

NORTH OF RYE CYCLE ROUTES STUDY



2nd Draft for consultation November 2012



BACKGROUND:

In 2011 the Rother Environmental Group (REG) commissioned and published the Rye Cycle Study, which examined options for cycle routes in and around Rye. Following this, REG was approached by Iden Parish Council requesting help with developing a safe cycle route between Iden and Rye.

This work was subsequently included in a larger bid to the Little Cheyne Court Wind Farm Community Fund, administered by the Sussex Community Foundation, which successfully secured funding in April 2012. REG also part funded this study.

In winter 2012 REG was approached by members of the Parent Teacher Association of St Michael's Primary School, Playden, to help develop a safer environment around the approaches to the school and the study was therefore broadened out to include Playden.

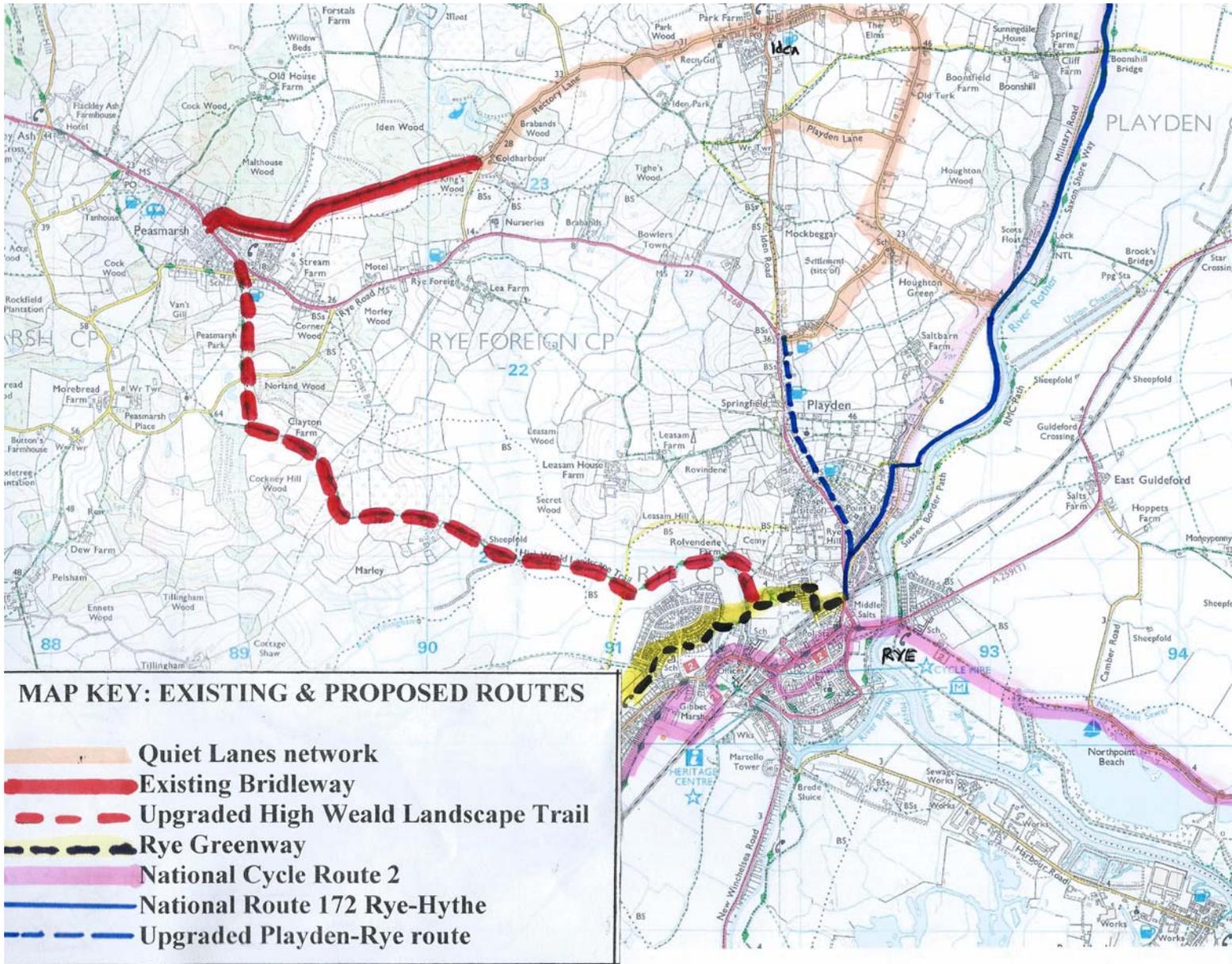
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STAKEHOLDERS:

East Sussex County Council
Rother District Council
Rye Town Council
Iden Parish Council
Playden Parish Council
Peasmarsh Parish Council
St Michael's Primary School, Playden



SUMMARY:

- 1. Create a network of ‘Quiet Lanes’ linking together Peasmarsh, Iden, Playden and Rye.**
- 2. Link these into the new Rye-Hythe multipurpose path.**
- 3. Create a cycle route alongside the A268 in Playden**
- 4. Improve the High Weald Landscape Trail between Rye-Peasmarsh.**
- 5. Improve connections with the new Rye Greenway.**

Iden to Rye

The most direct route between Iden and Rye is along the Iden Road (B2082) for approx 1.75 kilometres and then along the A268 for a further 1.75 kilometres passing through the village of Playden to reach Rye.

The main issues with this route are fast traffic speeds along the B2082 which is at the national speed limit of 60 mph/96 kph outside Iden village, with most of the road offering no refuges or pavement. As one resident puts it, this is “virtually a motorised race track”. In addition, there is a steep gradient for about 500m on Rye Hill as the A268 enters Rye, which is hugely off-putting for cyclists contemplating a return journey to Iden.

Iden Village to Scott’s Float via Houghton Lane

The second option between Iden and Rye is along either Playden Lane from the edge of the village until it joins Houghton Lane or from the village crossroads down Grove Lane until it becomes Houghton Lane. Houghton Lane then joins Houghton Green Lane and leads down towards Military Road. Both these routes are approx 2.75 kilometres from the centre of the village to Military Road. The advantage of this route is that these are both quiet village/rural lanes with relatively low traffic speeds and therefore well suited for a cycle route.



Reference photos: Lack of traffic and low vehicle speeds provide a good cycle route along Houghton Green Lane (left) and Grove Lane (right).

Recommendation: Following the lowering of the speed limit in Iden to 30 MPH, we recommend that the next step is to create a network of 20 MPH ‘Quiet Lanes’ encompassing Houghton Green Lane, Houghton Lane, Playden Lane, Grove Lane, Church Lane and Coldharbour Lane.

Other routes: We also investigated the possibility of using the rural route as far as its junction with the footpath just north of Elmsfield Cottages and then following this footpath past Cliff Farm down to Military Road. At 2 kilometres in total length this is the shortest route to get to the main road, however a very steep incline down a gully just before it reaches the road rules this out as a cycle route.



Reference photos: Although the shortest route, the footpath past Cliff Farm (left) goes down a gully in the cliff which is too steep for a cycle path (right).

Scott's Float to Rye

From its junction with Playden Lane just south of the Scott's Float lock to its junction with the A268, Military Road runs along the flat for approx 2 kilometres, with about half this length designated as a 30 mph zone and the remainder at the national speed limit (60 mph).

According to road traffic data from ESCC's monitor No.166 located just outside the 30MPH zone, this road experiences average peak traffic flows of 71 vehicles an hour (AM) and 78 vehicles an hour (PM) southbound, and 86 vehicles an hour (AM) and 90 vehicles an hour (PM) northbound (sample data from week beginning 09 July 2012). This means a vehicle passes on average every 35-38 seconds in peak periods. This monitor does not capture speed data, however local evidence is that vehicle speeds along Military Road can be excessive, particularly on the long straight stretch outside of the urban 30MPH zone and the approaches to Appledore.

Hythe-Rye Multi-Use Path

The national cycling charity Sustrans (www.sustrans.org) is currently developing a route between Hythe and Rye under commission from Kent County Council and Shepway District Council.

This route would follow the Royal Military Canal for around 20 miles from Hythe to Rye, mostly following the northern and/or western bank along the Saxon Shore Way and Royal Military Canal Path. In the southernmost stages towards Rye, the route follows the River Rother and then Military Road.

Fortunately, this would therefore provide a mostly traffic-free route for residents of Iden and Playden to reach the centre of Rye once it is completed.

ST MICHAELS' PRIMARY SCHOOL PLAYDEN

St. Michael's is a voluntary controlled Church of England School for children aged 4 to 11, situated in a rural location about 2.5km from Rye. The school currently has 95 pupils. The school is located on Houghton Green Lane about 1km east of the A268.

Problems associated with vehicle traffic around the school including parking issues, poor sightlines towards traffic approaching from the east, and speedign vehicles using Houghton Green Lane as a 'rat run' or short cut between the A268 and Military Road.



Traffic outside St Michael's Primary School on Houghton Green Lane.

Eco Schools Award and Walking Bus

The school has recently embarked on a project to gain Eco School status, and also instituted a Walking Bus initiative in order to try and get more pupils/parents walking to school. The event was well supported with 10 adult volunteers, a police presence, and 34 children taking part.



OPTIONS FOR PLAYDEN/HOUGHTON GREEN

1. Join with Iden to campaign for a network of 20MPH 'Quiet Lanes' encompassing Houghton Green Lane, Houghton Lane, Playden Lane, Grove Lane, Church Lane and Coldharbour Lane.
2. Consider the widening and improvement of the existing footpath alongside the A268 between the Peace and Plenty public house and the Top of the Hill public house, a distance of around 1 kilometre.



This paved route alongside the A268 could be widened and improved to encourage local residents to walk and cycle to St Michael's Primary School.

SUMMARY:

- 1. Create a network of 'Quiet Lanes' linking together Peasmarsch, Iden, Playden and Rye.**
- 2. Link these into the new Rye-Hythe multipurpose path.**
- 3. Create a cycle route alongside the A268 in Playden**
- 4. Improve the High Weald Landscape Trail between Rye-Peasmarsch.**
- 5. Improve connections with the new Rye Greenway.**
- 6. Create cycle lanes along Military Rd into Rye.**

Appendix A: 'QUIET LANES'



Speeding traffic is a huge problem in villages and along country lanes, and is set to get worse as traffic levels continue to rise. Under the Transport Act 2000, local authorities are able to designate roads for which they are responsible as Quiet Lanes.

Quiet Lanes are designated minor rural roads intended to pay special attention to the needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and the mobility impaired. They are designed to enable users to enjoy country lanes in greater safety and encourage car drivers to respect more vulnerable road users.

Quiet Lanes work best when they are part of a network of designated lanes which can link local residents to, for example, the local shop or school, and connect lanes around a village centre or to a nearby village. Measures such as lower speed limits and discrete road signs aim to encourage drivers to slow down and be considerate to more vulnerable users who can in turn use and enjoy country lanes in greater safety, with less threat from speeding traffic.

Quiet Lanes form an effective part of the new GO20 Campaign, which is a coalition between Sustrans, Brake, Living Streets, the Campaign to Protect Rural England, the National Heart Forum and 20's Plenty for Us.

We recommend the creation of a network of 'Quite Lanes' linking Iden, Playden and Peasmarsch. This would encompass Houghton Green Lane,

Houghton Lane, Playden Lane, Grove Lane, Church Lane and Coldharbour Lane.

For more detailed guidance on community campaigning:

- 20's Plenty for Us [website](#)
- Living Streets' guide on [how to take action](#)
- Brake's road safety [community campaign kit](#)
- CPRE's advice on [taking action in rural areas](#)
- Sustrans' [activities near you](#)

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