

Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan - Subgroup Report

Topic Group:- Transport Meeting date:- 21st August 2013

Attendees:

- . Peter Cowey
- . Chris winks
- . David Gambles
- Erin Robson and Gavin Warrender gave their apologies

Items discussed

- Airport
- Chris had attended the Airport meeting and was informed that the impact due to car parking increasing from 7,500 to 15,000, staff increasing by 1,000 and passenger numbers increasing by 4 million they would have little impact on Ponteland. The Airport said that they would object to airport related businesses being located north of the airport in or around Ponteland itself.

- Cycle Routes
Both Chris and David have volunteered to cycle round Ponteland with David Butler to see where cycle routes could be introduced.

- Car parking
This is a real problem as the only car parks not privately owned or held are:- two behind the shops at Merton way, One in front of the shops at Broadway and one behind Darras Hall first School. The major problem is when schools are in operation. In the morning for an hour and in the afternoon again for an hour the following areas can and are grid locked. In the morning children are being dropped off but in the afternoon cars/buses are waiting and vying for position ready for the children to be dismissed from school.
Some possible solutions listed later in this report.

- Road Traffic
As already mentioned the schools have a major impact on flows twice a day in school term. However there are further aggravations to the problem as follows.
If any road works are required. Mid-morning and late afternoon traffic heading or coming from North Shields due to the Ferry Service. Convoys of Army vehicles coming from or going to Otterburn. Traffic wanting to turn into either Sainsbury's or Waitrose supermarkets from the opposite side of the road, again causing a tailback.

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Some figures from official bodies:-

The NCC carried out a survey of traffic along Main Street and some results are as follows.

Friday 7th Dec 2012 6182 vehicles heading West over a 24 hour period

Saturday 8th December 2012 5839 vehicles heading West over a 24 hour period

With a similar number heading East.

Taken from the National Road Traffic Forecasts (NRTF) websites.

In 2012 there were 34.5 million vehicles on the road of which 28.7 million were cars.

The forecast of the number of vehicles is estimated as increasing from 2011 to 2031 by some 14% to 38%.

This means that the number of cars on the road is expected to increase from 28.7 to either 33.37 Million or upwards to 46.29 million. Thus there is to be expected an increase of 4.67 million to 17.59 million cars on the road.

The figures for vehicle traffic miles is expected to go up from around 252 billion vehicle miles to a best case of approximately 325 billion miles to a worst case of approximately 440 billion vehicle miles by 2040.

There are a lot more tables and valuable statistics available on the websites, which is far too voluminous to repeat here.

Using some of the NRTF figures and projecting these through Ponteland gives a very different picture to the current times.

Already there are times when the traffic is backed up from the centre of Ponteland back to the roundabout at the Badger pub and Rotary way, a distance of 0.8 of a mile.

Those living on the newish estate at the Golf Club can find that they need to head South first to the roundabout before coming back on themselves again as they cannot come out of the estate and head West.

Using the NRTF figures we can expect an increase of traffic through Ponteland of some 1,000 (14%) to 3,788 (38%) cars heading both West and East per day. Since occasionally the traffic is currently backing up to the Badger then where will it be backed up to with the increase? $0.8 \times 14\% = .93$ of a mile and $0.8 \times 38\% = 1.29$ miles. This takes the possible traffic back to the small roundabout turning towards Dinnington and perhaps even the Airport roundabout or beyond.

Possible Solutions:-

1. Build a by-pass. This will take away through traffic so reducing the problems on Main Street. It will also allow local traffic to join and leave the Bypass at three points into the centre of Ponteland.

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2. Build a road with ample parking area off Rotary Way giving a direct access to the Middle and High School. Thus relieving the traffic on Callerton Lane area. This however does not solve the problems on Thornhill Road or Broadway on Darras Hall.
3. Move the schools to either side of Rotary Way with ample car parking for drop off and wait areas for pick-ups so that Newcastle vehicles do not touch the centre of Ponteland.
Stamfordham Road traffic would come down the hill and turn right leaving only Belsay traffic coming through Ponteland.
This new "Campus" would mean relieving the congestion on Thornhill Road and Broadway on Darras Hall. This also has the knock on effect of creating land that can be used for, playing areas such as "kick abouts", leisure, car parking and new Businesses all in areas where they are needed by both children and adults.
4. Better Traffic sensor lights at the Diamond on Main Street. This should allow traffic to flow more freely rather than waiting for the lights to change when no traffic is waiting to use the lights on the adjoining road.
5. A combination of an/all the above. These will need to be discussed by all the Steering Group before going to the public.

The overriding result is that to do nothing is not an option. Things will get worse and if Ponteland is to have a viable long term plan then apparently some unpopular decisions will need to be taken.

Decisions

Action agreed	Date by	Name
1. Ask NCC for a full traffic census covering each season, i.e Spring, Summer, Autumn and winter. This will give varying patterns. However it seems unlikely that this can be achieved in the time left before this report needs to be ready.	ASAP	P Cowey
2. Find the possible routs of a By-pass from NCC	ASAP	P Cowey
3. Find the tipping point used by the NCC to determine if a By-pass is required.	ASAP	P Cowey
4. Chris and David to ride round Ponteland on their bikes with David Butler re possible cycle routes	ASAP	CW and DG
5. Better Traffic sensor lights at the Diamond on Main Street. This should allow traffic to flow more freely rather than waiting for the lights to change when no traffic is waiting to use the lights on the adjoining road.	ASAP	At the next Highways meeting

Outstanding Issues to Follow up

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- **Bus Transport, David gambles to supply data and paper for the next meeting to be held at P Cowey's house.**
- **Airport still with Erin**
- **Gavin to take part**
- **Cycle Routes to be determined**