



**COBBETT HILL ROAD, NORMANDY
PROPOSED 7.5 TONNE
HEAVY GOODS VEHICLE BAN**

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)**

24th JUNE 2009

KEY ISSUE

This report considers objections received following advertisement of a proposed 7.5 tonne weight restriction on Cobbett Hill Road in Normandy.

SUMMARY

The Committee agreed the imposition of a 7.5 tonne Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) ban on Cobbett Hill Road in June 2008, following representations from Normandy Parish Council and local residents. The proposal has been advertised and objections have been received from two neighbouring Parish Councils, one including a petition of local residents, and one local business. The report makes no recommendation, and seeks the views of the Committee as to the way forward.

Report by

LOCAL HIGHWAYS MANAGER

Surrey Atlas Ref.

Pages 106 & 107

GUILDFORD B.C. WARD (S)

NORMANDY

COUNTY ELECTORAL DIVISION (S)

WORPLESDON

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to consider the views of those who have petitioned both for and against the proposed HGV ban and to resolve whether or not it wishes to proceed with the proposal.

If the Committee is minded to **proceed** with the ban, it is asked to agree:

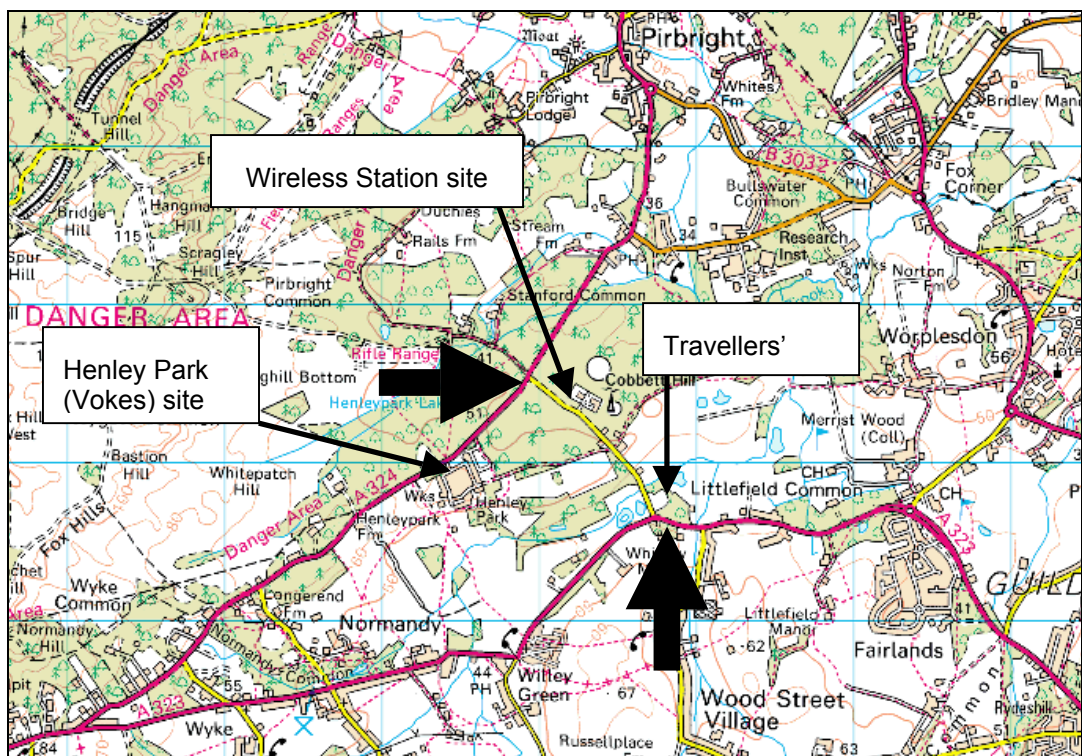
- (i) that the objections set out in this report be over-ruled and the necessary Weight Restriction Order under Sections 1 and 2 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 be made.

If the Committee is minded **not to proceed** with the ban, it is asked to agree:

- (ii) that the proposal be abandoned.

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

- 1 Cobbett Hill Road is some 1250 metres in length, and joins the A324 Aldershot Road at its northern end to the A323 (also called Aldershot Road) at its southern end. A location plan is shown below. The road runs between the two marked points. It has no footways, and at its northern end varies in width between 5 and 6 metres. At its southern end it is narrower, at between 4 and 5 metres. It is subject to a 40 mph speed limit, and has no highway lighting. Public footpath 464 crosses the road around its mid-point. The road is predominantly rural in character, with a small number of individual properties accessed directly or indirectly from the road. In addition there is a travellers' site on the eastern side of the road close to its southern extremity. Also on its eastern side, close to the northern extremity is a site of the wireless station.



- 2 Although the road is unclassified, it forms a natural short cut between the two principal roads for some traffic such as from Henley Park (formerly known as the Vokes site) on the A324 immediately to the west, travelling towards Guildford and the A3.
- 3 The wireless station site is currently being used for a variety of purposes, including some involving HGVs. The status of these uses is controversial locally.
- 4 At its meeting on 3 March 2005 the Committee considered a report proposing three HGV bans in Normandy: on School Lane, Hunts Hill Road, and Cobbett Hill Road. These had been suggested by local people and Normandy Parish Council during the consultation for the Normandy Village Safety Scheme. However, following representations from a coach operator who used the road en route to a school contract service for the County Council the Committee resolved that the officer recommendations be agreed in relation to School Lane and Hunts Hill Road only, and that Cobbett Hill Road should be reconsidered and a report brought back to a future meeting of the Committee if necessary. The HGV bans on School Lane and Hunts Hill Road were subsequently implemented, and came into effect on 16 January 2006.
- 5 At the meeting of the Committee on 12 February 2008 Mr Tim Kaner presented a petition on behalf of 31 residents of Henley Park and Cobbett Hill hamlet (plus additional "signatures" claimed via email). The petition read: "We the undersigned request that SCC introduce a 7.5 tonne weight restriction on Cobbett Hill Road in Normandy, Guildford." Officers brought a full report on the matter to the meeting of the Committee on 18 June 2008.
- 6 Traffic counts from previous years have shown that some 20 to 30 HGVs per day would be affected by the ban, together with some 20 coaches. However, vehicles requiring access to premises in the road for business or delivery purposes would be exempt from such a prohibition. Therefore vehicles to and from the travellers' site or the former wireless station, or making deliveries to other premises would all be exempt.
- 7 For effective enforcement to take place, an HGV would need to be followed by a Police Officer to be certain that no need for access had occurred. In practice Surrey Police are unlikely to be in a position to provide a high level of enforcement, and this is likely to mean that the ban is not complied with. It is likely therefore that a ban would not result in a significant reduction in HGV traffic using the road.
- 8 At its meeting on 18 June 2008, the Committee resolved to proceed with the ban. However no funds were available at the time. At the end of the 2008/09 financial year funds became available so officers advertised the proposed ban. As a result a number of objections have been received.

OBJECTIONS RECEIVED

- 9 Objections have been received from two neighbouring Parish Councils, Worplesdon and Pirbright. Pirbright PC states that they are in favour of keeping lorries off rural roads, but not by chasing such traffic from one parish to another. They go on to say that the proposal does not define an alternative route for displaced traffic, and they believe that for much of the traffic this will be via Ash Road, Guildford Road and Fox Corner. These roads are more heavily populated than Cobbett Hill Road and include two extremely sharp corners. They also point out that there have been no injury collisions involving HGVs, so believe that no case can be made for the ban on accident reduction grounds.
- 10 Pirbright PC's objections are supported by a petition signed by 111 local residents from 66 households, mainly in the Fox Corner / Ash Road area. This states "We the undersigned oppose the request that SCC introduce a 7.5 tonne weight restriction on Cobbett Hill Road in Normandy".
- 11 Worplesdon PC state that they wish to oppose the proposed weight restriction in the strongest possible terms on the following grounds:
- HGVs will automatically use Holly Lane, adversely affecting students attending Merrist Wood college, who have petitioned for a pedestrian crossing on Holly Lane.
 - Closure of Cobbetts Hill road to HGVs and buses will result in an unacceptable increase in heavy traffic in the adjoining parishes.
 - Weight restrictions should not be introduced in a piecemeal fashion. A countywide strategy is required. Restrictions should only be implemented if appropriate improvements are made at known 'hot spots' on the alternative routes.
- 12 In addition, officers have received correspondence from the owner of the wireless station site. He has been advised that any HGV ban would not apply to vehicles using the site, since they would be exempt from any ban. He has advised that nevertheless he wishes his objection to stand on the grounds that any HGV ban may adversely affect his future prospects of being granted planning permission for activities on the site, at a time of difficult trading conditions.

OFFICER COMMENTS

- 13 The number of HGVs using Cobbett Hill Road is modest, and therefore the effects of any diversions would also be modest. This argument could be deployed both for and against the proposed ban. Any diverted traffic would probably affect a greater number of households than the current situation.

- 14 Officers of Transport for Surrey are currently working on a county-wide HGV strategy. This will be aimed at providing information on suitable routes for HGVs to the Ordnance Survey, and thence to satellite navigation companies, as well as publishing maps showing suitable HGV routes. It is unlikely to result in wholesale prohibition of HGVs on all rural roads, since this would be expensive, unlikely to receive significant enforcement, and would add considerably to sign clutter in rural areas.
- 15 There is no strong technical case which can be made either for or against the HGV ban.

OPTIONS

- 16 **(a) Over-rule the objections and proceed with ban.** This would be popular with Normandy Parish Council and those residents who petitioned for the ban. This is unlikely to result in a significant reduction in HGV usage of Cobbett Hill Road, partly due to legitimate access needs, and partly to likely illegal use of the road combined with a lack of regular enforcement. Worplesdon and Pirbright PCs, and those residents who signed the Pirbright petition, would consider themselves disadvantaged by this, although any displacement effects, equally, are likely to be modest
- 17 **(b) Abandon the proposal.** This would be popular with Worplesdon and Pirbright PCs, and those residents who signed the Pirbright petition, but unpopular with Normandy Parish Council and those who petitioned for the ban.

CONSULTATIONS

- 19 This report is presented as a result of advertising the proposed HGV ban, and takes account of all representations received to date.

FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 21 The necessary order-making including advertisement costs, and the required signage are estimated to cost between £5,000 and £10,000. Part of these costs has already been incurred. If the Committee so decides, the cost of the signage can be met from the devolved Local Transport Plan or Local Allocation capital budgets.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 22 The scheme has no economic implications. It may marginally improve the quality of life of residents, which in turn may marginally increase local walking and cycling journeys.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

23 This report has no implications for equality and diversity.

CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

24 This report has no implications for crime and disorder.

CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

25 There is no clear-cut case either for or against the proposed HGV ban. In these circumstances officers would normally recommend maintaining the status quo. However, in view of the strong views expressed on all sides, no recommendation is offered in this instance.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

26 Depending on which of the recommendations is approved by the Committee, officers will either advertise the proposed prohibition, or will abandon or defer the proposal.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS	Normandy Village Safety Scheme consultation responses Previous Committee reports & minutes, notably: Petition, Item 4, 12 February 2008 Committee Report, Item 12, 18 June 2008
