

Committee:	<b>Planning Committee</b>
Date:	<b>21 July 2010</b>
Report By:	<b>Director of Transport and Environment</b>
Title of Report:	<b>Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme - objections to the Notices advertising the introduction of traffic calming features in Tilsmore Road (U7369), Ghyll Road (U7602) and Sheepsetting Lane (U7602) in Heathfield</b>
Purpose of Report:	<b>To consider the objections and representations made to the Notices advertising proposed amendments to the Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme</b>

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**RECOMMENDATION: The Planning Committee is recommended:**

- 1. not to uphold the objections to the proposed widening of the existing speed cushions associated with the Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme for the reasons set out in Section 5 of the report.**
  - 2. to uphold the objections to the proposed introduction to a new set of speed cushions outside Ghyll Rise in Ghyll Road and a two-sided pinch point with a speed cushion as a priority working feature outside Wyndley in Ghyll Road, for the reasons set out in Section 5 of the report.**
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## **Supporting Information**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme was constructed in September 2008. The scheme was identified in the Heathfield Local Area Transport Strategy (LATS) which was developed by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) in partnership with Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council, Wealden District Council and the Heathfield Regeneration Partnership. The LATS was adopted in 2004. The area covered by the scheme is shown in Figure 1.

1.2 The main objectives of the Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme were to reduce vehicle speeds, improve the safety of all road users, particularly pedestrians and make the area a less attractive route for through traffic.

### **2. Background**

2.1 The main components of the Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme introduced in 2008 were as follows:

- the introduction of a 20mph zone outside the Cross-in-Hand Primary School in Sheepsetting Lane which extends into the top end of Ghyll Road. The 20mph zone is supported by a mixture of speed cushions and build outs with signed priority working systems;
- an extension to the existing 30mph speed limit in Sheepsetting Lane to its junction with the A267;
- the introduction of four build outs each with a single speed cushion within the narrowing but without priority working in Tilsmore Road;
- the introduction of a single build out with a signed priority working system in Mill Road together with improvements to the footway; and

- the introduction of speed cushions and a build out in Ghyll Road to its junction with Tilsmore Road.

2.2 Following the introduction of the scheme, the County Council received numerous comments and complaints from local residents expressing their concern about the effectiveness of some of the traffic management features, particularly the speed cushions. In addition, specific comments were also received about the impact of the build out in the vicinity of Ghyll Rise in Ghyll Road on pedestrian safety.

2.3 During the formal consultation on the original scheme in January 2008, a number of objections were received to the Notices advertising the speed cushions in Tilsmore Road. The County Council had consulted widely throughout the development of the scheme working particularly closely with the local residents through the Tilsmore Area Residents' Representatives Working Group (TARRWG). Consideration was given to objections to the scheme and every effort made to resolve these. However, these objections were not able to be resolved and were considered by the Planning Committee in June 2008. The Planning Committee agreed that the objections should not be upheld and that the Tilsmore Road elements of the Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme be implemented as advertised. The four build outs with a single speed cushion were subsequently constructed, as advertised, in Tilsmore Road.

2.4 Following the introduction of the original scheme in 2008, local members and officers have continued to work with the Tilsmore Area Residents' Representatives Working Group to develop a number of proposed modifications to address concerns raised about the original scheme.

2.5 In order to assess the effectiveness of the traffic management scheme before and after traffic speed surveys were undertaken. The results showed that the 'before' vehicle speeds were generally acceptable for the prevailing speed limits although the speed cushions themselves have not been as effective as was anticipated. The cushions are perceived by many local people to be ineffective in controlling vehicle speeds. Additional speed surveys were undertaken in the area covered by the set of speed cushions in the 20mph zone in front of the Cross-in-Hand Primary School. The results showed that there was less than a 2mph average vehicle speed difference between speeds on the approaches to the speed cushions and those recorded at the speed cushions.

2.6 The Stage 3 Safety Audit, undertaken after the scheme had been implemented, recommended that if vehicle speeds had not reduced sufficiently then the size and/or frequency of the speed cushions should be increased. The results of the monitoring surveys showed that the 1.6 metres wide cushions had not been as effective in reducing vehicle speeds as had been anticipated. Therefore, proposals were drawn up to increase the width of all of the speed cushions associated with the Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme from 1.6 metres to a mixture of 1.7 metres and 1.8 metres wide speed cushions. The mixture of cushion widths was proposed to increase the uncertainty for drivers who would have to vary the alignment of their vehicle when passing over cushions of varying width, which should further reduce speeds.

2.7 Following the construction of the scheme, a number of local residents expressed the view that the build out in front of Ghyll Rise in Ghyll Road was having an adverse impact on pedestrian safety as all of the vehicles negotiating the build out are being positioned on the footway side of the road. However, there have been no recorded accidents at the build out outside Ghyll Rise to date.

2.8 Design guidance relating to traffic calming schemes recommends that special attention is paid to the entry points to ensure that drivers are aware that they are entering an area where speed controlling measures are in place and where conditions will be different from the surrounding network. To this end, the priority working created through the installation of the build out outside Ghyll Rise gives priority to traffic exiting the traffic calmed area. However, to address the perceived concerns about safety in the vicinity of the build out

proposals were drawn up for the possible replacement of the build out with a set of 1.7 metres wide speed cushions. In addition, to ensure that there is still an appropriate speed reducing feature on the entrance to the traffic calmed area, proposals were also drawn up for the possible introduction of a two-sided pinch point and a speed cushion as a priority working system further down Ghyll Road outside Wyndley.

### **3. Consultation**

3.1 In March 2010 ESCC consulted informally with the householders of the three properties that would be most affected by the proposed replacement of the build out with a set of speed cushions outside Ghyll Rise and the introduction of the two-sided pinch point feature with a speed cushion outside Wyndley. Responses were received from two of the properties. Both raised concerns about the suitability of the locations for the new features as well as their effectiveness in reducing vehicle speeds.

3.2 Prior to the formal advertisement of the Notices, officers met with representatives from both East Sussex Fire and Rescue and South East Ambulance Services. East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service said that they are generally in favour of any measures that contribute to reducing vehicle speeds and consequently the severity of accidents. The Tilsmore Area is not on a response route for their emergency vehicles and therefore increasing the size of the speed cushions would make little difference to their response times.

3.3 With regards to the proposed two-sided pinch point feature outside Wyndley in Ghyll Road, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service were concerned about the potential impact on turning circles for their vehicles at the junction between Tilsmore Road and Ghyll Road. However, officers were able to give assurances that the vehicle tracking has been re-checked and confirmation was given that there is sufficient space for large vehicles to turn right. South East Ambulance Service also supported the proposed amendments on the basis that it contributes to reducing vehicles speeds and consequently the severity of accidents. The Tilsmore Area is not on one of their response routes and therefore the size of the cushions would make little difference to their response times, although they generally prefer narrower speed cushions. With regards to the proposed two-sided pinch point feature outside Wyndley in Ghyll Road, South East Ambulance Service did not express any concerns about the introduction of this type of traffic calming feature in this location.

3.4 Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council have been represented at the TARRWG meetings and support the proposed amendments to the Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme. With regards to the other statutory consultees, Sussex Police, Wealden District Council and the Freight Transport and Road Haulage Associations did not object to the proposals.

3.5 A week before the formal advertisement of the Notices advertising the proposed amendments all of the residents in the Tilsmore Area were sent a letter about all the proposed amendments and how to respond to the consultation. Enclosed with the letter was a location plan showing the proposed changes outside Ghyll Rise and Wyndley together with a copy of the Notice.

3.6 The Notices were formally advertised for a 28 day period between 23 April 2010 and 21 May 2010. Seventeen letters were received during this period and three after the consultation period had ended. These are set out in Appendix A, along with an officer response to each of the points raised. Officers contacted the majority of the objectors in an attempt to resolve their objections but this was not possible.

### **4. Comments and Appraisal**

4.1 There were 12 objections stating that the speed cushions associated with the original traffic management scheme were ineffective. Nine of these objectors supported making improvements to the speed cushions; however, three stated that they thought the proposed improvements would not work. It is recommended that these objections are not upheld, as

the purpose of the proposed amendments is to increase the width of the speed cushions in order to slow down a larger proportion of vehicles.

4.2 There were two objections relating to the increased noise that would result from vehicles driving over the larger speed cushions. Research has shown that overall traffic noise is actually reduced on roads where speed cushions have been introduced and in addition, few HGVs pass through the area affected as the Tilsmore Area is subject to a 7.5 tonne weight restriction.

4.3 There were four objections stating that the proposed speed cushions are not high enough. It is recommended that these objections are not upheld as the speed cushions are already at the maximum permissible height for such features of 75mm. They can not be made any higher as this would result in some vehicles being grounded.

4.4 There were four objections relating to the close proximity of the proposed two-sided pinch point feature to the Ghyll Road/Tilsmore Road junction. It is recommended that these objections are not upheld on the basis that this issue was not identified as a potential safety issue in a pre-construction safety audit.

4.5 There were four objections received relating to the two-sided pinch point feature outside Wyndley in Ghyll Road stating that it would encourage vehicles to use Tilsmore Road. It is recommended that these objections are not upheld as many vehicles already use Tilsmore Road as a through route to the High Street and increasing the size of the speed cushions associated with the four traffic calming features already present in Tilsmore Road, should deter any additional vehicles that may be encouraged to use Tilsmore Road.

4.6 There were two objections received relating to the two-sided pinch point feature displacing existing parking which will cause an obstruction across driveways. The introduction of the feature will prevent parking at this location. However, we will monitor the situation and consideration will be given to introducing a white advisory line across driveways to deter inconsiderate parking.

4.7 There were two objections relating to the spacing between the traffic calming features in Tilsmore Road, which it is felt enables vehicles to build up substantial speed in between the features. It is recommended that these objections are not upheld. In siting the traffic calming features account had to be taken of the position of the number of private drives, private access roads and utility covers which constrained the positioning of the traffic calming features. The proposed increase in the size of the cushions will slow down a greater proportion of vehicles. This will also have the effect of reducing the vehicle speeds between the features.

4.8 There were three representations relating to the approach speed of vehicles entering Tilsmore Road from the High Street and that this was unsafe for pedestrians. The introduction of gateway features together with additional signing will help to reduce the speed of vehicles entering Tilsmore Road from the High Street. Increasing the size of the speed cushions will also help to reduce the approach speeds to the first feature in Tilsmore Road.

4.9 There were two objections relating to the congestion and the difficulty of vehicles entering and exiting driveways caused by vehicles parking around the build outs particularly in Tilsmore Road. It is recommended that these objections are not upheld. ESCC will continue to work with Sussex Police to reduce the incidence of inconsiderate parking around the features in Tilsmore Road. We will continue to monitor the situation and further consideration will be given to the introduction of parking restrictions, if necessary.

4.10 There were four representations expressing concern that the first build out in Tilsmore Road had been constructed on a bend meaning that that the feature had been struck a number of times. However, the reason that the feature has been hit is primarily due

to the fact that the vehicles involved have approached the feature at an inappropriate speed rather than poor positioning of the feature. At present, a large proportion of vehicles can negotiate the feature without slowing down. Increasing the size of the speed cushions will reduce approach speeds to the feature. In addition, the introduction of a gateway feature and additional signing in the vicinity of the entrance to Tilsmore Road should also help to reduce vehicle speeds.

4.11 There were eight representations about the local consultation and the role of the Tilsmore Area Residents' Representatives Working Group. Local residents felt that they had not been sufficiently consulted during the development of the amendments to the Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme. In February 2005 a representative from each of the roads in the Tilsmore Area was chosen to represent the people living in their road at a public meeting. The role of the representative was to canvas local views to inform the development of the scheme and provide feedback after the working group meetings. This arrangement worked well during the development of the original scheme. However, the comments received suggest that this arrangement has not worked as effectively during the development of the proposed amendments.

4.12 There were seven representations about the congestion around the build outs in general, particularly the one outside the Cross-in-Hand Primary School, caused by vehicles parking too close to the build out thereby preventing vehicles from passing safely. ESCC is continuing to work with the school and Sussex Police to reduce the incidence of inconsiderate parking outside the school. A school walking bus has been introduced from the Mill Road car park to the pedestrian entrance to the school to encourage parents and carers not to park in front of the main entrance to the school. ESCC has also introduced a white line around the feature in front of the school to show drivers that this is an area where they should not park as they are likely to cause an obstruction. ESCC will continue to monitor the situation and, if required, the introduction of additional parking restrictions will be considered.

4.13 There were three representations about vehicles continuing to travel through the Tilsmore Area at inappropriate speeds. The wider speed cushions will slow down a greater proportion of vehicles.

4.14 There were two representations relating to lorries using the Tilsmore Area as a cut through. The roads in the Tilsmore Area are subject to a 7.5 tonne weight restriction. This is a matter of enforcement and Sussex Police have been made aware of the issue. ESCC has also liaised with the representative of the businesses operating from the Ghyll Road Industrial Estate to ask drivers to access the industrial estate using appropriate roads.

4.15 There were seven representations requesting the introduction of a footway along Tilsmore Road and the introduction of one-way working along the road (in view of the reduction in road width that would result from the introduction of the footway). This proposal was originally identified in the LATS and was subject to public consultation in 2004. At that time local residents of other roads in the Tilsmore Area considered that introducing one-way working in Tilsmore Road would increase traffic levels on their roads. At a subsequent public meeting it was agreed by local residents that a more comprehensive scheme should be developed to address local concerns about traffic and pedestrian safety throughout the whole Tilsmore Area rather than just on Tilsmore Road. As a consequence, the proposal to introduce a footway along Tilsmore Road with one-way working was not progressed.

4.16 There were two representations relating to the lack of priority road markings and road signs at the build outs in Tilsmore Road. Introducing build outs with a signed priority working system would necessitate the introduction of illuminated signs and additional road markings. Local residents were concerned that this would have the effect of 'urbanising' Tilsmore Road. Therefore, it was agreed that as vehicle speeds in Tilsmore Road were generally low, the build outs would be introduced without a signed priority working system.

4.17 There was one representation about the build out in Mill Road not being effective as a speed reducing feature. The post-construction traffic survey shows that average vehicle speeds have been reduced in Mill Road.

4.18 In addition to the objections and representations set out above, there were a number of other representations that did not relate to either the features introduced as part of the original scheme or the proposed modifications. These representations included requests for additional traffic calming measures in Mill Road, concern about the impact of inconsiderate parking on the verges in Mill Road and the poor condition of the road surface in Mill Road and Tilsmore Road. These representations are set out in more detail in Appendix A.

## **5. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation**

5.1 ESCC has consulted extensively both throughout the development of original scheme proposals and the proposed amendments to the existing Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme using consultation methods agreed locally. Local Members and officers have worked with the Tilsmore Area Residents' Representatives Working Group. Consideration has been given to the objections and representations and every effort has been made to resolve these.

5.2 The proposed amendments to the Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme can be split into two discrete elements; firstly the proposed widening of the existing speed cushions with a mixture of 1.7 metres and 1.8 metres wide speed cushions and secondly, replacing the build out in front of Ghyll Rise on Ghyll Road with a set of speed cushions and introducing a two-sided pinch point feature with a speed cushion as a priority working feature outside Wyndley on Ghyll Road.

5.3 The majority of the people who objected or made representations about the ineffectiveness of the existing speed cushions supported something being done to make them more effective. The Stage 3 Safety Audit recommended that if vehicle speeds had not reduced sufficiently then the size and/or the frequency of the cushions should be increased. It is recommended that these objections are not upheld and the existing speed cushions should be widened as advertised.

5.4 With regard to replacing the build out in front of Ghyll Rise in Ghyll Road with speed cushions and the introduction of the two-sided pinch point feature in front of Wyndley in Ghyll Road, during the formal consultation ESCC received a number of objections to these amendments, particularly from the households that would be most affected by them. However, in addition to this, a number of local residents also felt that they have not been properly consulted about the development of the proposed amendments to the original scheme. A number stated that they had not been contacted by their respective road representative and that the letter sent to all of the residents in the Tilsmore Area by ESCC, immediately prior to the formal consultation process, was the first time that they had heard about the proposed amendments. This suggests that the consultation process using the resident representatives has not been as effective as it was during the earlier stages of the development of the scheme. It is therefore recommended that in view of the concerns raised about the consultation process that the set of speed cushions in the vicinity of Ghyll Rise and the two-sided pinch point feature with a speed cushion as a priority working system outside Wyndley are not introduced. As a consequence the build out in the vicinity of Ghyll Rise will remain unaltered.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Transport and Environment

13 July 2010

PC : Planning Committee 21 July 2010 Tilsmore Area Traffic Management Scheme

Contact Officer: Christopher Tree Tel. No. 01273 482247

Local Members: Councillor Simmons and Councillor Dowling

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

none

## Appendix A - Summary of objections and representations received

No of respondents	Summary of objection/representation	Response
12	Objection: The speed cushions associated with the original scheme are not effective at reducing vehicle speeds.	Increasing the width of the speed cushions will slow down a larger proportion of vehicles.
3	Objection: Vehicles continue to travel through the Tilsmore Area at inappropriate speeds.	Increasing the width of the speed cushions will slow down a larger proportion of vehicles.
9	Objection: Support making improvements to the speed cushions to ensure that vehicles slow down.	Noted.
3	Objection: Stated that the proposed amendments would not work.	Increasing the width of the speed cushions will slow down a larger proportion of vehicles.
4	Objection: The proposed speed cushions are not high enough.	The speed cushions are at the legal maximum height of 75mm. They cannot be constructed any higher than this as this may result in vehicles being grounded.
2	Objection: There will be increased noise associated with the larger speed cushions.	Research has shown that overall traffic noise is reduced on roads where speed cushions have been introduced.
4	Objection: The two-sided pinch point with a speed cushion is too close to the Ghyll Road/Tilsmore Road junction and will make its operation unsafe.	A pre-construction safety audit has been carried out and this has not highlighted any issues about the feature being too close to the junction.
4	Objection: The two-sided pinch point with a speed cushion will encourage vehicles to use Tilsmore Road.	Tilsmore Road is used as a through route to the High Street. Increasing the size of the speed cushions associated with the traffic calming features in Tilsmore Road will help to deter any additional vehicles using the road as a through route.
2	Objection: The two-sided pinch point with a speed cushion will displace the existing parking and cause an obstruction across driveways.	The introduction of the feature will prevent parking at this location. However, we will monitor the situation and consideration will be given to introducing a white advisory line across

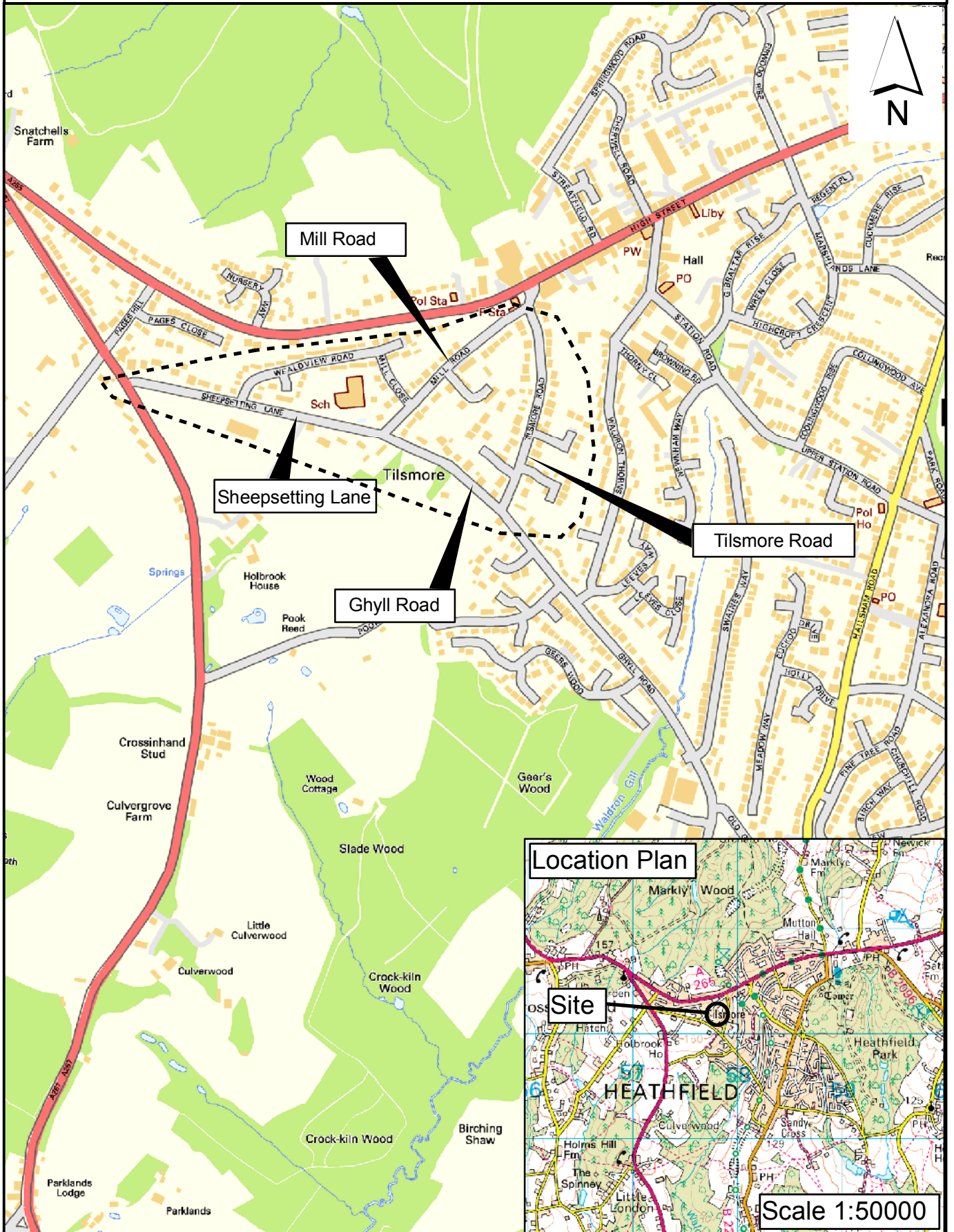
		driveways to deter inconsiderate parking.
1	Objection: Can the proposed set of speed cushions outside Ghyll Rise be located on the boundary between the properties of Ghyll Rise and Glen Dale?	The speed cushions cannot be relocated as they would be too close to the driveway of Glen Dale. This would result in vehicles having to drive across the speed cushions to enter and exit the property.
2	Representation: What are the proposed changes to the features in Tilsmore Road.	The width of the speed cushions associated with the build outs will be increased and will slow down a larger proportion of vehicles.
1	Representation: There is not a significant speeding problem in Tilsmore Road.	Noted.
2	Representation: The spacing of the build outs in Tilsmore Road results in vehicles building up speed in between the features.	In locating the build outs in Tilsmore Road account had to be taken of the position of the number of private drives, private access roads and utility covers. Increasing the width of the speed cushions will slow down a larger proportion of vehicles approaching the features.
2	Representation: There are no priority road markings or signs at the build outs in Tilsmore Road.	Introducing priority working system would necessitate the introduction of illuminated signs and additional road markings. Local residents were concerned that this would have the effect of urbanising the road.
4	Representation: The speed of vehicles entering Tilsmore Road from the High Street is too high and it is unsafe for pedestrians as there is no footway.	Increasing the width of the speed cushions will help to reduce approach speeds The introduction of gateway features together with additional signage will also help to reduced entry speeds into Tilsmore Road.

4	Representation: The first build out in Tilsmore Road is constructed on a bend and the feature has been struck on a number of occasions.	The build out has been hit primarily due to vehicles approaching the feature at an inappropriate speed, not because it is badly positioned. Increasing the width of the speed cushion associated with this feature will help to reduce approach speeds. The introduction of gateway features together with additional signing will also help to reduce entrance speeds into Tilsmore Road.
2	Representation: Vehicles having difficulty entering and exiting driveways caused by vehicles parking around the build outs in Tilsmore Road.	ESCC will continue to work with local residents and Sussex Police to help reduce inconsiderate parking. The situation will continue to be monitored and, if found necessary, consideration will be given to the introduction of parking restrictions.
1	Representation: The road surface in Tilsmore Road is in a poor condition and needs resurfacing.	The County Council's planned maintenance team is currently investigating the drainage issues ahead of resurfacing Tilsmore Road, subject to the availability of funding.
3	Representation: Traffic speeds in Mill Road are still too fast and the build out is not effective.	Post-construction traffic surveys show that the average vehicle speeds in Mill Road have been reduced.
3	Representation: Mill Road requires additional traffic calming features.	Additional traffic calming measures have been identified for possible future inclusion in the Integrated Transport Capital Programme.
1	Representation: Vehicles park on the verges in Mill Road.	Consideration is being given to the introduction of bollards on the verges to prevent inconsiderate parking.

1	Representation: The condition of the road surface in Mill Road is poor.	The County Council's planned maintenance team is currently investigating the drainage issues ahead of resurfacing in Mill Road, subject to the availability of funding.
7	Representation: Congestion is caused by inconsiderate parking in the area in front of the Cross-in-Hand Primary School. It prevents vehicles from safely travelling along Sheepsetting Lane particularly at the start and end of the school day.	A school walking bus has been introduced from the Mill Road car park. Parents and carers have been encouraged to use the Mill Road car park and not to park in the roads around the school. ESCC has introduced a white line around the build out in front of the school. This shows drivers that this is an area where they should not park as they are likely to cause an obstruction. ESCC will continue to work with local residents, the school and Sussex Police to help reduce inconsiderate parking. The situation will continue to be monitored and, if found necessary, consideration will be given to the introduction of parking restrictions.
8	Representation: There was a lack of local consultation in the development of the amendments to the original scheme. Local residents were not consulted by their representative from the Tilsmore Area Residents' Representatives Working Group.	At a public meeting in February 2005, a representative from each of the roads in the Tilsmore Area was chosen. The role of the representative was to feed back and seek local views to inform the development of the original Tilsmore Area traffic management scheme.

7	Representation: Requests that the original plans to introduce a footway along Tilsmore Road are reviewed.	This proposal was originally identified in the LATS and consulted upon in 2004. At that time local residents of other roads were concerned that making Tilsmore Road one-way to accommodate the footway would have an adverse impact on their roads. It was subsequently agreed at a public meeting to develop a more comprehensive scheme throughout the whole Tilsmore Area not just Tilsmore Road. As a consequence the proposal to introduce a footway along Tilsmore Road with one-way working was not progressed.
2	Representation: Lorries continue to use the roads in the Tilsmore Area as a through route.	The Roads in the Tilsmore Area are subject to a 7.5 tonne weight restriction. This is an enforcement matter and Sussex Police have been made aware of the issue. ESCC has liaised with the representative of the businesses operating from the Ghyll Road Industrial Estate to remind drivers to access the industrial estate using appropriate roads.

# Figure 1



Scale 1:10000

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 BEng (Hons) CEng MICE  
 Director, Transport and Environment  
 East Sussex County Council

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