



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)

B3015 DEEPCUT BRIDGE ROAD, DEEPCUT WEIGHT RESTRICTION (over railway bridge) AMENDMENT

8th NOVEMBER 2007

KEY ISSUE

To seek authority to advertise a Traffic Regulation Order, required to make enforcement of an existing 7.5 tonne weight limit more effective.

SUMMARY

The B3015 Deepcut Bridge Road bridge over the railway currently has a 7.5 tonne Maximum Gross Plated Weight. This presents enforcement difficulties that could be resolved by a change to the wording of the Traffic Regulation Order. The report seeks approval to make this change to overcome this, and to remove the current exemptions that could also affect bridge safety.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Surrey Heath) is asked to agree that:

- (i) An order be advertised under the provisions of the Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the purpose of which will be to change the current 7.5 tonne maximum gross plated weight on the B3015 Deepcut Bridge Road bridge over the railway, to 7.5 tonne maximum gross weight, and subject to no objections being maintained, the Traffic Regulation Order be made.
- (ii) The Local Highways Manager in consultation with the Chairman of the Local Committee and Local Member resolve any objections received in connection with the proposal.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. In December 1999 Surrey Heath Borough Council, as Agent for the Highway Authority, implemented a temporary 7.5 tonne weight limit on B3015 Deepcut Bridge Road. This was following a request by Surrey County Council's Structures Group.
2. The bridge is the responsibility of Network Rail and they had planned to undertake strengthening works in the future. The planned strengthening was later delayed and after consultation with GOSE to seek an extension to the

temporary Weight Limit Order, a permanent weight restriction was deemed appropriate.

3. At the Surrey Heath Area Transportation Committee of 26 October 2001, the Committee agreed to advertise and subsequently a permanent 7.5 tonne Weight Limit Order was made. The permanent Weight Limit Order was made on 19 December 2001.

ANALYSIS

4. Enforcement of the existing 7.5 tonne weight limit can require the alleged offending vehicle to be weighed to ascertain whether the vehicle is overweight, and if the driver is liable to prosecution. In order to process a potential prosecution the vehicle must be escorted to a public weighbridge, of which there are none within a reasonable distance. This makes enforcement difficult, costly and time consuming and as such enforcement less frequent.
5. The bridge over the railway was subjected to a 7.5 tonne weight limit due to the structural condition of the bridge. It is considered important to ensure enforcement is made more practical and effective. The existing Weight Limit Order includes an exemption for vehicles upon the direction or permission of the police, to proceed over the bridge. It is considered that this exception should be excluded from the order on safety grounds.

OPTIONS

6. Trading Standards are able to carry out the enforcement of weight limits under their provisions to deal with 'weights and measures' but have highlighted matters of detail to the wording of the current weight limit order at Deepcut, which makes enforcement difficult.
7. At present a vehicle is required to be escorted to a public weighbridge to verify its actual weight. As there are less public weigh bridges in the locality trading standards have suggested amending the wording in the order, referring to the 'maximum gross weight' as directed by the Construction and Use Regulations 1986. This would allow enforcement officers to check vehicle details at the time of the alleged offence and take immediate action, thus making enforcement more effective and likely. The new order would also omit the exemptions contained in the existing Order, which will also avoid the risk of overweight vehicles using the bridge.

CONSULTATIONS

8. The proposal will be advertised under the provisions of the Traffic Regulation Act 1984, a notice of which will appear in the local press and be posted on site. Representations will be received during the 21-day advertising period.

FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

9. The estimated cost of amending the Traffic Regulation Order is £1,500 and will be funded from the Local Allocation budget.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

10. Surrey has embraced the concept of sustainable development, which is the foundation of Surrey's Local Transport Plan and is committed to the vision of making Surrey a better place.

CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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11. Surrey Heath Crime and Disorder strategy seeks to continually improve the safety of the community. The amendment of the restriction will enable more effective enforcement and reduce potential damage to the railway bridge.

CONCLUSION

12. The change of the Traffic Order will make the enforcement of the weight limit more effective and remove the potential risk of overweight vehicles being permitted onto the bridge.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13. To enable more cost effective enforcement and improve safety for users of the railway bridge.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

14. Subject to approval an amendment Order will be advertised under the Traffic Regulation Act 1984, a notice of which will appear in the local press and posted on site.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

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