

TRANSPORT

Background The existing situation

Bredfield is a settlement based on the roads leading to Woodbridge or Ufford from Debach and Dallinghoo. The previous dominance of agriculture meant that the roads were formed around the fields and the road pattern is still the same as it was over one hundred years ago, with numerous turns and sharp corners as the roads trace their way between fields which are bordered with hedges. The land has no obvious hills, although the stream that runs through the village means a change in elevation on some roads, but there are no 'high points' and therefore road users have deal with numerous sharp corners, which are often screened by high hedges, in a flat landscape. The existence of industrial units to the north of the village in Clopton and Debach and the depot of D J Spall (Recycling & Recovery) in Dallinghoo mean that the roads through the village are frequently occupied by Heavy Goods Vehicles. Being surrounded by arable land means farm vehicles also use the roads, and at peak times of harvest these are joined by more large vehicles. Some control is exercised over the movement of HGV's, with eastbound traffic (and hence access out to the A.12) via Bredfield being subject to an Environmental Weight Restriction of 7.5 tonnes, effectively imposing a one-way system. A bus route runs through the village, connecting with Woodbridge six times a day, and to Ipswich five times a day. To reach the local centres at Woodbridge or Ipswich it is necessary to join the A.12 which bisects the parish at its eastern edge. Apart from the A.12 all the roads only carry either a local authority 'C' classification or are unclassified. The parish has numerous footpaths and National Cycle Route 1 passes through the village.

The future: what Bredfield will look like if your Group achieves its' aim

The aim must be to improve the experience of the average road user in Bredfield who has to contend with obscured turnings, narrow roads and large vehicles. It is considered unlikely that all the bends and turns in the road can be made to disappear, but a well thought-out system of warning signs and traffic calming measures will help with these problems and also help control speeding traffic. Better hedge management can be encouraged to further alleviate the problem. It may be possible to limit and control the number and size of Heavy Goods Vehicles that transit Bredfield and further restrictions of access to large vehicles will ease the problem. Well maintained footpaths and cycle routes will continue to feature as part of the landscape. Access onto the A.12 would be easier and safer.

Methodology:

A transport and traffic survey was carried out during September 2015 with a questionnaire being issued to every house in the village. Previous Village Appraisals (1978 and 1990) and a Parish Plan (2006) also covered the topic and can serve as reference points. Reference was also made to the 2011 Census and figures from the Office of National Statistics, both made available through Suffolk Observatory.

Issues Identified:

The level of car ownership in the village has achieved almost 100%, and many with access to two or more cars, and most of the complaints and objections stem from the perceived inadequacies of the roads to meet modern needs. The surveys and appraisals over several years have regularly indicated that there are some roads and junctions which are regarded as dangerous, that speeding traffic is a problem and the existing HGV rules are being breached.

Danger spots: the latest survey indicated that the corner at Potash/Perseverance Cottages was the worst, with a ninety degree turn masked by buildings and high hedges, with the prospect of meeting a truck in the middle of the road. The junction of Woodbridge Road and Scott's Lane at the Pump was also regarded with trepidation, with another ninety degree turn masked by buildings one way being complemented by a blind bend obscured by overgrown hedges and shrubs the other way. Access onto the A.12 from Bredfield was identified as a major problem in the 2006 Parish Plan, and this continues to be a major source of concern, with the steadily increasing level of traffic on the A.12 meaning long delays for those attempting to join the southbound carriageway. However, it should be noted that accidents are uncommon – only two 'slight' road traffic accidents were recorded in the Parish during 2014.

Signs etc. – although the latest survey showed no clear result, there was concern over the standard, location and visibility of existing signs.

Bus service: The 1978 appraisal established that the rural bus service was declining in popularity and this was confirmed in the 1990 Appraisal, the 2006 Parish Plan and the survey conducted in 2015, with the majority of residents never using the bus.

Speeding traffic: this was noted at a problem in 1978, again in 1990 and 2006 and was again raised as an issue in the latest survey.

Footpaths: seem to be popular and are well used. Most people thought them well posted and maintained.

Cycles: a high proportion of villagers own bicycles, although it would appear that this is either a 'secondary' means of transport or used for leisure for most.

Hedges: many people took the opportunity to complain of overgrown hedges which obscured signs and bends, but this may be distorted by the timing of the survey. It may be an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to cut hedges where it is believed birds may be nesting between March and August – thus in September when the survey was carried out, the hedges would be tall and wide.

Supporting evidence:

Evidence came from a Transport and Traffic Survey carried out during September 2015. For this a total of 146 questionnaires were delivered, with 59 being returned a response of 40.4% which is accepted as a valid return rate.

Objectives:

It will be necessary to confirm the certain points with further questions in the Main Questionnaire, these could seek views on: improved signage; traffic calming; HGV regulation tightening and enforcement. These issues must then be raised with the relevant authorities. The problem of accessing the A.12 needs to be addressed, but how it may be solved is uncertain; one possible way may be to continue the speed restrictions which already exist at Woodbridge further north to the Bredfield / Saddlemaker's Lane turns.

FACTS AND FIGURES – from the 2011 census

96% of households in Bredfield owned a car

Mode of travel to work:

67.7% of residents used a car or van

5.1% travelled as a passenger in a car/van

3.8% walked to work

1.9% used a bicycle

1.3% used a motor cycle

1.3% the train

0.6% used a bus

Annual weekday traffic at A.12 Woods Lane roundabout:

33,962 movements noted (2014), an increase from 31,256 in 2011