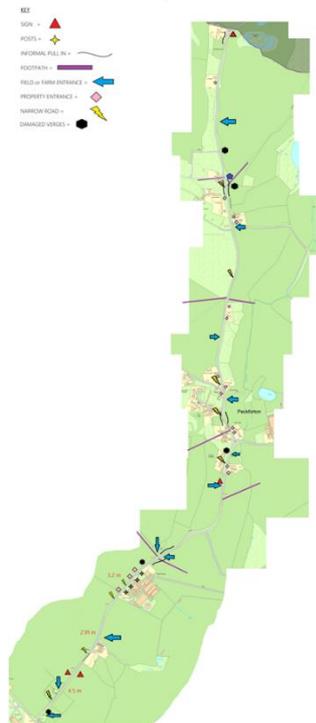


Peckforton Parish Speeding Sub-group Highways Risks and Issues in Peckforton

June 2021
V5



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Summary

Residents of Peckforton Parish have significant concerns about the health, safety, and welfare of residents using the two main lanes; Stonehouse and Peckforton Hall lanes due to the threats from speeding and traffic volumes, the significant number of vulnerable users on the roads, the type of traffic and road geometry. The report has been constructed by local residents only and is based upon their own research and the testimonies of a village-wide survey of local residents of the village. The detailed Evidence Sections of the report will provide evidence of significant threats of speeding due to:

- Exceptionally high use of local lanes by multiple types of vulnerable users
- The nature of the vehicles
- Road geometry

In common with adjacent villages of Beeston and Spurstow who have successfully acquired local authority support in speed management, and with the support of the local MP, the Parish calls upon the Cheshire East Highways Department to support the local community to implement speed reduction measures, and traffic reduction measures, as a matter of urgency. This report was presented to a representative of CE Highways and Councillor Stan Davies on 29th June 2021.

Background

Unless varied by a Highways Authority, the national speed limit on the rural road network is 60 mph on single carriageway roads. In 2011, 66% of road deaths in Britain occurred on rural roads, and 51% of road deaths occurred on single rural carriageway roads subject to the National Speed Limit of 60 mph limit. According to DfT Circular 01/2015 it is government policy that a 30-mph speed limit should be the norm in villages. Peckforton is unique amongst the adjacent villages and the roads adjoining Stonehouse Lane and Peckforton hall Lane in not having restrictions below the National limit or any measures designed to minimise dangerous speeding.

Speeding and hazards on the local lanes are due to the combination of a significantly high volume of vulnerable persons using the lanes and adjoining pathways, the geometry in parts of the lanes, through-traffic, and the use of heavy and large agricultural machinery. The issue has been raised by local residents repeatedly in the past and with no result. A 2019 and 2021 survey of residents shows it remains a key issue. Although there is little evidence reported to the Police, many residents report multiple incidents, and concerned about their safety on the roads. Photographic in this report show multiple near misses and in close proximity to pedestrian and cyclist users of the two lanes

Adjacent Parishes have successfully achieved measures to reduce speed. Peckforton is unique in comparison in that it has received no intervention. The local Parish subgroup believe it has the evidence to require arrangements by the Highways authority (consistent with outcomes for local Parish neighbours in Beeston and Spurstow) for the Authority to consider creating a 30 MPH limit on both carriageways, and to consider any other measures to enforce / encourage that limit) and to limit the volume of through traffic consistent with the 'quietening of local lanes Campaign to Protect Rural England: Guide to Quiet lanes 2006.

Department for Transport Circular on Setting Speed Limits – January 2013

Fear of traffic can affect people's quality of life in villages, and it is self-evident that villages should have comparable speed limits to similar roads in urban areas. It is therefore government policy that a 30-mph speed limit should be the norm through villages.

Where the character of a village falls outside this definition, local authorities are encouraged to use their discretion in deciding whether a lower speed limit is appropriate "Local residents may also express their concerns or desire for a lower speed limit and these comments should be considered."

The Local Case in Summary

Peckforton Issues

The two key roads of concern in Peckforton village are Stonehouse Lane and Peckforton Hall Lane. Peckforton Hall Lane leads to neighbouring Spurstow which has a 30 mph zone, whilst the eastern end of Stonehouse Lane leads to the reduced speed limits of Beeston - recently agreed to be reduced to 30 and 40 mph. The interface is close to an outdoor education centre that is used ordinarily by hundreds of children.

Map (See Appendix)

Vulnerable Road Users

Stonehouse Lane leads to two popular attractions - Peckforton Castle and Beeston Castle. The highway is crosscut by dozens of pathways exiting benign rural walks from the Sandstone Trail and onto, without warning, a 60 mph highway with few verges and only a limited pedestrian pathway in the centre of the village. Our evidence shows that hundreds of people (walkers, families, children's groups, cycling groups, horse riders and runners/running competitions) regularly use the two highways. Several school buses pick up on Stonehouse Lane and with virtually no pavements, complete with sharp bends. The extensive potholes drive people and traffic to the centre of the carriageway and taken together it is only a matter of time before serious incidents occur.

Peckforton Hall Lane feeds Stonehouse Lane and includes all of the above. It is particularly hazardous from a road geometry perspective – see below.

Peckforton Hall Lane:

Is a single width road, with a limited number of pull-in places where vehicles and cars can safely pass one another, the lane additionally has:

- A number of bends and changes in level where sightlines are restricted
- High hedges also restricting sightlines and width
- 4 road vehicle access points in close proximity
 - 2 residential, 1 agricultural, 1 residential and agricultural
- 3 footpaths leading from road with staggered crossings
- No pavement or pedestrian walking area at all
- The width of the road is very likely to contravene policy on road width and speed

Stonehouse Lane:

Is a single width road, with a limited number of pull-in places where vehicles and cars can safely pass one another, the lane additionally has:

- A number of bends and changes in level where sightlines are restricted
- High hedges also restricting sightlines and width
- No pavement or pedestrian walking area at all
- The width of the road is very likely to contravene policy on road width and speed

It attracts the larger volume of vulnerable groups onto the carriageway due to the proximity of the attractions and a higher number of crossing points of walking routes that dissect the lane multiple times without warning to car users and to walkers entering from a field onto a 60 MPH highway.

Road Function

Both lanes are used by:

- Local traffic
- Agricultural vehicles
- Through traffic between A49 and A534
- Traffic to Peckforton Castle (staff and guests) and Beeston Castle which attract hundreds of visitors every month
- Access to the Sandstone Trail which attracts 1000s

Composition of Road Users

- Cars, Tractors, very large agricultural vehicles, Land Rover rallies,
- Horse riders, cyclists (groups and individuals), walkers, dog walkers, (Peckforton Hall Lane)

Peckforton Hall Lane includes cattle crossing points where the road can be closed to allow passage.

History of Collisions

The official reporting of collisions and accidents to the Police is low in comparison with other areas. However, a survey of local people in spring 2021 shows a significant number of incidents and accidents that have gone unreported and there is a large degree of worry around safety concerns in using the lanes by both young and older residents. The photographic evidence in this report shows multiple examples of vehicles swerving to avoid collisions by entering upon verges. The testimony of one resident provides an example of cars entering their driveway to avoid a collision with an oncoming vehicle - narrowly missing his children who were stood on the drive waiting for the school bus.

Mean Traffic Speed

Current data on mean traffic speed and volume is not available at the time of writing and the Parish have requested past survey data from the Authority.

Roadside Development

This is not thought to be a significant factor, although the centre of Peckforton at Quarry Bank does contain a higher density of properties on either side of the road.

Recommendations for Cheshire East Highways

- 1) 30 mph for Stonehouse Lane and Peckforton Hall Lane
- 2) Removal of the de-restriction on Hill Lane
- 3) Implementation of the 'Quiet Lanes' initiative with appropriate signage at appropriate locations along the two lanes
- 4) Support the policy of installation of Village Gateway signs to entry to the village
- 5) Consider more active traffic management measures as appropriate to local risks

1. Evidence - Vulnerable Road Users in Peckforton

The Road Traffic Act (RTA) requires local authorities to prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety and integral to this is the Cheshire East Council's approach in the management of speed on its roads

In the year ending June 2019, there were 1,870 reported road fatalities and 27,820 people killed or seriously injured reported to the police across the UK. Latest figures reveal that agricultural vehicles were involved in 488 accidents in 2018, of which 130 were classed as serious accidents and 29 led to fatalities. Source: Department for Transport. According to ROSPA, more deaths occur on rural roads than on urban ones. In 2010, there were 1,046 fatal accidents on rural roads compared to over 572 on urban roads

The geography of Peckforton poses several difficulties for vulnerable users. On the two lanes in question, there are many blind bends, concealed entrances/exits, in many places the roads are reduced to single track often without a verge. Both lanes have concealed hedge entrances from Council approved pathways leading off the many countryside walks in the area. There are examples of footpaths joining the lanes by way of a stile, which means that sometimes pedestrians are climbing down the stile directly into the roadway. This coupled with the pattern of road users, including large agricultural vehicles, gives rise to a hazardous situation.

- Demographic change in the village (more children)
- Visitor numbers increased 5-fold since English Heritage took over Beeston Castle and since the publicity surrounding Sandstone Trail (on the BBC etc)

Highway Code

The following extract from the Highway Code defines Vulnerable Road Users (Paragraph 204 and 207)

The most vulnerable road users are pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, and horse riders. It is particularly important to be aware of children, older and disabled people, and learner and inexperienced drivers and riders.

Particularly vulnerable pedestrians. These include: children and older pedestrians who may not be able to judge your speed and could step into the road in front of you. At 40 mph (64 km/h) your vehicle will probably kill any pedestrians it hits. At 20 mph (32 km/h) there is only a 1 in 20 chance of the pedestrian being killed. So, kill your speed.

Older pedestrians who may need more time to cross the road. Be patient and allow them to cross in their own time. Do not hurry them by revving your engine or edging forward.

People with disabilities. People with hearing impairments may not be aware of your vehicle approaching. Those with walking difficulties require more time

Blind or partially sighted people, who may be carrying a white cane using a guide dog. They may not be able to see you approaching

Deafblind people who may be carrying a white cane with a red band or using a dog with a red and white harness. They may not see or hear instructions or signals.

Information regarding Peckforton Village on Vulnerable Users

In 2019 Peckforton had an estimated population of 306, with a high proportion of residents classed as vulnerable, an increased number of children and a large number of vulnerable pedestrian road users. The village is a scenic rural community on the Sandstone Trail that has just two key roads (Stonehouse Lane and Peckforton Hall Lane). The road function is predominantly local access and recreational use for the Sandstone Trail and Peckforton and Beeston Castles, as well as the residents of Peckforton going about their daily business.

Two castles are open to visitors. We asked the owner of Peckforton Castle, Matthew Naylor the following question:

“How many people per year would visit Peckforton Castle? Taking into consideration the 60 MPH, large vehicles and road geometry hazards?” His reply was:

Footfall - staff and visitors – 1500 per week

Cars - staff and visitors – 600 per week

Deliveries – 100 per week

Walkers – 50 per week visiting Peckforton Castle

Land Rover Experience – included above.

Events - Christmas markets, Weddings, Murder Mystery Dinners, Corporate events, Spa Days, etc. – included in the above 1500 per week.

Many of the visitors would be unfamiliar with the area and the road layout.

Peckforton’s Pedestrians

- No safe crossings.
- No road markings.
- Village Hall – Used by Beeston and Peckforton residents and Parish Meetings. It is also used for: Polling Station, Children’s Birthday parties, Adult Functions, Yoga classes, Quiz nights and other social events, Annual cycling/running races.
- Pedestrians are often forced to walk through the roads in groups because of the layout of the road.
- Houses are road facing listed buildings – a quarter of the houses are Listed and ‘model houses’ with no curb in front etc.
- Children – travelling to school by bus and to the local nursery, they are not able to ride their bikes as the traffic is too fast. The demographic in Peckforton has changed in the last decade with a younger population and increased number of children living in the village as well as visiting family.
- Several near misses, in particular those with children and dog walkers.
- Parents don’t feel able to walk with prams along either Stonehouse Lane or Peckforton Hall Lane.
- Children – attending the outward-bound school on Stonehouse Lane frequently walk around the area as part of the educational experience including night-time torch lit walks. They are often inexperienced in the use (and risks) of rural roads, where heavy agriculture and tourism take place. During term time approximately 2 schools per week visit the Outward-Bound Centre staying 2 nights.

- Walkers (Sandstone Ridge Trust.Org* states 1million + visitors annually) - many come to Peckforton when visiting Peckforton and Beeston Castles, since Covid-19 we have seen an increase in the number of visitors of all ages and abilities, some with no experience of rural lanes or the geography.
- Dog walkers – some local residents resort to driving their dogs to an area nearby where they can walk their dogs safely.
- Older Residents – many of the older residents feel they are trapped in their homes due to the speed of traffic and that in many places the verge is not present and/or usable.
- Young adults – groups of young people taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, often concentrating more on the maps and their friends rather than the road.

Peckforton's Cyclists

- Cyclists - Peckforton is on the designated Cheshire Cycle Routes. It is picked up by the Google Apps and other Apps targeted at cyclists and attracts significant numbers of groups of cyclists
- Children from local villages come to learn to ride
- British cycling team train locally
- Triathlons are regularly conducted through the village
- Cycling increased over lock down by both adults and children now deemed too dangerous by many

Peckforton's Motorcyclists

- Large number of motorbike and vintage bike enthusiasts are attracted by rallies and group events
- Electric bikes
- Quad bikes

Peckforton's Horse riders

- Horse riding on the two lanes is popular, bridle paths cross the roads, there are also horse-riding lessons for novice riders.
- Several reputable horse-riding schools in the area.
- Family ride days ran by the Cheshire Hunt.
- The Hunt itself
- International horse trials held locally

There are unofficial reports of horses rearing and riders being thrown off due to the alarm of speeding vehicles.

* <https://www.sandstoneridge.org.uk/about-sandstone-ridge-trust/sandstone-ridge-in-numbers.html>

Cheshire East Mandate

From the Cheshire East Website**:

Cheshire East announce they are an active member of the Cheshire Road Safety Group, designing safer roads-

“We are an active member of the Cheshire Road Safety Group.

Designing safer roads

We have an ongoing programme of engineering work to make roads safer.

Our goals are to:

- ¶ minimise injuries and deaths on the road.*
- ¶ tackle road safety issues that affect the quality of life in our communities.*
- ¶ create environments that are more sympathetic to the needs of vulnerable road users”.*
- ¶ Cheshire East, say they promote road safety issues that affect our “Quality of Life” –*
- ¶ The Dark Skies policy which means that there is no street lighting, this is particularly noticeable in the darker mornings and evenings.*
- ¶ Traffic noise pollution affects the peace and tranquillity and hence our “Quality of Life”.*
- ¶ Peckforton is home to a diverse wildlife population – there are several endangered or protected species such as hares, newts, badgers, we also have the pheasants and ducks that are popular with visitors.*
- ¶ “The government expects local authorities to make significant changes to their road layouts to give more space to cyclists and pedestrians. Such changes will help embed altered behaviours and demonstrate the positive effects of active travel. I’m pleased to see that many authorities have already begun to do this, and I urge you all to consider how you can begin to make use of the tools in this guidance, to make sure you do what is necessary to ensure transport networks support recovery from the COVID-19 emergency and provide a lasting legacy of greener, safer transport.”*

Grant Shapps - Secretary of State for Transport

Suzie Akers Smith, Cheshire East Council’s cycling and walking champion, has welcomed the Cheshire East’s approval of ‘the principle of introducing 20mph speed restrictions, where appropriate’. 20mph speed limits will be included in the council’s 2021 speed management strategy.

“A review of the Speed Management Strategy will also enable Cheshire East Council to reduce national speed limits on country road where there are often horse riders and walkers.

“In Congleton only [recently] a tragic collision where a vehicle was travelling too fast for the road, but wasn’t breaking the speed limit, meant a horse has died, and the rider will most likely be traumatised from this experience.

“Reducing speeds on country roads where 60mph is not appropriate will make [it] safer for walkers as well as horse rider

***https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/142/pdfs/ukxiem_20150142_en.pdf*

Impact – Residents Statements

A questionnaire was sent to all Peckforton residents regarding road safety in May 2021. Their responses (see Appendix for some verbatim comments) are clear evidence of the impact on their quality of life, physical and mental wellbeing.

Some example quotes from the responses to the questionnaire (full responses are included in the Appendix):

“I started cycling during lockdown which I very much enjoyed, now I am **too scared** to cycle through the village due to **frightening experiences of speeding vehicles.**”

“When walking along the roads which are narrow and have bends limiting visibility, I have on several occasions **had to move rapidly into the verge or hedgerow to avoid cars and vans** as they speed.”

“Cars did not slow down at all as they passed very close to me. This **make me nervous to go out walking** as there is no alternative route with a footpath through much of the village.”

“A speed limit of 20 or 30 mph should be applied to ensure our safety and enable myself and others to **walk and cycle through the village without fear.**”

“The speed at which traffic travels along Stonehouse Lane has consistently been a concern. In the absence of footpaths, I choose not to walk along the road as I consider it to be **too dangerous.**”

“We have 3 young children (1, 3 and 6) and we were **instantly petrified** by the driving we witness and the potential for an accident. We feel it can only be a matter of time before there is, sadly a very serious incident. We have been forced **to limit the activities** we'd like to involve the children in (e.g., walking to collect milk from the farm, cycling), as have had just too many near misses.”

“Waiting for the school bus. Every day our eldest gets picked up by the school bus. One morning we were waiting on our driveway and **a car swung onto the driveway at high speed** to avoid an oncoming vehicle - effectively using the first 2m of our driveway to widen the road and drive on at speed (rather than stopping, pulling over and waiting). This car **was less than 1m from hitting C.... and S.....** - who were standing on the driveway - at ~40mph.”

“Cycling with children with the current speed limit is just too dangerous. Numerous experiences of our eldest daughter (6 years old) being **forced off the road** and off her bike as a result (similar to trying to walk, there just isn't the space to accommodate passing traffic and walkers/cyclists safely. And the current 60mph speed limit gives very little time for drivers and walkers/cyclists to react safely.”

“**Two incidents of children almost knocked off bikes** – once turning into Quarry Bank, another when pulling out to avoid a puddle on Stonehouse Lane. Both, due to car's speed unable to slow down.”

2. Evidence - Road Function

The two roads running through the village, not only serve the local householders, but they also serve a wide range of other users. There is a daily public bus and private school bus service. There is the daily milk lorry collection from the farms in the village. There are cows crossing twice a day. There are the silage vehicles (vehicles 2.5m wide, making it impossible to pass without a passing place and capable of travelling over 30mph) so the potential for a collision with a car on the blind bends is high) as well as all the other large agricultural operations. There are the effluent contractors for the farms. There are the commuters working at the Hotel as well as the many tourists using the facilities of the Hotel and the walkers using the Sandstone Trail. The roads have not been designed to take this traffic and cannot be altered - they can however have some restrictions in place to steady this stream.

And as can be seen from the photographs appended. Both function and geometry cases are supported by the skid marks in two places by the HGV or agricultural vehicle on Stonehouse Lane only a matter of a hundred yards apart from each other. There is no record of the outcome of these two incidents but in construction and other forms of industry nationwide, 'near miss reporting and awareness of incident or their likelihood of occurrence form a critical part in preparing risk assessments, and the hazard analysis and preventative measures to put in place to prevent accidents happening'.

Impact on Residents

- Prevent parking on Peckforton Hall Lane between the barns and farm in the 'passing space'. People leave their cars in this space as a place to head out for a walk. This creates a dangerous environment due to traffic unable to pass safely especially when a tractor is oncoming. There has been an incident (unreported) where 2 cars were parked in this bay and a car encountered an oncoming silage vehicle with trailer and any passing was impossible. The silage vehicle was unable to reverse due to the trailer therefore forced the car to reverse rounding a blind corner and using the barn entrance (private road) as a safe passing place.
- Many residents are unwilling to drive down Stonehouse Lane due to the dangerous nature of the narrow lane and other speeding drivers.
- Residents are more likely to drive their children to a safe environment to go for a walk than walk from their front door on Peckforton Hall Lane & Stonehouse Lane due to the dangerous nature of the roads and the drivers on them.
- It is frightening for people with prams, young children, puppies/dogs to walk on these roads with no pavement. The traffic is so fast that pedestrians are being forced to jump onto the verge to avoid serious incidents. Residents take their lives into their own hands every time they use the road as a pedestrian. It has been noted that some residents with young children have stopped walking on Peckforton Hall Lane due to the fear of a serious incident.
- Given Covid 19, there are significantly more delivery vans and lorries on the roads driven by people under pressure to hit targets. These drivers are causing havoc to local residents and causing fear for pedestrians who wish to use the roads to walk on.

- As of 14th June 2021, it has been noted that there was an **18-metre skid mark on Stonehouse Lane** (see photos attached) from an LGV. This is classed as another 'near miss' as this person was obviously avoiding an oncoming collision. There are many other skid marks seen on a daily basis along Stonehouse Lane & Peckforton Hall Lane that reflect these 'near misses.
- There are elderly residents who now do not leave their homes by foot due to the fear of speeding traffic along these country roads. To simply walk to the post box on Quarry bank has become a hazard. They are in fear of getting into their cars for the same reason which in turn is leaving these vulnerable people isolated and lonely and at risk of mental health issues.

3. Evidence - Road Geometry and Engineering

Peckforton Hall Lane and Stonehouse Lane have sections of their carriageway that narrow to 2.5m. At their widest they are 4m. Due to the speed limit of 60mph, local residents are often faced with unfamiliar users travelling too fast and/ or causing vehicles to take evasive action to avoid a collision. The edges of these two roads consist of some high-sided verges, sandstone walls that are partially hidden with foliage, broken road edges and private driveways that have to be used as passing places. Incidents of vehicle roll over have been seen on Peckforton Hall Lane and burst tyres and damaged alloys have been seen on Stonehouse Lane.

Residents have seen numerous 'knock for knock' collisions. There are many pinch points and blind bends throughout the village adding to the hazards. Many residents prefer not to use Stonehouse Lane because of the dangers, preferring instead to travel down to the A49 and round to the Wrexham Road, increasing mileage and adding to environmental poor practice.

The list of issues reported by residents are detailed below:

- 60 mph – too fast
- Blind bends
- Large sections with no verge
- Sections narrow to single track
- Sat Nav is unreliable
- Road surface poorly maintained but also often covered in debris associated with fallen branches and from agricultural vehicles and livestock using the roads.
- Wildlife - badger runs, 29,500 pheasants, nesting ducks and birds of prey etc.
- Concealed entrances
- Variety of road users - agricultural vehicles, livestock, cars, high performance cars, caravans, HGVS, forestry trucks, commercial vehicles, traction engines, horses, ponies, children, cyclist, motorcyclist, historic car enthusiasts, the Hunt, school parties, disabled, people completing physiotherapy, furthest point from emergency vehicles, most isolated village in Cheshire, quad bikes, triathlon route
- Limited road signage
- Very few passing places
- Hedges and grass cannot be trimmed during spring (because of nesting birds) this impacts on usability of verges and limits sights in places for drivers
- Two castles / wildlife – drivers often distracted tourists. Often drivers positioning on the road is unpredictable.

- Large areas of standing water/ flooding issues
- No street lights
- No markings on road to denote lanes or show the edge of the road.
- Limited public transport- one bus a day
- Children learning to ride bikes
- Learner horse riders
- No safe crossing points
- Large agricultural vehicles (up to 31 tonnes)
- Livestock – cattle regularly cross the road for milking
- Common for livestock (bullocks, cows, sheep, horses, dogs to escape.
- The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (as amended) *** tractors should be travelling no more than 25mph. In March 2015, the maximum combination weight of a tractor and single trailer increased from 24.39t to 31t. High spec tractors such as a JCB Fastrac and Mercedes Unimog, can travel up to 40mph. Huge disparity in speed and agility with other road users. Can drive from 16 years old. Lack of circuitous off-road routes necessitating use of highways –dairy-farming, there is a dearth of ‘joined-up’ routes, so countryside access is not possible without venturing onto the highway.

***https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/highways_and_roads/road-safety/road-safety.aspx

4. Evidence - The History of Collisions

The below instances give an indication of the known documented or witnessed incidents that have occurred within the last few years on Peckforton Hall Lane and Stonehouse lane.

It is important to note that many incidents go unrecorded and so the actual number of incidents is expected to be higher than that documented below.

Examples include small collisions i.e., wing mirrors and near misses with pedestrians and vehicles. As per the HSE guidance on near misses (see “[HSE/Guidance/Topics/The health and safety toolbox: How to control risks/How to manage health and safety/Accidents and investigations](#))

“A near miss is an event not causing harm, but has the potential to cause injury or ill health (in this guidance, the term near miss will include dangerous occurrences”

- Stonehouse Lane, approx 300m south of Stonehouse lane to Peckforton Hall Lane junction, collision involving 2 vehicles and 1 casualty.
- Peckforton Hall Lane, collision involving 2 vehicles no casualties.
- Peckforton hall Lane, small collision involving 2 vehicles no casualties.
- Peckforton Castle Drive to Stonehouse Lane, junction collision involving 2 vehicles with 2 casualties.
- Stonehouse Lane close to Horsley Lane Incident involving 1 vehicle overturned.
- Stonehouse Lane 200m north of Hill Lane, near miss with articulated vehicle and pedestrians including children.
- Peckforton Hall Lane 2 vehicles near miss.
- Stonehouse Lane to 100m South of Quarry bank, slight collision involving 2 vehicles.
- Peckforton Hall Lane, collision involving 3 cars, subsequent road closure.

- Peckforton Hall Lane incident involving 1 vehicle overturned.
- Peckforton Hall Lane 50m to junction of Stonehouse lane incident involving 1 vehicle roll into hedge row.
- Stonehouse Lane collision involving 1 vehicle with historic sandstone walls.
- Peckforton Hall Lane collision involving 1 vehicle destroying wall.
- Stonehouse Lane corner on Horsely Lane, near miss with 2 vehicles, vehicle slid across lane path of oncoming vehicle.
- Stonehouse Lane near forestry cottages innocent involving cyclist and vehicle, cyclist collided with hedge row.
- Stonehouse Lane 25m from Hill Lane near miss 1 vehicle and 1 horse and rider

5. Evidence - Existing Mean Traffic Speed

Peckforton consists of two main roads, Peckforton Hall Lane which connects from A49 to the other main lane Stonehouse Lane. This connects with A453 and the A49 via Beeston. Both these lanes are used as 'cut-through's' to shortcut from A453 and A49 in both directions causing unnecessary heavy traffic at commuter times. Both A453 and A49 have varying speed limits between 30, 40 and 50 mph while the lanes have 60 mph. This seems entirely wrong. How can vehicles be allowed to travel faster on lanes that are down to single track width in places than on A roads?

Department of Transport Circular 01/2013 says the national speed limit is only appropriate for the best quality unclassified roads; this is certainly not true of Peckforton. The allowed speed is a danger to the residents, users such as cyclists and walkers. The circular states 30 mph should be the norm through villages. There are 30 mph limits on A49, while the development and layout bordering the lanes may not be of density seen in many villages this does not lessen the number of vulnerable users or the danger they are in.

High level findings:

- Current speed limit 60mph
- Speed of vehicles increases during commuter times
- Speed limits in adjoining villages encourages excessive speed in de-restricted Peckforton
- High level findings road geometry and function
- Narrow roads result in single lane use for majority of length
- Used as a cut-through from A-roads
- Lack of separation between vehicles and vulnerable road users.

Speed Assessment of Vehicles

It is understood that two speed assessments have taken place in Peckforton undertaken by Cheshire East Highways, one in 2015 and again in 2018 – results have only been made available for the 2015 survey. *Copies of the 2018 findings would be appreciated.*

Cheshire East Highways carried out a speed analysis in Peckforton in 2015, this was only done at 2 locations, thereby missing a large volume of traffic heading for one of the key visitor attractions, Peckforton Castle. It is felt that a third recording should have been placed on Stonehouse Lane before the staff entrance to Peckforton Castle.

The date of the survey is not provided – this is critical as the road usage is seasonal/cyclical.

Agricultural contractors are used on a "as required" contractual basis, visitor numbers are greater in summer and also increase at holiday periods. This could also raise the issue of the length of the

survey in that a survey over a longer period would provide a larger sample and greater accuracy of data.

Since the 2015 survey was carried out, the number of visitors has increased due to increased publicity regarding the Sandstone Trail, Peckforton Castle and we understand that visitors to Beeston Castle have increased 5 fold since English Heritage took over management. In that time vehicles have increased in size and are much faster. Since the 2015 speed survey, shopping on the internet has matured which has increased the number of delivery vans, many of which are trying to meet delivery targets.

More traffic controls have been put in place on the A49 and A543 meaning that traffic uses Stonehouse Lane as a short cut.

The recent reduction of speed within Spurstow and Beeston means that a National Speed Limit sign is put up just before the entrance to Peckforton, which many drivers see as an invitation to accelerate without consideration of the road conditions or geometry etc, the fact that the National Speed limit sign is there they see as saying "it must be safe".

There are a number of ongoing projects which will increase the number of visitors to Peckforton,

- The shortlisting of Peckforton for AONB status.
- The numerous house building projects creating lots of new homes for new residents.
- The potential opening of the Beeston Railway Station allowing visitor access from further afield and to greater numbers.

6. The road environment including level of roadside development

To the non-expert writers of this report, roadside development is not a particular issue, although it should be noted that a small number of frontages of houses lead directly onto the carriageway.

7. 'Quiet Lanes'

In 2006 Cheshire County Council committed to a "Quiet Lanes" pilot in Peckforton – residents of Peckforton would like to know what happened?

Ref: https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/quiet_lanes_1.pdf

An introduction to Quiet Lanes - as per the CPRE's Guide to Quiet Lanes

Speeding traffic is a huge problem in villages and along country lanes, and is set to get worse as traffic levels continue to rise. CPRE has long campaigned to protect country lanes from the adverse effects of intimidating traffic. Through our Safer Country Lanes campaign, we have helped secure an important way to tackle the problem by designating Quiet Lanes. Under the Transport Act 2000, local authorities are able to designate roads for which they are responsible as Quiet Lanes. CPRE is one of the leading organisations promoting the concept of Quiet Lanes, as part of a wider strategy to promote environmentally sustainable transport and lower speed limits on country lanes and through villages.¹

8. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Peckforton, as part of the Sandstone Ridge, has been shortlisted for designation of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in June 2021. (See e-mail below).

Traffic travelling at 60 MPH through Peckforton is at odds with the AONB.

From: info@sandstoneridge.org.uk

Date: 23 June 2021 at 23:53:33 BST

To: council@frodsham.gov.uk

Subject: Cheshire Sandstone Ridge: Candidate Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Dear Sandstone Ridge Parish/Town Council

I am delighted to announce that the Cheshire Sandstone Ridge has been shortlisted for AONB designation.

Without doubt, this is a watershed moment in seeking to 'Conserve, Connect and Inspire' current and future generations in understanding and caring for this unique landscape and its diverse habitats. Having reached this stage of the rigorous designation process is a proud moment indeed and is testimony to the hard work of our many stakeholders and partners.

There will be much work ahead as we continue to demonstrate political and public engagement for this exciting initiative.

As a Parish/Town which lies within the Sandstone Ridge boundary, I trust that I can rely on your support and the communities that you represent.

Attached are both the national and regional Press Releases.

With best wishes,

Andrew

Before proposing that an area is designated as an AONB it must meet the "natural beauty criterion"

- landscape quality, where natural or man-made landscape is good quality
- scenic quality, such as striking coastal landforms
- relative wildness, such as distance from housing or having few roads
- relative tranquillity, where natural sounds, such as streams or birdsong are predominant
- natural heritage features, such as distinctive geology or species and habitat
- cultural heritage, which can include the built environment that makes the area unique, such as archaeological remains or historic parkland

Traffic travelling at 60 MPH through Peckforton is at odds with the AONB.

Appendix 1: Village Resident Testimonies Spring 2021

Letters from residents of Peckforton - for the purpose of hearing the voice of our community

Community Letter

The Peckforton residents were asked in a letter to comment on the speeding issues on the lanes:

Dear Residents,

The Peckforton Parish sub- group have been challenged with the development of a presentation on reviewing the Speed Limit, currently set at 60 miles per hour through Peckforton in preparation for a meeting with Highways in June.

Along with other statistics and data gathering activities, we thought it would be helpful to ask as many residents as possible in Peckforton for their thoughts and experiences of the safety issues we face on our roads.

We are aware of the large amount of footfall in Peckforton by Sandstone Trail Walkers, cyclists, visitors to the outdoor centre and two castles (Beeston and Peckforton Castles)

We are also aware of the nature and animal life that we are keen to protect, uphold and maintain in the area.

We would be grateful if you would share any stories or experiences of any health and safety risks you may have had or witnessed on our roads.

Please can you describe it for us below? We thank you for your contribution and would ask you too either:

E mail to amanda@b2bppm.com or drop it off to the Peckforton & Beeston Hall. Thank you.

We would appreciate replies before the end of May so we can collate all responses prior to our meeting with Highways.

Speeding Group Peckforton gathered the resident's feedback - Common Themes (in order of priority of concern):

1. 60 mph on Stonehouse Lane and Peckforton Hall Lane being too fast.
2. Pedestrian and Vehicle Traffic – Tourist attraction and cut through roads – sheer volume of traffic.
3. Danger to residents, near misses and fear amongst the older and families with younger children.
4. Why has all other surrounding villages got speed controls and ours doesn't, and in most cases has the most risks?

Detail

60 miles per hour on both lanes is unsafe due to:

- It's narrowing on parts of the roads down to single lane traffic.
- It's pothole issues.
- It's receding widths due to water damage.
- It's lack of paved and marked verges.
- Commuting Traffic driving faster, using it as a cut through to avoid other speed camera roads.
- Un familiar visitors who do not know the layout of the lanes.

Pedestrian Traffic

- The two lanes, in particular Stonehouse Lane is home and is part of the Sandstone trail walkers, Cheshire cycling route, Peckforton Castle, and is a scenic walking route to view the village attractions like the Elephant and Castle, village memorials and the Village Parish Hall.
- Peckforton Castle has 1,500 people passing through the Hotel per week, that is a lot of traffic.
- Many walkers that visit have dogs and children and tend to travel in groups, some visitors are busloads of children up to 30 at a time walking in groups.
- Cyclists ride in groups trying to avoid potholes and cars and pedestrian walkers, and tend to ride in the middle of the road.
- Visitors in cars tend to park on side grass verges wherever they can, also creating a hazard for car travellers unknowingly, as the lanes are already narrow for two cars to pass on parts of them.

Danger to residents, near misses and fear amongst the older and families with younger children.

- There is a bus stop on Stonehouse Lane, not signed, and some children are picked up by school coaches to get to and from school, this is also a hazard given the speed of the traffic, causing some parents to not allow their children to use these facilities and older members of the village are deterred from standing at such a bus stop.
- A young family living on Peckforton Hall Lane were used to taking their children on their bikes to collect milk from the farm, unfortunately they have had to stop doing that as it is too dangerous for them owing to the speed of traffic, even going out of their driveway has become a hazard as cars swerve into it at high speeds trying to dodge oncoming traffic
- Wildlife is at risk, ducks and other birds have been reported to have been run over by fast speeding cars

- One reported overturned vehicles, smashed wing mirrors and scratched cars are a regular occurrence, however they do not appear to be on the police accident register.
- Older residents, especially during the Covid pandemic have felt more isolated as they are afraid to walk in the lanes due to speeding traffic.

Why has all other surrounding villages got speed controls and ours doesn't, and in most cases has the most risks?

- Beeston area on Stonehouse Lane has recently been awarded 30 and 40 miles per hour speed limits. It is the continuation of the road, why not the rest of the Lane?
- Spurstow, Houghton and other lanes and roads surrounding us have 20 -40 mile an hour speed limits, and in some cases less traffic and less tourism.
- The "reduce speed" red sign and often the bend sign between Spurstow and Peckforton are constantly obscured by vegetation.

**Please see below the individual written responses from residents.
Names removed and initialled only.**

C&P

Having recently moved to Peckforton (2019), we have been deeply concerned about the speed of traffic using Stonehouse Lane, particularly where the road comes downhill to an unmarked sharp right hand bend and where the junction has slower traffic joining Stonehouse Lane from Horsley Lane, quite often blind due to vehicles in the junction.

Coming the other direction, traffic from Beeston arrives at the unmarked sharp left-hand bend which tends to move the vehicle across the road and potentially into any oncoming traffic. When walkers, cyclists, horse-riders are all thrown into this mix it is a highly dangerous situation. The Police have been contacted and recorded our concerns (Currently we are waiting to hear the result of the safety review of the Stonehouse Lane/Horsley Lane junction carried out by Cheshire East Highways.)

As the first house in Peckforton across the border from Beeston, we learnt of the attempt to get the speed limit reduced by both Parish Councils, we offered our support and wrote to Cheshire East with no success, and felt strongly enough to contact our then MP Antoinette Sandbach as we wanted to try and obtain a common approach across the two councils, this was unsuccessful for Peckforton, as the speed limit remains at 60 MPH throughout Peckforton, but Beeston were successful in reducing the speed to 30/40 MPH from 60 MPH.

This means that when the new signs for the National Speed limit are installed to show the end of the speed restriction in Beeston road users will feel that it is safe to accelerate when in fact the site will be unmanaged and dangerous.

We still feel strongly about the safety of residents and visitors in Peckforton that we have joined the Speeding Steering Group.

Personal Experiences

Children – we have had to block off our gate onto Stonehouse Lane as there is no verge and cars come at speed – we have had several near misses with our Grandson (6 years old) and cars travelling at speed and also with parked cars forcing pedestrians onto the highway. Visitors walking can often be heard shouting at children to “keep in” as cars are coming at speed, the panic can be heard in the parents’ voices. There are no verges or safe passage for walkers. This can also be seen further up Stonehouse Lane where several footpaths cross or join the lane, the walkers congregate on the highway many of which are vulnerable.

There is a further consequence in that children cannot walk to see their friends in the area.

Our Grandson would like to catch the school bus to Bunbury but other parents have voiced concerns regarding safety of children waiting for the bus with the current speed limit of 60 MPH.

Walking – Whilst walking in Peckforton we are constantly having to take evasive action to avoid traffic, often travelling at speed, this means clambering up a steep verge or in the absence of the verge, standing in the road.

There have been incidents of road rage, where vehicles have left the carriageway at speed to park in the wide junction at Horsley Lane, drivers ignoring the pedestrians and on a couple of occasions we were tending to the sandstone wall and the Beech hedge, these have been reported to the Police.

Cycling – we as a multi-generation family would like to take the opportunity to cycle but we do not feel that the roads in Peckforton are safe enough, especially for a 6 year old and other vulnerable road users, this means that we are relying on cars more than necessary.

There have been several accidents that have occurred but have not been reported, the evidence is there to be seen, there is a gap in the metal highways safety fencing on the bend caused by a car leaving the road, there are numerous pieces of cars in the hedge where cars have left the road. A young woman turned her car over at the boundary of Beeston and Peckforton, it appeared she had taken the bend too fast, she was unhurt and did not report the accident.

We have encountered numerous incidents on Peckforton Hall Lane where cars have been travelling too fast for the narrow lane quite often they seem surprised to meet another vehicle coming the other way.

J&A

Impact on Residents

- Prevent parking on Peckforton Hall Lane between the barns and farm in the ‘passing space’. People leave their cars in this space as a place to head out for a walk. This creates a dangerous environment due to traffic unable to pass safely especially when a tractor is oncoming. There has been an incident (unreported) where 2 cars were parked in this bay and a car encountered an oncoming silage vehicle with trailer and any passing was impossible. The silage vehicle was unable to reverse due to the trailer therefore forced the car to reverse rounding a blind corner and using the barn entrance (private road) as a safe passing place.
- Residents are unwilling to drive down Stonehouse Lane due to the dangerous nature of the narrow lane and other speeding drivers.
- Residents are more likely to drive their children to a safe environment to go for a walk than walk from their front door on Peckforton Hall Lane & Stonehouse Lane due to the dangerous nature of the roads and the drivers on them.

- It is frightening for people with prams, young children, puppies/dogs to walk on these roads with no pavement. The traffic is so fast that pedestrians are being forced to jump onto the verge to avoid serious incident. Residents take their lives into their hands every time they use the road as a pedestrian. It has been noted that some residents with young children have stopped walking on Peckforton Hall Lane due to the fear of a serious incident.
- There are many more delivery drivers on the roads driven by people under pressure to hit targets. These drivers are causing havoc to local residents and causing fear for pedestrians who wish to use the roads to walk on.
- As at 14th June 2021 it has been noted that there was an 18 metre skid mark on Stonehouse Lane (see photos attached) from an LGV. This is classed as another 'near miss' as this person was obviously avoiding an oncoming collision. There are many other skid marks seen on a daily basis along Stonehouse Lane & Peckforton Hall Lane that reflect these 'near misses'.
- There are elderly residents who now do not leave their homes by foot due to the fear of speeding traffic along these country roads. To simply walk to a post box has become a hazard. They are in fear of getting into their cars for the same reason which in turn is leaving these vulnerable people isolated and lonely and at risk of mental health issues.

Resident No 6

- Two incidents of children almost knocked off bikes – once turning into Quarry Bank, another when pulling out to avoid a puddle on Stonehouse Lane. Both, due to car's speed unable to slow down.
- Be useful to have signs as road narrows before entrance to Hill Lane, and the way out of the village – to advise irregular commuters/users it tightens (on Stonehouse Lane)

Resident No 4

- Speed and quality of the roads
- Road closures have increased traffic cutting through the area. They are not aware of hazards and how the road narrows. If you meet a vehicle as a driver you are forced to the side or verges where there are huge numbers of potholes. In over 40 years of driving, we have never seen roads of such poor quality. Cheshire East is failing its residents. We have had to spend money on getting our vehicles repaired (4 coil springs £600.00)
- Speed restrictions would (hopefully) make everyone who uses the roads drive to the conditions, and allow more time for other drivers, farm vehicles and pedestrians and animals.
- It is ridiculous to have a 60 mph through a village with adjoining roads.
- Lockdown has encouraged more delivery drivers using the area who work to a time schedule- so they rush and force people onto verges and it becomes increasingly dangerous. We have had a number of near misses! I now have a dashcam to record poor driving and would report it.
- The quality of the roads and an excessive speed limit makes cycling a real hazard. Cheshire East is failing its cyclists. Cyclists are forced to ride in the centre of the road as they could have serious accidents navigating the potholes. We are supposed to be encouraging cyclists and green modes of transport. It is promoted from Government and local authorities. Cheshire East is failing – making it too dangerous for many. It is not acceptable.

T&J

- Stonehouse Lane is used as a 'rat run' since Spurstow gained extra speed cameras. It is very busy early morning and late afternoon.
- The road is not wide enough to pass in several places. Someone has to give way to drivers, and drivers do not want to do this.
- Peckforton is considered to be a prestigious area, and is a conservation area, but has not speed limit.
- Peckforton is a farming area and consequently we constantly have large agricultural vehicles on the narrow roads.
- On many occasions I have experienced drivers nearly knocking me over and having to jump onto verges as cars fail to slow down.
- Just last week I witnessed my neighbour nearly being hit by a tractor, forcing him and his family to reverse their car over 100m because the tractor would not give way.
- Cyclists come through the village in many numbers only using the good bits of the road. They do not follow the Highway Code.
- The roads are in a terrible condition, and we get floods in many areas.
- When contractors come to the village to work, they park anywhere causing construction.
- We have lots of visitors to Peckforton who will park anywhere causing havoc.
- We are aware of instances where these parked cars have their wing mirrors damaged by other passing vehicles driving too fast and without care.

Resident No 2

I have come across crashed cars on Stonehouse Lane, there are areas of road where two cars cannot pass safely and therefore 60 mph is too much. I may say that I am against restriction speed limits where roads are safe, but it is obvious 60 mph is too much for a narrow lane!

GAF

I am amazed to read at the top of this page of the speed limit of 60 mph which I think is far too high with the amount of walkers, horse riders, cyclists, plus the state of the road. There are no pavements to walk on and sides of the road are really rough pot-holes. I only drive when I have to, and I go to the side when I have to. Plus, people tend to park anywhere in the nice weather. I think 40 miles per hour is fast enough, especially through the village of Peckforton.

Resident of Peckforton No1

My experience of driving around the lanes of Peckforton often highlight many areas of concern, especially in view of the existing 60 mph limit. Not only is the condition of the road surface, along with flooding issues, there are many places where blind bends and narrowing of the lane exists. This coupled with increased usage from walkers, cyclists (riding two abreast) highlights the danger which express themselves. The consideration of halving the existing limit would be a great benefit to both road users, and our wildlife.

P&G

- I almost collided with a car at the very narrow neck of Stonehouse Lane just past Stonehouse Farm. It is almost a blind bend and only wide enough for one car, and cars travel fast through this gap.
- Many potholes in Peckforton, especially around the black and white cottage, beside the post box.

CB

Living in the grounds of Peckforton Castle our major concern relates to the castle entrance where visibility is restricted (particularly when turning right out of the gates). Stonehouse Lane is quite straight here allowing traffic to drive at speed, making it treacherous joining the road. A couple of years ago I was hit by a car as I turned right, unable to see the vehicle which was travelling at great speed. I wonder if correctly positioned mirrors on the opposite side would be beneficial??

I imagine that there will have been several incidents as it is a busy junction when the hotel is in 'full swing'.

I am constantly amazed at the speed that traffic travels down the castle drive, as staff and visitors leave the castle. There are several speed bumps which have been installed by the castle owners, which successfully slow their speed as they approach the gates but it still makes walking along the castle drive (a public footpath) a dangerous occupation.

The speed at which traffic travels along Stonehouse Lane has consistently been a concern. In the absence of footpaths I choose not to walk along the road as I consider it to be too dangerous. As a driver I am regularly met with vehicles driving in the centre of the road which is not helped by the potholes and failing curb edges, in places dropping away quite severely. If the Council were to repair/maintain the road this would, I believe, go some way to improving the overall safety of the village.

I would be very welcoming of any efforts to slow the traffic down and make Peckforton a safer place for residents and visitors alike.

RR

We have been liaising with the parish council on this matter since we moved here in 2018. We have 3 young children (1, 3 and 6) and we were instantly petrified by the driving we witness and the potential for an accident. We feel it can only be a matter of time before there is, sadly a very serious incident. We have been forced to limit the activities we'd like to involve the children in (e.g., walking to collect milk from the farm, cycling), as have had just too many near misses.

At the bottom of this email, I've pasted observations already emailed to the parish council in case these haven't been passed onto you. Immediately below, please find some recent experiences from the past ~1 month only!

In summary we currently face a lethal concoction of:

- high vehicle traffic due to local attractions
- high walking & cycling traffic

- extremely poor road conditions, especially to the sides which forces all road users into the middle
- a residential environment (Peckforton hall and Stonehouse lanes have pretty much continuous houses)
- a 60mph speed limit

Recent personal experiences:

- Walking with children. 3x per week we go to collect our milk from the dairy at Manor Farm. It's the right thing to do in support of local business and sustainability (zero food miles!). This involves a 500m walk along Peckforton Hall Lane with 2 children on foot and 1 in a push chair. We have lost count as to how many times we are forced to mount verges with a pushchair in an emergency due to oncoming cars in the middle of the road (see below re potholes to the sides). It has now reached the point where we do not feel it's safe to walk with the children to collect the milk - how sad.
- Cycling. We are fortunate living within 1 mile of Bunbury. Actually it was a very strong reason we moved here - we do not like to rely on driving to/from amenities (shops, schools, leisure) as do our best to protect the environment. However, cycling with children with the current speed limit is just too dangerous. Numerous experiences of our eldest daughter (6 years old) being forced off the road and off her bike as a result (similar to trying to walk, there just isn't the space to accommodate passing traffic and walkers/cyclists safely. And the current 60mph speed limit gives very little time for drivers and walkers/cyclists to react safely. Combined with the very poor condition of the roads, particularly the 1-2m to the sides, this effectively forces all traffic and other road users into the middle of the road)
- Waiting for the school bus. Every day our eldest gets picked up by the school bus. One morning we were waiting on our driveway and a car swung onto the driveway at high speed to avoid an oncoming vehicle - effectively using the first 2m of our driveway to widen the road and drive on at speed (rather than stopping, pulling over and waiting). This car was less than 1m from hitting Chloe and Sam - who were standing on the driveway - at ~40mph.

As a result of this experience, I placed large sandstone blocks ON OUR DRIVEWAY (i.e., not public land) to stop cars from swerving in and using the driveway to effectively widen the road. These blocks have since been picked up and moved on 2 occasions (presumably by drivers who are inconvenienced by them, despite them being on our land).

- Driving. We have on 5 occasions been forced into hedgerows on Stonehouse lane (between Peckforton and Bicker ton poacher) by oncoming vehicles driving at high speed in the middle of the road. The roads (Peckforton hall lane) have numerous blind bends (e.g., at Peckforton hall farm). Very typically, the oncoming vehicle will see us too late. The instant reaction from them is to try and move to the side of the road. However, they see (often flooded) potholes and decide that's not an option. They are travelling too fast to break their speed sufficiently before meeting us so there is no option but for us to take emergency action and mount the verge into the hedgerow!

Previous observations

- Heavy farm traffic means road quality is poor particularly alongside verges where there's a continuous stream of large and often flooded potholes. This forces all cars into the middle of

the road. There seems to be extremely limited (if at all) assessment of potholes / road condition which very clearly need major repair.

- Stonehouse and Peckforton Halls lanes are on the "Cheshire Cycle Route" meaning high volume bike traffic. Not only does this display on cycling maps, it's also shown on google maps (which in turn lots of cycle route planning software is based off)
- There are no pavements (very few anyway). However there is very regular foot traffic between houses in the village, to the farm to collect milk and from walkers
- Peckforton and Beeston castle are both popular which generates higher traffic levels than normal country roads
- Sandstone trail access also very popular - even more so if AONB. Also increases traffic levels (relative to an average country road)
- Haughton is 40mph and has far fewer attractions to draw traffic. Clear precedent given house density very similar

Thanks for your efforts with this and please let us know if there's anything further we can do to support.

RH

I'm sure most of my thoughts are known. As regards experiences since I have lived here, I have had two wing mirrors broken and say a dozen incidents where I've had to swing on the verge to avoid people speeding coming towards the car. Of course, where I've had to mount the verge because of not being enough width in the road are too numerous to mention. Not really had any other incidents, people just stopping to turn at the last minute to the castle without signalling is quite common.

A&T

Here are our experiences from our junction of the village.

We lived on Stonehouse Lane for over twenty years and have in that time witnessed many accidents. The road through the village is very narrow and many vehicles and agricultural vehicles drive far too fast. We have always been surprised that there have been no fatalities. Now living on Hill Lane, we find it extremely dangerous emerging onto Stonehouse Lane. The visibility both ways is extremely limited, and this combined with the speed of traffic is so hazardous. There is no footpath in this vicinity adding to the problem.

I have witnessed numerous crashes within the village boundary and most of these I would put down to excessive speed.

A&J

We moved in 2 years ago and we have witnessed several accidents. One being our daughter. She had her wing mirror removed by a speeding car, who did not stop when it happened. She was forced off the road in the collision.

We frequently experience fast drivers when walking our dog and try to avoid walking on both of the lanes.

We have noticed the potholes and flooding has got worse in the two years we have been here, and nothing seems to get repaired.

Traffic seems to be at it's busiest in the morning with commuters travelling for work. The Castle has a constant trail of traffic, and during the Covid Pandemic Peckforton has been extremely busy with tourists, although we believe that this is not going to decrease.

It has been extremely nerve- racking to see these people out to enjoy their walk or bike ride with their families nearly get run over or be part of an ever- increasing risk to health and life! Just when it was the opposite reason for their visit to Peckforton in the first place.

60 miles per hour on a busy tourist road, full of wildlife and beauty should be kept that way for the public and residents to enjoy.

J&N

As residents at Peckforton Hall for the past 28 years, we have become particularly aware of potential dangers to pedestrians; specifically, those using Peckforton Hall Lane and Stonehouse Lane.

We have now been exercising regularly on these roads and it is fairly alarming at certain points for pedestrians. The increase in cycle use has increased the risk, as personal experience shown by near miss from cyclists on 2 occasions. Experience has been that cyclists can bunch and travel equal to the speed of some cars!

It is quite frightening when walking on the narrower parts of these roads that at times you are forced into the hedge!

The 'slow ' sign on Peckforton Hall Lane, about 20mtrs west of the Peckforton Hall Barns and Hall entrance has done little to encourage drivers to slow down, thus making joining at this point somewhat hazardous, (for both residents and walkers using the public footpath). In addition, there is the approach to the blind bend shortly afterwards at which there have been accidents.

It seems sensible for safety reasons, to extend the 30-mile limit from Spurstow into and including Stone House Lane.

(PS!! I am inclined to gesticulate if a car speeds by! On one or more occasion the car has reversed and argued that the speed limit is 60mph, so they are not breaking any rules!)

Appendix 2: Photographs

See slide deck provided separately.