

Meeting of Full Council

Monday 20 October 2025

Agenda Item No. 17.0

TO CONSIDER CONCERNS RELATING TO ROAD SAFETY ON LEWES ROAD, RIDGEWOOD

1.0. Background

- 1.1 Visibility has been impeded at the junction of New Road and Lewes Road for some years now when looking north, due to the location of the bus stop near to Ridgewood Post Office, and vehicles parking on Lewes Road to visit the post office.
- 1.2 Visibility has been further reduced with the introduction of a number of newly created entrances to new housing developments, which has included the build out of a traffic calming measure close to the entrance of Red Clover Road. These issues have been further exacerbated over the summer months and continue to this day, by the large number of vans parking on Lewes Road and New Road associated with the developments currently being constructed along Lewes Road (2 x 9 home developments). Further developments have obtained planning permission or are in the process of obtaining planning permission for development off Lewes Road; some of these are major applications.

2.0 Action taken to date

- 2.1 A local resident called a meeting with County/District/Town Councillors onsite, and following that made a formal complaint in the summer to enforcement teams at East Sussex County Council and Wealden District Council
- 2.2 Enforcement officers did liaise with construction teams onsite, but vehicles were soon back parked along Lewes Road and New Road near to the bus stop, post office and junction of New Road.
- 2.3 The first photo over the page shows how visibility was already restricted by the location of the bus stop and cars overtaking when seeking to turn right out of New Road and north onto Lewes Road, before the new developments were under construction. The second and third photos are from last week...



Reduced visibility before construction



Vehicles currently parked along the Eastern side of Lewes Road...



Vehicles currently parked along the southern side of New Road...

- 2.4 The Town Clerk will show a video to members in the meeting taken only last week of a vehicle trying to leave New Road.
- 2.5 In recent weeks, members of the Town Council's Plans Committee have been discussing their concerns with the road safety of Lewes Road. The Town Clerk felt it was a full Council matter due to the scale of development in this area, and the need for a joined up approach.
- 2.6 The Town Mayor wrote to the Head of Planning & Environment on 8 October 2025, on behalf of the Town Council's Plans Committee to express their concerns:

"Following the Uckfield Town Council Planning Committee meeting held on Monday, 6th October, I am writing to raise serious concerns regarding the now untenable situation along Lewes Road and New Road in Uckfield.

As you will be aware, there are currently four active construction sites within approximately 100 yards of one another on the Lewes Road, with a fifth (Horsted Pond Farm) due to commence shortly. This small rural road is now experiencing unprecedented traffic levels due to both the recently completed 250 homes at Ridgewood Place and the ongoing construction activity. Due to the traffic lights and construction site now underway on Eastbourne Road, there is also an increase of traffic of both small and large vehicles on New Road, turning in and out onto Lewes Road at this pinch point.

The combination of heavy construction traffic, the recently installed traffic-calming bollard, and the positioning of new bus stops has created a dangerous situation for both pedestrians and motorists. Local residents and businesses are being severely affected, particularly the Post Office shop, where customers are now unable to park anywhere nearby. This particularly impact the elderly who use the shop and post office and cannot now easily access it.

We are receiving frequent reports of parked cars being damaged as large vehicles attempt to squeeze past. Construction vehicles are routinely parking along both Lewes and New Road, often obstructing driveways, restricting access for buses, and impeding general traffic flow. When large delivery lorries attempt to turn, the road becomes completely blocked for extended periods. Combined with temporary traffic lights on the bypass this week, this has caused gridlock on Lewes Road and Eastbourne Road, particularly during school hours.

Councillors have also raised serious concerns about the bollard positioned at the entrance to Ridgewood Place. I have personally witnessed three near misses at this location — one involving my own vehicle — and understand that the bollard has already been struck and damaged at least once. It appears to be awaiting repair yet again!

I have spoken with Cllr Chris Dowling, who has visited the site, met with residents, and recognises the severity of the situation. He has since raised the matter with Highways, who have advised that as there are no current road restrictions, the issue falls within planning and should have been addressed through the Construction Management Plan.

I have now requested that the Police engage directly with site managers to address anti-social parking by construction workers and to help improve on-site traffic management.

In light of the above, I would be grateful if you could please:

- 1. Liaise with Highways to ensure that the two parking spaces outside the Post Office shop remain clear, to help support this long-standing local business and to improve safety around the bus stop.*
- 2. Ensure that residents' driveways are not being obstructed by construction vehicles.*
- 3. Review the positioning of the bollard at the entrance to Ridgewood Place and consider its relocation to a safer position.*

4. *Provide the Town Council with copies of the Construction Management Plans for all four current developments, so we can understand what measures are in place and what additional provisions may be needed before work begins at Horsted Pond Farm.*

Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter. The Town Council and local residents are extremely concerned about the safety risks and ongoing disruption, and we would appreciate prompt action to help address these issues.

*Yours sincerely,
Cllr Karen Bedwell
Mayor of Uckfield*

2.7 The County Councillor has also approached officers at East Sussex County Council.

2.8 The responses received from all departments indicate:

(i) all developer led highway works undergo an independent safety audit process both at the detailed design stage and again after completion, with remedial action taken as necessary. The Stage 3 'After completion' safety audit was undertaken in January 2024 and no adverse comments were made regarding the operation and forward visibility to and from the junction at Red Clover Road.

Given over 5700 vehicles per day use this section of Lewes Road and that the junction, together with the priority working feature to the south, have been operational for at least 2 years, then something in the order 4.1million vehicle movements have taken place since. Given the lack of an accident history, I am reasonably confident that most drivers are coping with the traffic conditions presented.

(we disagree as local drivers on this road)

(ii) Because the developments that are creating the parking issues are not developments that have associated S.278 highway works, there is nothing that we can do from that perspective. *(i.e. minor applications along Lewes Road)*

I have had a look at both the relevant planning permissions granted and Wealden DC did require a Code of Construction practice to be submitted and approved, which would cover off matters around vehicle movements/parking associated with the construction. I will forward the concerns below onto Wealden DC to see if the parking by builders/delivery vehicles outside of the Post Office is in breach of any Code of Construction practice that has been submitted and approved.

(officers who have visited have been ignored)

(iii) *Within planning control our remit is Construction Traffic Management Plans that sit under planning conditions. On that basis we will do the following:*

- *Send you the approved Construction Traffic Management Plans for the current sites, so the Town Council can see the delivery routes, delivery hours, contractor parking arrangements, and banksman requirements that were agreed with the County Council as highways consultee;*
- *Write to each site manager to remind them of their obligations under the approved plans. This will include keeping accesses, driveways and bus movements clear, containing contractor parking on site or at an agreed satellite area, and avoiding school peaks where that is required;*

Investigate any evidenced reports of non-compliance with these plans. Where a breach is identified we will take proportionate planning enforcement action. If you can, please provide dates, times and photographs so we can evidence any pattern;

- *Ensure that no work starts at Horsted Pond Farm until the Construction Traffic Management Plan condition is properly discharged in consultation with the County Council. It will actually be some way off as the outline permission has not yet been issued and there is then the RM stage to go through;*

(iv) other matters - items outside our remit should be taken up with the County Council and the Police. These include the position of bus stops, the Post Office parking bays, any temporary traffic management or signs in the highway, and the position or repair of the bollard at the Ridgewood Place entrance. Obstruction of driveways is a Police matter.

3.0. Recommendations

3.1. Members of Full Council are asked to:

- (i) note the current concerns with road safety in Lewes Road and New Road;
- (ii) provide log sheets to local residents living in the vicinity of these construction sites, and the junction of New Road, to record details of when the construction plan details are breached, and for these to be used to make a case to the developers and relevant authorities;
- (iii) write a formal letter to East Sussex Highways/East Sussex County Council to request an onsite meeting with the relevant officers to discuss:
 - the location of the bus stop;
 - parking restrictions in Lewes Road, and;
 - pedestrian and vehicular safety at the junction of New Road/Lewes Road
- (iv) write to Sussex Police to seek their support with the handling of obstructions at junctions and property entrances.

Contact Officer: Town Clerk