

HIGHWAY REPORT

The Hurstpierpoint Society

February 2024

Regulation 19 MSDC District Plan Review

Justification Demonstrating Unsound Strategic Assessment of Hurstpierpoint to Implement Safe Traffic Management for Proposed Objectives in the South of Mid Sussex *

*** Redacted Version**



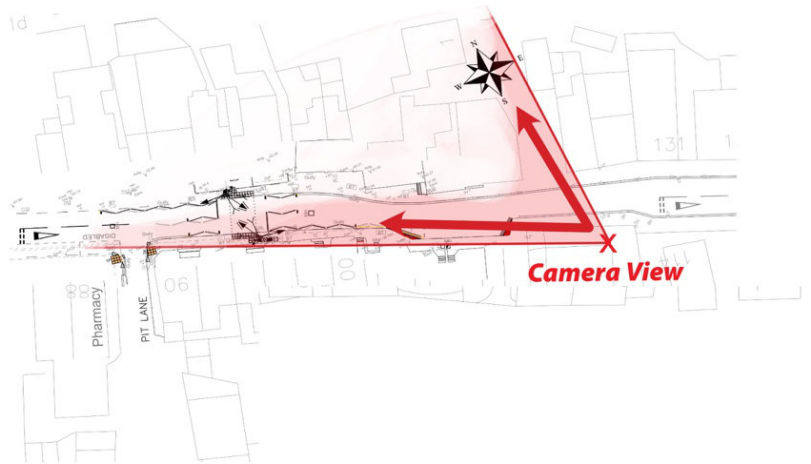
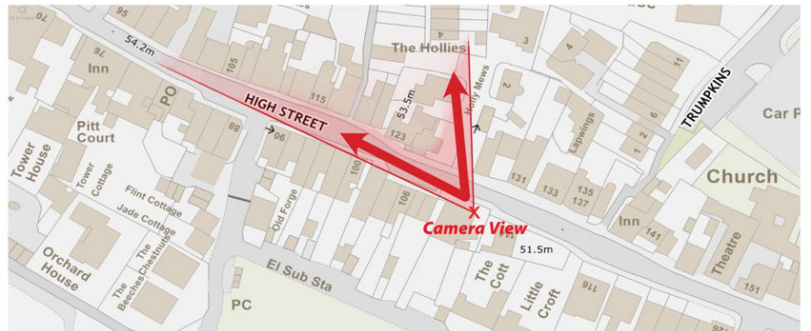
REGISTERED CHARITY NO.263520
hurstpierpointsociety.org.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Over recent years, development has increased around Hurstpierpoint. This, and its repercussions, especially in terms of the changes in education facilities, has seen a significant increase in traffic in the village, particularly in the High Street (B2116), which is a main east/west transport corridor. This is further exacerbated by illegal parking, and the lack of enforcement.
- 1.2. St Lawrence CEP School has increased in capacity by 1/3, and changes at Hurstpierpoint College has also seen a substantial increase in Day pupils.
- 1.3. The recent West Sussex Transport Plan 2022 to 2036 highlights a number of areas with traffic issues. While highlighting the need to improve access to the rail network at Burgess Hill stations, access to, and at, Hassocks via the B2116 through Hurstpierpoint is omitted, despite air pollution being highlighted for improvement at Stonepound, Hassocks.
- 1.4. However, the High Street in Hurstpierpoint (B2116) is not included for scrutiny of the existing situation, let alone any comment on the further proposals by MSDC. This is surprising as anecdotally, everyone in Hurstpierpoint is concerned about the traffic in the High Street. This is a route that dates back to medieval times with the oldest and earliest building, Upper Trumpkins, dated 1450, being on the northern side of the High Street. On the southern side of the High Street is the New Inn, originally built in about 1500 as a grand timber frame Wealden hall. Also on the south side is Mansion house built about 1575.
- 1.5. Further development in the 1800s followed the lines set by these very old, historic buildings and have governed the width of the road, originally intended for horse and carriage transport, not cars, vans and lorries. The High Street is one of three Conservation Areas, recognising the importance of the historic buildings here.
- 1.6. Over the last 60 years, Hurstpierpoint has seen a time of housing development in and around the village and the volume of traffic has been steadily increasing, especially with the reliance on motorised travel for both people and goods. The medieval High Street was not designed for this volume of traffic and consequently more accidents, near misses and general traffic frustration is happening.
- 1.7. It can only be assumed that the reason for not recognising this as an issue in the WSCC Transport Plan is because of the low number of fatalities and many people not reporting Incidents. It does not recognise the very real trepidation felt in taking lives in hands with many cars mounting pavements many times on a daily basis. For clarity it would be essential to at least visit this High Street to witness personally what happens now.
- 1.8. It is due to this lack of strategic technical examination that Hurstpierpoint Society feel compelled to highlight the Plan's unsound testing of its viability to the safety, fabric and wellbeing of the community. To this end The Society has recently undertaken its own traffic survey in the High Street to record traffic movements.

2. Methodology

- 2.1. A fixed camera was placed on the exterior of a house at the eastern end of the High Street on a randomly selected day. We deliberately chose a day that was not a weekend, Monday or Friday for fear that these may yield atypical outputs. The camera had a vantage point of the pinch point at the eastern end opposite 123 High Street.
- 2.2. The camera was set to continuously record from 7:36 to 16:56 on 31st January 2024. The recording was then sent to RCE systems s.r.o. the operator of “DatafromSky” a unique and cost effective (less than Euro 5 per hour of video) video-analytics platform for the fully automated extraction of accurate traffic data using AI and machine learning methods.



- 2.3. Link to DatafromSky web page: <https://datafromsky.com/> for information.

- 2.4. The video was run through their platform to produce a log file of all activity recorded by the camera. The log file was then examined by us in the DatafromSky software viewer. All pedestrian and bicycle activity were excluded as was activity in parking bays and driveways and the results exported to an Excel spreadsheet for statistical analysis. Below (page 3) is a screen shot of the level of data produced by the platform.

- 2.5. The “Mean” and “Standard Deviation” times for which vehicles were required to stop was calculated.

- 2.6. The mean total stationary time was = 23.61s and the Standard Deviation was 31.39s. Outliers were then calculated by adding twice the Standard Deviation to the Mean to give a value of 86.39s. All total stationary times above this figure were excluded from the analysis.



2.7. Limitations

2.8. A single location camera does not include issues at any other location along the B2116 between London Road, Albourne (B2118) and London Road Hassocks (A273) Stonepound Crossroads. Nor can it capture stretches that allow parking as shown on the schematics of the High Street on pages 4 & 5 (Map1 Map2 Map3), that reduce speeds of traffic flow but limits use to single file flow, and many incidents daily (most of which go unreported).

2.9. Although the High Street dimensions remain as they were when built as Turnpikes in the 19th Century, this survey does not record the size (width, length and weight) of 21st Century transport. Neither does it record traffic ignoring the weight restriction for through traffic using the B2116, the most southerly east-west route across Mid Sussex, which is otherwise an unenforced restriction.



- 2.10. It has only been possible to record data in daylight using this methodology. It does not record that Hassocks Station car park is usually at capacity by 7.30am.
- 2.11. A single camera cannot record data regarding village traffic ingress and egress to or from other locations or destinations.
- 2.12. This data does not demonstrate the accumulative effect of development over the past decade or so. Despite the laudable aim of creating a safer High Street, the recent remodelling of the High Street is less safe and more congested. This effects the fabric of the Conservation Areas, the wellbeing of the community, and the vitality and viability of the High Street trade. No examination of this, in the context of a 'Strategic Development Plan', has been undertaken. We include throughout this report, brief photographic snapshots of traffic in Hurstpierpoint.

3. Village Wide - Points of Single File and Stationary Traffic Flow

3.1. Hurstpierpoint's High Street is unique in Mid Sussex, as the roads north/south and east/west remain as they were first formed as Turnpikes and drove-ways in the 19th century; not designed for modern traffic, either in size, quantity or speeds.



Give way to oncoming vehicles



Priority over oncoming vehicles

Transit through the village is wholly dependent on drivers seeing, understanding and obeying driving instructions (above)

Key

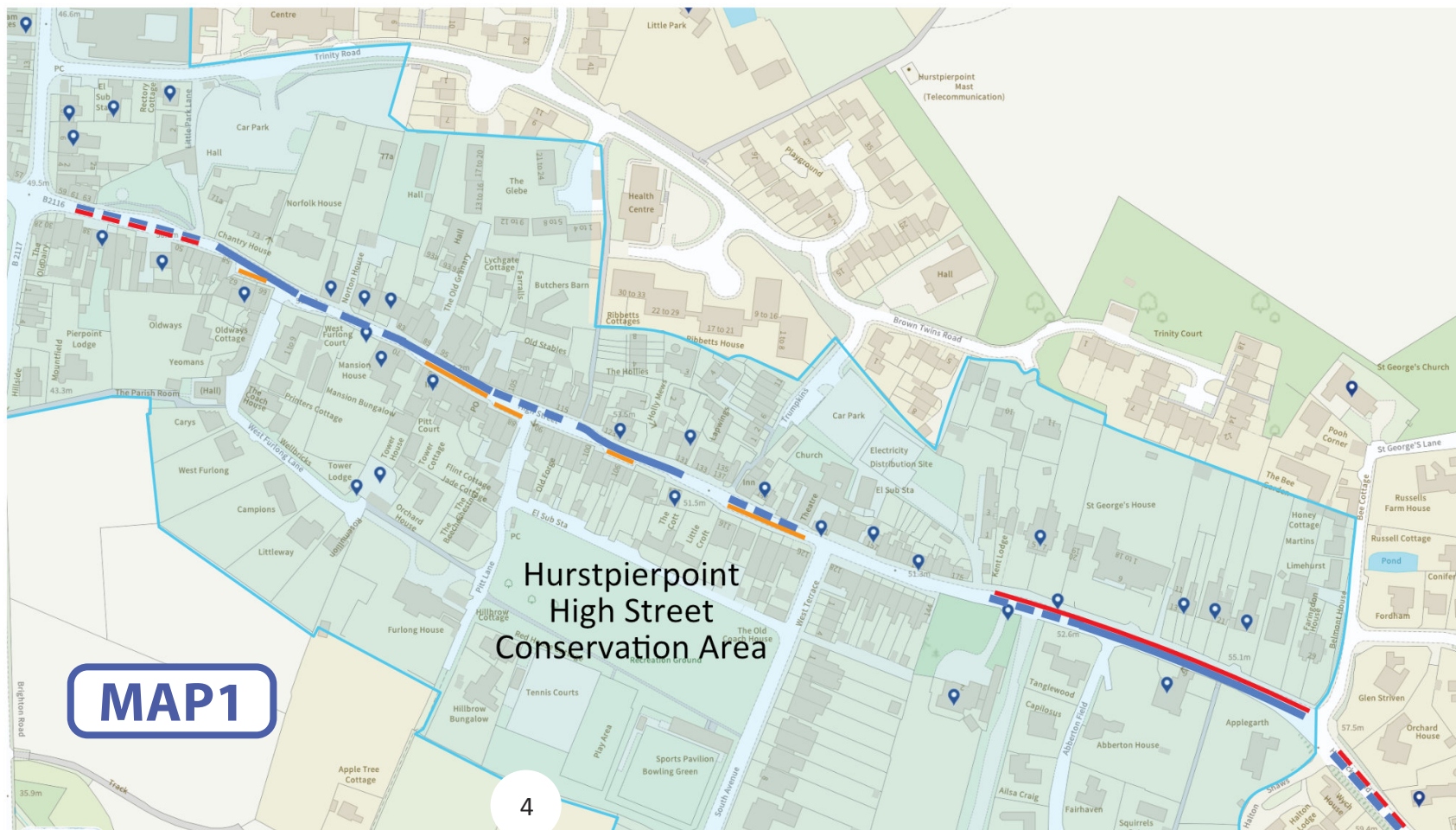
- Permanently used permitted parking reducing flow to single file flow
- - - Often used permitted parking points reducing flow to single file flow
- - - Often single file flow points dependant on *right-of-way* and driver behaviour
- Permanent single file flow dependant on *right-of-way* and driver behaviour
- Bus stop often reduces flow to east-west flow only
- Permanently used permitted parking that should not effect flow single file
- - - Large vehicle always reducing flow to single file flow
- Listed Building
- Conservation Areas

3.2. It should be noted that the average modern car is 1.8m wide. SUVs are 2m wide, often wider than parking spaces allocated. Delivery vans can be between 2 and 3m, and lorries and buses far in excess of these.

3.3. Parking on pavements, and the dangers this poses, is very common in the High Street.

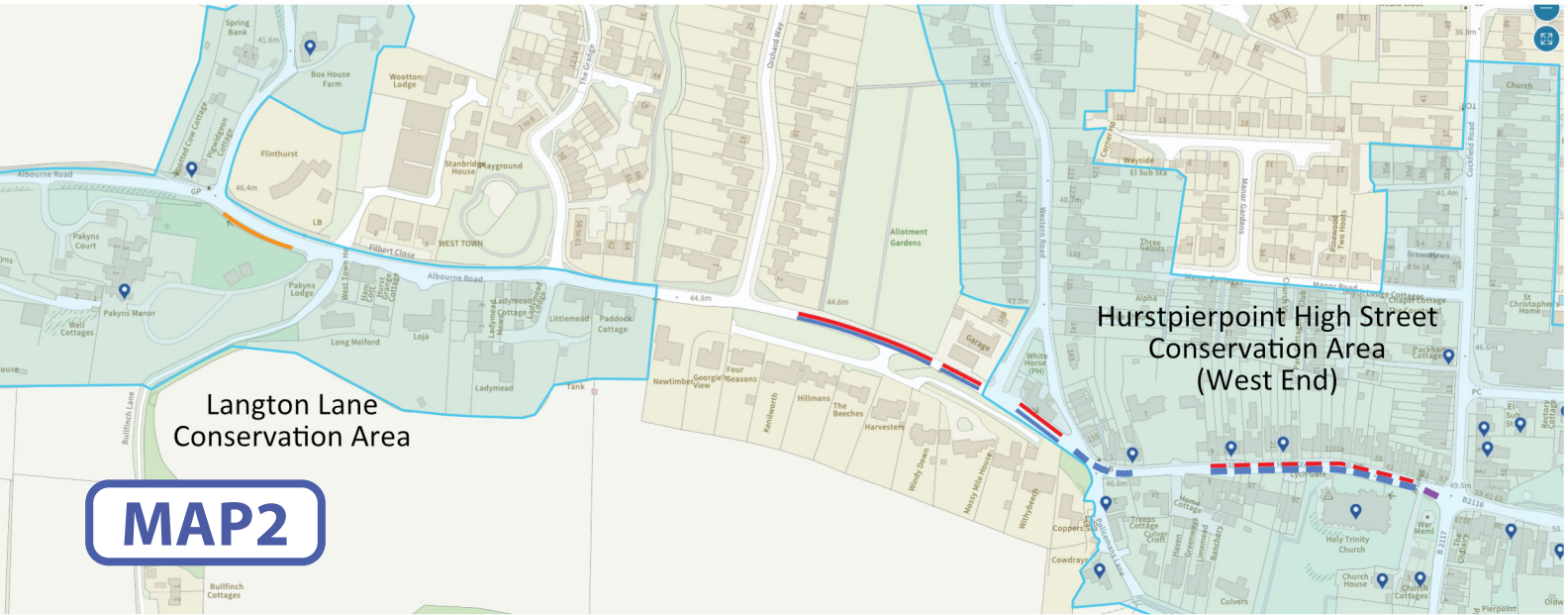
3.4. To clear gridlock, drivers have no choice but to mount the pavement, avoiding collision but putting pedestrians at risk.

3.5. The historic buildings in the High Street often require maintenance, and scaffolding, that has to extend into the road to do this, is a very common occurrence. Clearly this reduces the width of the highway further, and removes the option of traffic using the pavement to clear a logjam.

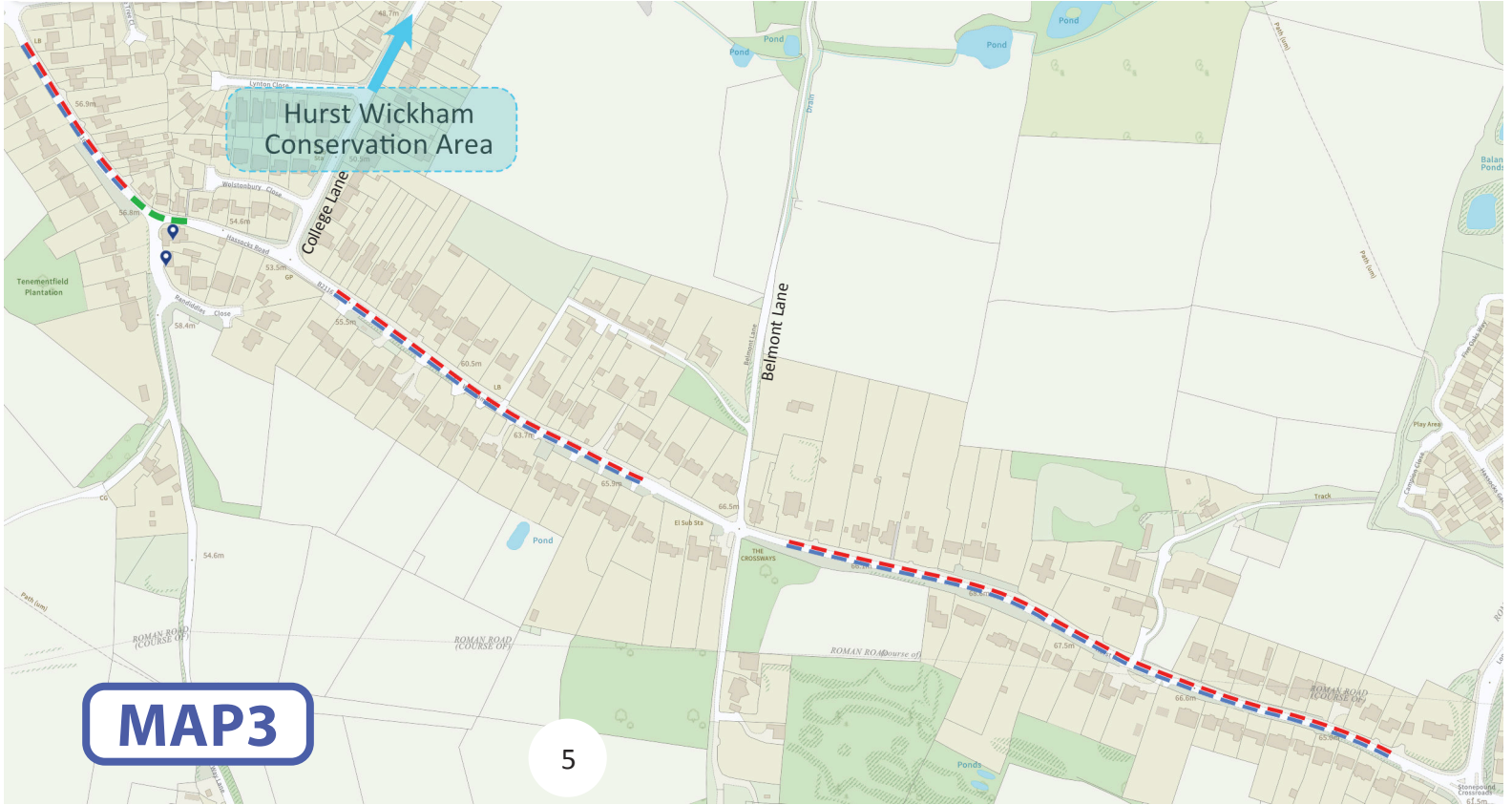


3.6. While the design of the system now in place may be compliant with 'The Manual for Streets', when gridlock happens (multiple times every day), caused by drivers either not seeing, misunderstanding/ignoring the signage, there is a clear and present danger to:

- Emergency Vehicles
- Disabled; especially partially sighted or blind
- Children
- Cyclists
- All pedestrians
- Other drivers



3.7. Issues on the B2116, between the junctions with the B2118 to the west, and Stonepound (A273) are not solely related to the highway between the two pinch-points on the High Street (Map1).



3.8. Not only are there congestion points as shown on Maps2 & 3 (right), all North-South routes: Cuckfield Road, Brighton Road and College Lane are permanently restricted to single file traffic because of parked cars.

3.9. Peak hour traffic at Stonepound Crossroads usually tails back to Belmont Lane. This is regularly compounded by builders parked vehicles.

4. Road Traffic Incidents

- 4.1. The *Crashmap* below shows reported casualty incidents between 2019-2022 (which includes the periods of Covid lockdown).
- 4.2. Most incidents do not get reported as there is no need to report a collision to the police

where no one was injured, and details exchanged with the other driver or property owner, and those involved do not consider a driving offence took place.

In all other cases, collisions should be reported, but this doesn't always happen.



4. Road Traffic Incidents (cont'd)

Regular Daily Chaos



We are encouraged to travel by bus when it can take over 20 minutes to get through the village. Ask a bus driver about driving through Hurst.



Disabled man with walking stick and a friend take cover in a shop doorway to prevent being hit on the head by the wing mirror of a large lorry negotiating the High Street pavement.



Jaguar (silver) negotiates pavement while mini (red) mounts the pedestrian drop-kerb while traffic either side, along with disabled pedestrian (who sits on wall with phone-camera), wait for a resolution



A pedestrian attempts to help resolve a 15 minute impasse. Loss of paintwork and abusive language in this incident, as all these, and many others, go unreported. Daily events effecting the vitality of Hurst.

Historic Granite Kerb Damage

On a regular basis, the historic granite kerbstones are damaged by heavy vehicles mounting them. These are very much a part of the fabric and heritage landscape of the High Street Conservation Area.

The damage poses an immediate threat to the safety of pedestrians, especially those who are blind or have diminished vision, as well as a danger to disabled pedestrian stick users and buggy users, and those with young children and/or prams.



5. Results

Statistical Analysis of Stationary Traffic on Hurstpierpoint High Street On 31st January 2024 by The Hurstpierpoint Society

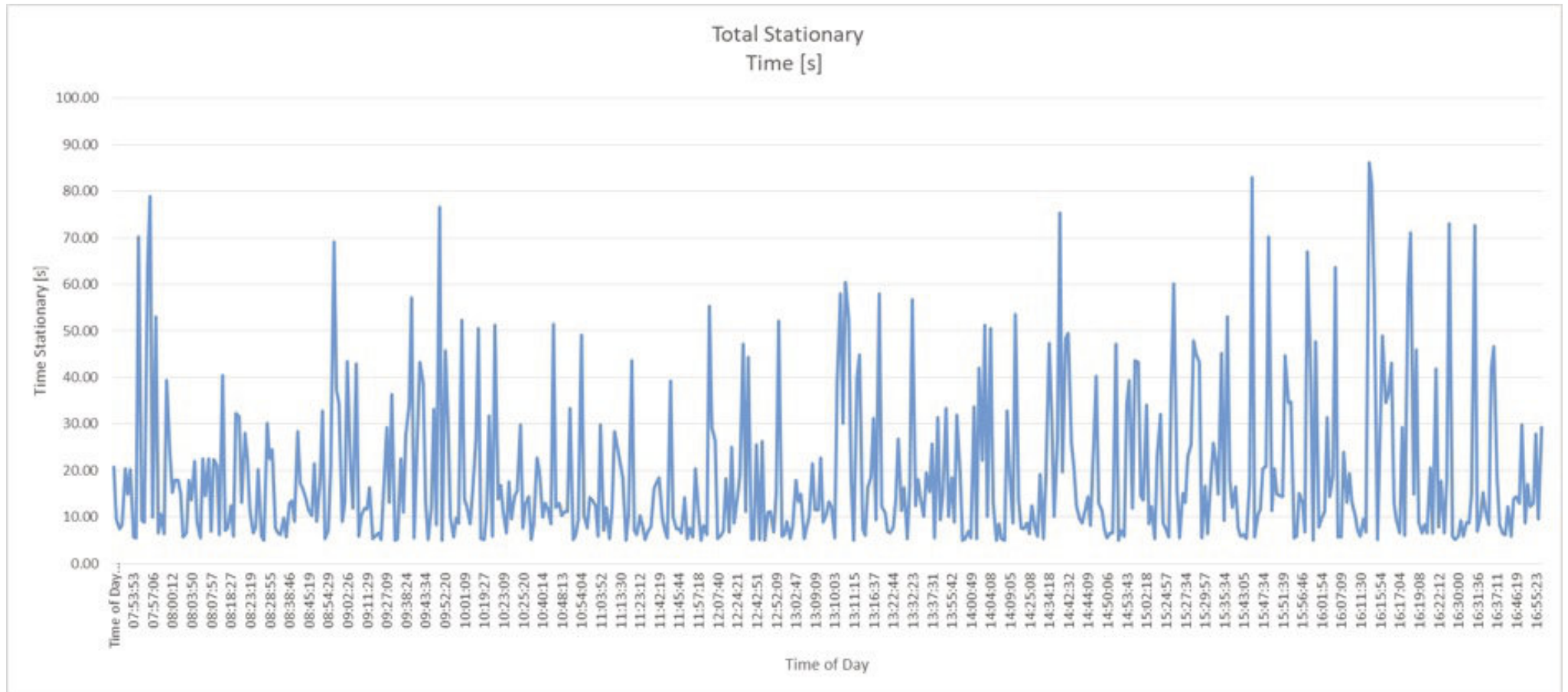


Figure 1 – Distribution of vehicle Total Stationary times throughout the day (excluding Outliers)

5.1. Data - See accompanying file :

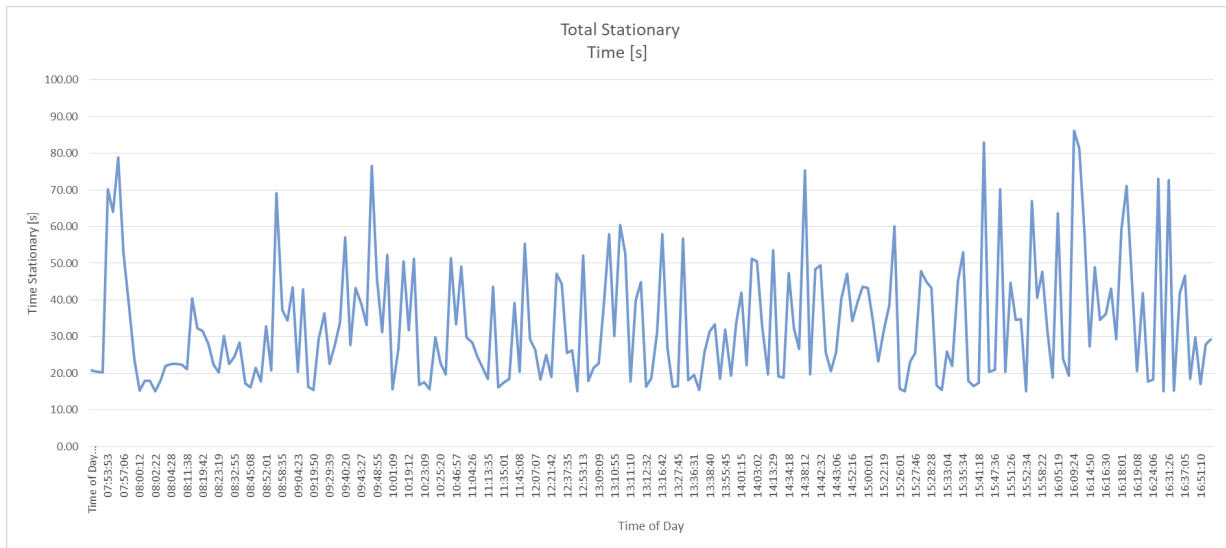
Hurst Traffic 31st Jan 2024 Full Data Analysis Final.xlsx

Sheet1 : Hurst Traffic Full Traffic Regi
Sheet2 : Distribution of Stationary Time
Sheet3 : Overall Statistics

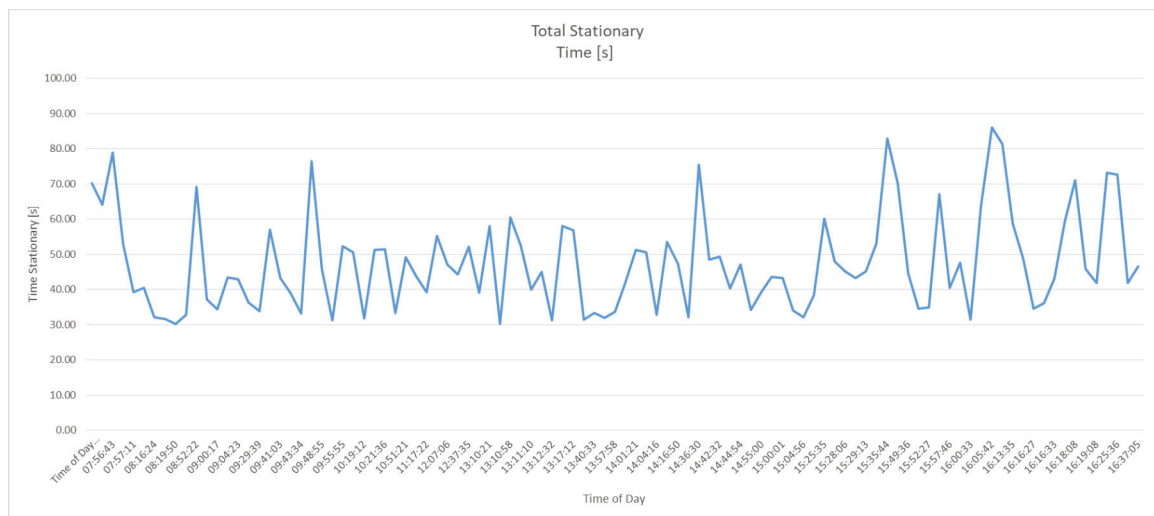
5.2. The software identified nearly 5500 objects of which just under 4190 were vehicles. The mean average speed was calculated to be 11.24 miles/h.

5.3. Excluding the outliers, 515 vehicles were forced to be stationary in that part of the High Street during the day.

5.4. Of that 515, 214 were stationary for more than 15s. Distribution shown below:



5.5. and a further 102 for more than 30s. Distribution shown below:



6. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 6.1. Given the limited duration of the survey, definitive conclusions are difficult to draw. However, it is clear that a large volume of vehicles passed through the historic village (over 4000) during the 9½ hours timeframe.
- 6.2. Even on the single random day on which the survey was conducted, the traffic could not be described as '*free flowing*' for a significant number of them. Although the outliers were excluded for statistical purposes, some stationary times were over 2.5 minutes.
- 6.3. It is highly likely that the developments set out in the District Plan will greatly add to the volume of traffic through the village and, if that is the case, it is also likely that the stationary times will increase in both frequency and duration.
- 6.4. Accordingly, it is our conclusion that, without further proper strategic technical examination and investigation of traffic movements through the village, the District Plan is "unsound".
- 6.5. MSDC, together with the Highways Authority (WSCC) MUST conduct detailed Strategic Analysis that is urgently required for the village as it is now, and provide a funded solution. Collectively MSDC and WSCC have the responsibility to mend the camel's back that is broken.
- 6.6. This certainly can no longer wait for, or be left to, applicants' planning applications. The impact of the number of houses proposed will be far greater than would be expected for a planning application.
- 6.7. The scale of developments proposed in Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish, will have impacts on the local infrastructure, some distance away from the planning sites.
- 6.8. Otherwise, an effective, safe, sustainable, strategic transport management scheme cannot be achieved. There currently is no explanation or indication provided of HOW effective, safe, strategic transport management can be achieved in South Mid Sussex.

7. Survey Video

7.1 Full video can be viewed here: [\[Redacted\]](#)

7.2 Short Edited highlights can be viewed here: [\[Redacted\]](#)

7.3. Screenshots From Traffic Survey Video Edited Highlights



8. Time Will Tell - The Former Turnpike

