

Flempton cum Hengrave Parish Council

Two villages, one community



Grange Farm Barns Complex, Hengrave - Request for Speed Limit Change on A1101

Report By:
Cllr Graham Walker
Cllr David Bambury
Cllr Janet Davies

June/July/August 2025

Background

The Grange Farm Barns (GFB) residential complex is located in the village of Hengrave at the Flempton end running parallel to the A1101. It is therefore part of the Hengrave cum Flempton Parish.

“Grange Farm in Hengrave has a long history, with evidence pointing to its existence in the early 18th century. While the exact date of its origins is uncertain, the farmstead is visible on the 1st edition Ordinance survey map, suggesting its presence by then. The farm includes buildings like a brick farmhouse and a brick aisled barn, with the barn engine house dated to 1849. The Dunlop family has been at Grange Farm since the 1950’s, initially focusing on arable and beef farming before establishing the Grange Farm Equestrian Centre in the 1980’s.” Source: Google AI Search

The barn residential development was created around 20+ years ago and the area has been further developed over the years with a small number of additional houses being constructed on the site.

The total number of residents on this site today is 23 with 7 children, each household having at least 1-2 cars. The school-age children who need to catch the bus into Bury St Edmunds need to walk from Grange Farm to the bus stop at the opposite end of the village.

A more recent development in this area is a building business that has moved into the sheds based at the rear of the barns. They access this area from Loc-1 in **Appendix #1**.



The Problem

Although the GFB development has been part of the village of Hengrave since the early 18th century, it sadly does not benefit from the same 30mph speed limit as the rest of Hengrave. As a result, the residents must turn into and out of traffic from the shared driveway onto the A1101 potentially travelling at 50mph - or even greater when drivers are not adhering to that current speed limit. This image denotes the start of the village if you were driving from the Flempton direction with a 50mph limit just before rounding the bend where Grange Farm Barns are situated. The 30mph signs start further down the road. Please see Appendix #5 which is a list (and map) of all the crashes documented along the section of A1101 from Flempton to just outside Hengrave over a 25 year period - Source www.crashmap.co.uk. Data up to end of 2022.



Issue 1: the bend

The picture below shows the first entry into the GFB area along the A1101 from Flempton. The Grange Farm complex is built close to a bend in the road. At this point the designated speed limit is still 50mph. The turning on the left is access to the rear of the barns and a new building business - you can see the dwellings at GFB coming into view on the left. The main access for GFB residents is only 150m further down from this from the junction as seen below.

From the speed survey carried out in 2021 (see table below) it can be seen that 20% of all cars going Eastbound and 35% going Westbound are traveling at speeds in excess of the 50mph speed limit. These speeds are at the point where the information was gathered but we feel it is fair to assume that cars traveling towards the bend ie Eastbound will be at the same speed as there has been no indication to reduce speed or lower speed to 30mph. This means that 35% of cars traveling round the bend (shown below) have no chance of stopping in time should there be a parked vehicle there - refer to Issue 4 - Bin store. More worryingly 18% of the cars are travelling at 60mph or more giving them even less chance of stopping in time.

To complicate matters further a small but important number of vehicles traveling along the A1101 are left hand drive. These are being used by US service men and women from RAF Lakenheath and Mildenhall. The implication being that visibility is further restricted due to the drivers location within the car.



Speed Survey Carried out in 2021 - Only vehicles exceeding the speed limit shown

	East Bound						
	Bin 7 51-<56	Bin 8 56-<61	Bin 9 61-<66	Bin 10 66-<71	Bin 11 71-<76	Bin 12 76-<81	Bin 13 =>81
Tue 28 Sep	349	106	53	26	7	6	6
Wed 29 Sep	381	112	65	32	17	4	6
Thu 30 Sep	372	104	49	22	11	9	3
Fri 1 Oct	445	120	55	29	20	2	5
Sat 2 Oct	289	80	44	17	10	4	2
Sun 3 Oct	262	103	47	25	15	10	2
Mon 4 Oct	389	99	51	20	11	9	3
5 Day Ave.	387	108	55	26	13	6	5
7 Day Ave.	355	103	52	24	13	6	4
	West Bound						
	Bin 7 51-<56	Bin 8 56-<61	Bin 9 61-<66	Bin 10 66-<71	Bin 11 71-<76	Bin 12 76-<81	Bin 13 =>81
Tue 28 Sep	658	192	80	36	17	7	1
Wed 29 Sep	658	205	58	28	9	2	2
Thu 30 Sep	719	243	74	27	10	6	3
Fri 1 Oct	748	226	60	27	13	5	3
Sat 2 Oct	476	142	57	19	5	5	5
Sun 3 Oct	432	172	69	28	5	4	6
Mon 4 Oct	670	261	86	32	12	4	6
5 Day Ave.	691	225	72	30	12	5	3
7 Day Ave.	623	206	69	28	10	5	4

Location of survey point shown in **Appendix #1**

Issue 2: exit/entry into the main barn complex

As the community has grown in the Grange Farm complex, traffic movement in and out of the area has increased commensurately. The key point is that the traffic is either turning into GFB from the A1101 or out onto the A1101 and into traffic moving at 50mph or greater. In addition, the A1101 is a link road between the A11 and the A14 and as such carries significant numbers of large articulated lorries making their way across the county, it is the main road to the RAF bases at Mildenhall and Lakenheath and the ambulance depot at Red Lodge.



Issue 3: exit/entry to the rear of the barns and building business

Further development in the area has resulted in a building business now being located to the rear of GFB (marked with white X in Appendix 1). This has caused an increase in traffic at Loc-1. Whilst this traffic is not turning close to a blind corner, it is turning into traffic moving at potentially 50mph or greater. We understand that this entrance is also used for access to GFB for the filling of heating oil tanks and the emptying of foul waste tanks. As a result, traffic using this turning will invariably be larger lorries and potentially heavy plant and machinery.



Issue 4: the bin store

This issue, together with the Issue 1 (above), the Parish Council sees as the most pressing problem. A combination of speed, a shallow bend which we estimate to have a radius of 370m and parked vehicles is a recipe for a major collision - See **Appendix #1**.

Note: Bend radius is calculated using Chat GPT AI - the Parish Council would welcome advice on whether the bend meets regulations for major A roads.

This area stores about 10 bins and requires emptying on a weekly basis. The important issue to note here is that this is the only access point for refuse collection to take place. This is a risky and dangerous location to carry out this operation. The picture shown for Loc-1 (in issue 3 above) shows a car rounding the bend and it is only at this point or slightly before can a parked lorry be seen. The distance from this point to the bin store is only around 50m (distances are approximate) see picture below. We believe this poses a significant risk to the safety of West Suffolk Council employees manning the bin lorries as well as other motorists.

Recent conversations with residents have brought to light further dangerous practices taking place at this location. We understand that delivery vans such as Amazon/Evri/Yodel/DHL etc. have been seen parking at this location to make their parcel deliveries. They do this to save time, as it avoids turning into the drive at Loc-2. This is unacceptable and only increases the chances of an incident occurring. Anecdotally we understand this may happen 4-5 times per day meaning that there could be parked vans there for a total of 20-25 mins per day.



Resident feedback

Grange Farm Barns: Residents' views and correspondence

We understand from local residents that there have been several incidents over the years and thankfully no fatalities have occurred - yet. Below are a selection of letters and messages from residents of GFB.

Mr. & Mrs. G of GFB: Extract from letter sent to Parish Council - Date 18th Dec 2024

"The accident which occurred over last weekend with a car crashing into the ditch on the edge of Hengrave has prompted me to write once again to urge the Parish Council to take the necessary actions to instigate changes to the speed limits in Hengrave, before there are further accidents & casualties.

I attach pictures of the vehicle and debris which is still in the ditch after the vehicle has been towed away.

In addition to speed limits, we have a number of other points which are outlined below.

Speed Limits

We would like to see the speed limit reduced from 50 mph to 30 mph on the A1101 from the Hengrave sign board when coming from Flempton. Likewise, when leaving the village travelling towards Flempton the speed limit reducing from 50mph to 30 mph from the current 50mph sign just after the Hengrave Hall Tradesman entrance onwards.

We live in the Grange Farm Barns area of the Village and the speed which traffic passes the entrance to Grange Farm is excessive and at certain times of the day frightening. This is especially the case with traffic going to and from the Airbases.



We have even been overtaken by vehicles while we are indicating to turn right into our turning on several occasions.

In addition to the speed implications with accidents & near misses occurring regularly there is also the nuisance of excessive sound when cars & motorbikes accelerate out of the bend just after Grange Farm Barns many of these are well in excess of the legal level of 72 decibels.

I believe by implementing this change the speed limit at this end of Hengrave would be similar to the other villages along the A1101 where there are residences on the outskirts of



Flempton (plus the Golf Course), Lackford & Icklingham a 30 mph speed limit is in place well after the residences are cleared.

Ideally, given the poor quality of driving along the A1101, a reduction of the 50mph sections to 40mph would be more appropriate & possibly encourage HGVs to use the A14 & A11 rather than rumble through the Villages.

The location of this accident:



Mrs. B:12th June 2025

"Living at Grange Farm croft, the impact of high-speed traffic on our stretch of road has become an increasing concern. Vehicles regularly travel well above the speed limit, and as a resident. I've witnessed several near-misses—particularly where visibility is limited and there are entrances and driveways in frequent use. The speed at which some vehicles pass by is not only dangerous but also creates a constant sense of unease for those of us living here.

There have already been several accidents along this section of the road, which underlines just how serious the situation is. It's only a matter of time before someone is seriously hurt if nothing changes. The combination of speed, narrow verges, and blind spots makes this a real hazard for both drivers and pedestrians.

Noise is also a significant issue, especially during early mornings and evenings when traffic is lighter and drivers tend to accelerate. It affects our quality of life and raises concerns about safety—not just for residents but for visitors, delivery drivers, and anyone accessing our homes. I strongly support any initiative to reduce speeds and improve safety on this stretch of road, and I urge Suffolk Highways to consider action before a more serious incident occurs."

Mrs. and Mrs S: 25th June 2025

"Excess speed of 50mph is a major factor at and around the Grange Farm Entrance. We have only lived here for 2 years and have witnessed three accidents. The increase in speed especially motorbikes is deafening! Studies have consistently shown that higher speeds increase the chances of being involved in a crash and the severity of injuries.

By driving at lower speeds, drivers have more time to react to unexpected events and the bend coming out of Hengrave towards Flempton, thus preventing crashes or lessening their impact. Individual drivers, however, can make a difference by driving as steadily as possible – it is acceleration and braking that increases fuel consumption and emissions.

Our residents want safer places to walk, walking with pushchairs, pets and cycling without fearing for their lives or their loved ones. Reducing the speed limit to include Grange Farm Residents and the sharp bend to 30 mph is long overdue for our health and lives! On another note, a pathway from Mill Road to Fornham All Saints would be greatly appreciated."

Mr and Mrs G: 5th Aug 2025

My husband and I live at a property which backs onto the A1101 at the Flempton end of Hengrave village, Grange Farm Barns. We regularly walk our Labrador or drive along the A1101 and have witnessed many episodes of speeding and unsafe overtaking on the road especially at the blind bend as they enter the village. As you are aware there have been head on collisions at that very bend, which so far have not been fatal but there is an obvious risk that it may happen in the future. I particularly fear for the cyclists who regularly travel along our road!

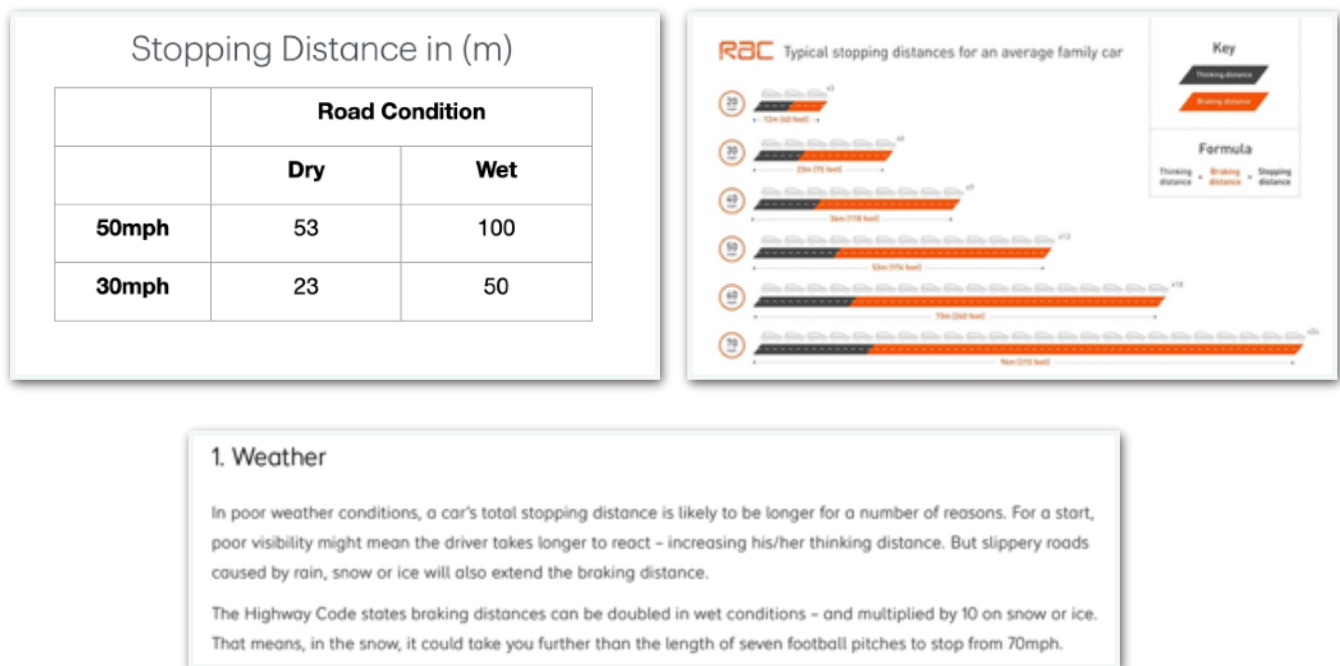
Recently I have observed that delivery drivers unable to find the location of properties either at Grange Farm or elsewhere in the village stopping at the waste bin collection site at the edge of the road not far from the blind bend. This means that other drivers overtake the vehicles whilst driving at speed often into the path of oncoming vehicles. This also happens at the entrance road to the farm. There are also a lot of left-hand drive cars that (possibly because they don't really understand our Highway Code) overtake at high speed in the village in areas where there are central double white lines indicating that overtaking is not allowed.

When we first came to live in Hengrave with our children aged 9 and 12, 19 years ago we reported these issues to West Suffolk Council as we were concerned for their safety. We have continued to do so and request the inclusion of Grange Farm Barns as part of the village to have the benefit of the 30mph speed limit, to no avail!

Does there really have to be a fatality due to this issue before anything is done about this problem!

What is the risk?

Check the stopping distances for cars travelling at 50mph and 30mph and we get the following results according to the following Department of Transport “Guidance - Setting local speed limits” <https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/learning-to-drive/stopping-distances/>, updated 17 March 2024



Refuse Collection Point - Loc 2

From the above figures, only if a car is travelling at 30mph is it likely to stop in time to avoid a collision. The speed limit at that point, as we are all aware, is 50mph (or greater) therefore the risk of a collision taking place is potentially significant. Please refer to speed data included in this review which confirms that 20% of all traffic travelling eastbound towards the bend are moving in excess of the 50mph speed limit.

Please see **Appendix #2 #3 #4** included within this submission in support of these findings.

Entrance to GFB - Loc-3

The distance from exit of the blind bend to the Loc-3 is approx. 150m. At this distance all vehicles should be capable of stopping in time if a vehicle is turning at Loc-3. As we know not all drivers obey the speed limit and the stopping distance at 60mph is 73m. Whilst, this is acceptable for dry conditions, it is doubled for wet conditions.

Entrance to rear of GFB - Loc-1

We feel that location doesn't pose as much of a concern due to the visibility of traffic coming from Flempton. However, traffic coming from the village is accelerating as they are already in a 50mph zone. As stated previously, there are large vehicles manoeuvring which are carrying heating fuel, foul waste and traffic connected to the new business to the rear of the barns. As such vehicles turning right at this point have the potential to be vulnerable.

Dept of Transport Guidance: What does it say?

The DfT guidance is necessarily a hefty tome, but it is designed out of necessity to cover all types of roads and all circumstances.

Interestingly, one of the first statements within the document is:

Section: Details

(3) "Roads should be designed so that mistakes made by road users do not result in death or serious injury. Effective road management is part of creating safe road environment that is fit for purpose."

The document goes on to say:

Section: Priorities for Action

- *Use the right speed limits in the right places*
- *Keep their speed limits under review*

Section: Villages

(135) "Fear of traffic can affect people's quality of life in villages. It is, therefore, government policy that a 30mph speed limit should be the norm through villages"

The Solution

Grange Farm Barns are designated as part of the Hengrave village. They have been part of Hengrave since the 18th Century and as such they should be treated same the rest of village. A village which the DfT guidelines state "...It is, therefore, government policy that a 30mph speed limit should be the norm through villages".

We respectfully request that SCC Highways grants permission to move the 30mph limit and the appropriate signage to include Grange Farm Barns.

In the meantime, the Parish Council are making all efforts within their powers to ease access onto the A1101. We are currently in contact with the current owners of the hedgerows running parallel with the footpath along the A1101 at GFB (these were previously the responsibility of Troston Farms) to request they regularly cut back the hedgerows. This should make visibility a little easier at the exit point (Loc-3) and hopefully for the oncoming traffic. It will also help pedestrians, so that they are not forced to walk along the outer edge of the pavement.

The Parish Council also appreciates the recent offer by SCC Cllr Hopfensperger to consider providing speed reduction measures using "Reduce Speed, Concealed Entrance" signs, but we feel that this is only a 'sticking plaster' solution over what is potentially a more serious problem.

The DfT guidance states:

The underlying principles of local speed limits - Main Points

"The factors that should be considered in any decision on local limits are:

- *History of collisions*
- *Road geometry and engineering*
- *Road function*
- *Composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users*
- *Existing traffic speeds*
- *Road environment"*

The Parish Council appreciates that all the above need be considered when considering the speed limit passing the area in question. Considering this, we feel that the only solution which could ameliorate the situation is to instigate a 30mph limit from Loc-4. Put simply, the current speed limit does not take into account an appropriate stopping distance where there are parked vehicles - in particular at Loc-2.

Please see **Appendix #2** included within this submission in support of these findings.

The DfT Guidelines state:

Section: Background and Objectives of the Circular - Background

"As a general rule for every 1mph reduction in average speed, collision frequency decreases by around 5%" Ref: Taylor, Lynam and Baruta, 2000

By reducing the speed limit passing GFB to 30mph, this would provide a 20mph reduction in speed. Of course this does not provide the complete elimination of collision frequency, but it would go a long way to ameliorating the situation.

Being realistic, none of these measures will ever prevent a driver who wishes to speed in that section, should they choose to do so. However, we are optimistic that most responsible motorists will respond to the signs and act accordingly. We are also investigating the addition of an additional VAS unit at the entry point to both Hengrave and Flempton.

Appendix List

Appendix #1 - Schematic layout of Grange Farm Barns with road layout and access points.

Please Note: Distances shown in **Appendix #1** and referenced in this document are approximate only.

Appendix #2 - This is ChatGPT response when asked a question regarding the potential for an accident to happen whilst negotiating a bend. The document makes reference to a couple of technical papers which we can provide but are easily accessible via a simple internet search.

Appendix #3 - Provided for information purposes only. The map show accidents from year 2000 to 2023. Source www.crashmap.co.uk