



The countryside charity
Sussex

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The Editor,
Mid Sussex Times
By e-mail to middy.news@jpress.co.uk

16th November 2020

Dear Sir,

Haywards Heath Town Masterplan: Let's reclaim our streets

Mid Sussex District Council risks wasting a great opportunity to make a step change in improving the lot of Haywards Heath residents with their draft Masterplan for the future town centre: <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/town-centre-masterplans/>

Whilst CPRE Sussex applauds the proposals to improve cycling and pedestrian experience of the town, nonetheless at the heart of that Masterplan lies the premise that more vehicles, and more parking for more vehicles, should be allowed into the centre of the town, and that the changes envisaged for the town should be based on accommodating that expectation.

No serious thought appears to have been given to the opportunities that a new Masterplan presents to assist arresting climate change (which is not mentioned even once in its 82 pages), or in particular, in the alternative of creating a low traffic neighbourhood (LTN) along South Road that would substantially pedestrianise it.

LTNs work, and they are surprisingly popular - a recent national YouGov poll¹ showed that 57% of those polled were strongly or broadly in favour of them, with 16% against, and 27% neutral or didn't know.

LTNs help the fight to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollution for the betterment of our health, our safety and our environment, which explains their popularity.

It also explains why the Government accepts that a fundamental changes are needed to the way people and goods move around in order to deliver net zero greenhouse gas emissions, and that significant new policy measures must be implemented urgently.² As part of that, LTNs can attract Government funding support as part of a new Dept of Transport £175m fund for traffic reduction schemes.

Yes, LTNs require "out of the box" planning to make them work for local businesses and residents. But we have to reduce our car-dependency, and LTNs have been introduced successfully elsewhere.

CPRE Sussex challenges MSDC to step back from progressing their current depressing proposals and use that time to undertake a careful analysis of how to make a South Road LTN work for the long-term betterment of the town, and to consult more widely in doing so. And then to come back with a revised plan that marries economic vitality of the town with a more healthy, lower carbon, environment. More forward thinking and more ambition, please!

To promote, enhance and protect a thriving countryside for everyone's benefit

President: Lord Egremont

Campaign to Protect Rural England Sussex Branch CIO | Registered charity number: 1156568

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Yours truly,

Michael A. Brown

For CPRE Sussex, the Sussex countryside charity

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Footnotes for the editor:

¹ https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/a414r61690/Greenpeace_Travel_200507_w.pdf

² Dept of Transport 2020 Report “Decarbonising Transport – Setting the Challenge”.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf