20mph speed restriction zones and refers to various authorities using the measure predominantly on residential streets and around schools and shops. The idea of introducing a 20mph speed restriction speed zone from the a point immediately south of the Main Street/Lotherton Lane junction up to a point immediately north of the Main Street/Cattle Lane junction should be considered.

With reference to the latter point, it was established as part of the 2002 Aberford and District Parish Plan Appendix 1, that conventional traffic calming measures such as speed humps and carriageway build outs would be an undesirable method of traffic calming implementation along Main Street. Consequently it is suggested that further speed Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) may be a more appropriate method of encouraging reduced traffic speeds with potential locations for the signs being the Main Street junctions with Cattle Lane and Lotherton Lane.

There remains, however, some scope to investigate further the potential to achieve traffic calming and lower speeds through less conventional build out solutions.

For example, build outs could be created which incorporate areas of planting or facilities such as seating or waste bins and achieve lower traffic speeds whilst improving the appearance and ‘feel’ of the general street scene. Such an approach could also include different surface treatments to improve the appearance of Main Street.

Clearly these measures come at a cost and require maintaining but it is suggested that these are discussed with the Local Highway Authority, LCC.

On Street Parking

There may be some scope to introduce Traffic Regulation Orders to prohibit parking in some areas especially around the school (through the implementation of double yellow lines). In addition, it may be possible to introduce ‘residents only’ parking bays to provide sufficient spaces for the dwellings on Main Street, however, both of these proposed measures would require consultation with LCC, regarding its existing resident parking schemes.

Clearly from the results of the speed survey data, the presence of on-street parking does not restrict speeds through the village and so there may in fact be some benefit in at least formalising the type of on-street parking and where it takes place.

Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Infrastructure

It is recognised that enhancements to Aberford’s accessibility to Garforth would be beneficial for those Aberford residents wishing to commute via train, particularly in the morning and evening periods. As raised by the Parish Council, a shuttle bus during peak morning and evening periods would be desirable and could improve the existing conditions. This would, however, be subject to funding which would need to be explored by the Parish Council and possibly self funded by the community.

With regards to existing bus infrastructure, there is potential to enhance the waiting conditions and accessibility of existing provision through the introduction of shelters and raised kerbs. It is considered that this measure would not only improve the attractiveness of public transport, which may consequently reduce single car occupancy trips through the village, but would also provide an opportunity to improve information on public transport with route maps. The latter point would address the Parish representatives concern over the lack of detailed bus timetable information.

With regards to re-routing existing bus services and increasing the frequency of existing services, this could be explored through consultation with the relevant public transport operators. It is to be noted however, that such service alterations are largely dependent on their financial viability and thus attractiveness to operators. In addition the benefits of redirecting a route must also be traded off against the likely increase in route journey times, which could inconvenience other users of the services.

Pedestrian Facilities

It is apparent that while tactile paving is in place at some junctions with Main Street, the provision could be widened to cover junctions such as Cattle Lane and Highfield Lane.

There is also a distinct lack of designated pedestrian crossing points across Main Street itself and this could be resolved through the introduction of zebra crossings. Zebra crossings would ensure a more orderly crossing method and could slow the speed of traffic through the village. Therefore, it is recommended that a zebra crossing be situated within the vicinity of the school to aid the safe crossing of Main Street and possibly the junctions with Highfield Lane and Cattle Street. These measures would also help address the issues of speeding considered by residents to be one of the primarily issues within Aberford.

In addition, pedestrian refuge island crossing points or crossing points with built out footways, could be used to enhance pedestrian facilities along Main Street and also reduce carriageway widths to reduce traffic speeds. Such crossings could be considered in the following locations:

- In the vicinity of Main Street/Lotherton Lane;
- In the vicinity of the Cattle Lane/Main Street junction;
- In the vicinity of the Arabian Horse Pub/Fields Lane; and

- In the north of the village in the vicinity of the Royal Oak pub.

Conclusion

The above recommendations would require detailed discussion and the approval of the Local Highway Authority prior to their implementation.

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Appendix A – Traffic Flow Data

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Appendix B – Accident Data

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