

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****LOCAL COMMITTEE SPELTHORNE****DATE: 16 DECEMBER 2013****LEAD OFFICER: NICK HEALEY, AREA TEAM MANAGER (NE)****SUBJECT: FELTHAM ROAD WEIGHT RESTRICTION****DIVISION: ASHFORD, SUNBURY COMMON AND ASHFORD COMMON****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

In January 2013 Committee approved in principal a new 7.5t weight restriction in Feltham Road, between Clockhouse Lane and the Borough Boundary near Challenge Road.

This report describes the results of extensive public consultation undertaken in August and September 2013, summarises traffic surveys undertaken in September 2013, and gives the views of Surrey Police on the proposed new restriction.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Local Committee (Spelthorne) is asked to:**

- (i) Defer formally the proposed new weight restriction in Feltham Road until such a time as the London Borough of Hounslow are favourable to the introduction of advanced warning signs for the new restriction within the Hounslow administrative area.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

If the proposed new weight restriction were to go ahead without advanced warning signs on its westbound approach, this would give rise to significant road safety concerns. Furthermore Surrey Police have indicated that without advanced warning signs, any new restriction would be impossible to enforce.

**1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

1.1 There is a long standing desire in the local community on and around Feltham Road to reduce the number of HGVs using Feltham Road, between Clockhouse Lane and the County Boundary near Challenge Road. Surveys undertaken in 2012 suggest that there are approximately 300 HGV journeys along this section of Feltham Road every day.

1.2 In January 2013 Committee approved in principal a new 7.5t weight restriction in Feltham Road, with the aim of reducing the number of HGV journeys. Committee was aware that a new weight restriction would not remove all these HGVs – some would continue to have legitimate access for loading – but if the new weight restriction were to be implemented, there may be a significant reduction of HGV journeys in Feltham Road.

- 1.3 Committee was also aware that a new weight restriction might lead to an corresponding increase in HGV journeys on roads that may be used by HGV drivers to avoid the new weight restriction: Convent Road, School Road, Staines Road West, Cadbury Road and Chertsey Road.
- 1.4 Since January 2013, officers have completed extensive public consultation to determine the views of the local community. Traffic surveys have been completed to quantify the number of HGVs that would be affected by the proposed new restriction. Views have been sought from key stakeholders, including Surrey Police and the London Borough of Hounslow (LBH).

**2. ANALYSIS:**

2.1 In August and September 2013 local residents were consulted on the proposed new weight restriction. Consultation letters were sent to approximately 5,500 addresses within an area bounded by Feltham Road, Convent Road, School Road, Staines Road West, and Cadbury Road. The consultation also included a limited number of roads outside this perimeter, whose only means of access and egress is by one of the aforementioned roads. The results of this public consultation are summarised below:

**Table 1 Summary of public consultation**

All respondents (total 303)	
Agree	153 (50%)
Disagree	139 (46%)
No opinion	11 (4%)

- 2.2 A detailed breakdown of the responses is available in Annex A. A number of respondents submitted written comments in response to the consultation. These are reproduced in Annex A.
- 2.3 In general the proposed new weight restriction is supported by those who feel they would benefit from reduced HGV traffic in Feltham Road, and opposed by those who would be adversely affected by displaced HGVs.
- 2.4 LBH was consulted and do not support the proposed new restriction. Their response is presented in full in Annex B. This means it is not possible to provide advanced warning signs for the proposed new weight restriction, which would ordinarily be provided at the junction of Chertsey Road and Ashford Road, within LBH.
- 2.5 The absence of advanced warning signs creates a significant safety risk – that an HGV in LBH may enter Ashford Road to travel to Ashford, for example, and then be forced to U-turn at Challenge Road when faced with the proposed new weight restriction with no advanced warning. Annex E contains a drawing showing the U-turn manoeuvre that would be needed to turn a large HGV in this scenario. It is not possible to U-turn without reversing in the public highway, which would put the HGV at risk of conflict with all other road users.
- 2.6 LBH have also raised a separate concern over a potential conflict with the London Low Emission Zone (LEZ) boundary. Non compliant HGVs travelling

northwards along Cadbury Road reach the LEZ boundary at the junction of A244 Chertsey Road and B377 Ashford Road. At the present time such non-compliant vehicles may avoid entering the LEZ by turning left into Ashford Road. However these vehicles would also then be forced to U-turn at Challenge Road, or ignore the proposed new weight restriction. Challenge Road itself is within LEZ, and therefore a non-compliant vehicle would be forced to contravene the LEZ to perform a U-turn at Challenge Road.

2.7 Transport for London (TfL) are responsible for the LEZ. They have also raised concerns over a potential conflict with the LEZ boundary – as they did when a weight restriction in Feltham Road was considered previously. TfL's concerns were expressed in a letter dating from June 2008, which is reproduced in Annex C. TfL do not support the proposed weight restriction in Feltham Road, and are concerned that even if advanced warning signs were to be provided within LBH, there would still be a conflict between the proposed new restriction and the LEZ boundary.

2.8 Surrey Police have been involved in informal discussion of the proposed new weight restriction since it was first approved in principal by Committee in January 2013. They requested information on how many vehicles would be affected by the proposed new weight restriction. The original traffic surveys of 2012 did not discriminate between HGVs over 7.5t and those less than 7.5t. Therefore further traffic surveys were undertaken in September 2013 to quantify the number of HGVs that would be affected by the new restriction. From the outset Surrey Police have been concerned at the number of vehicles that would be forced to U-turn at Challenge Road, if the proposed new weight restriction were to go ahead without advanced warning signs within LBH.

2.9 The results of the traffic surveys of September 2013 are detailed in Annex D. The traffic surveys suggest that if the proposed new weight restriction were to go ahead, it would affect approximately 50-60% of the HGVs currently using Feltham Road. Approximately 50 HGVs per day would continue to use Feltham Road perfectly legitimately for access and loading, equivalent to one HGV every 14 minutes.

2.10 Most HGVs using Feltham Road as a through route are doing so to access the Challenge Road industrial area. However a significant number have no business in Challenge Road, and would be forced to U-turn on arrival at the eastern extent of the proposed new weight restriction, if no warning signs were to be provided.

2.11 In view of the traffic survey results from September 2013, Surrey Police have provided the following comments:

Graham Cannon, Road Safety & Traffic Management Officer:  
 Thank you for sharing the traffic survey data and for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.  
 My view is that the proposed 7.5t weight restriction in Feltham Road is totally unacceptable at the present time. I understand that the London Borough of Hounslow are opposed to the proposed restriction, which means that no advanced warning signs could be provided on the westbound approach to the restriction. This means that HGV drivers would be effectively trapped when they reached the beginning of the weight restriction near Challenge Road. They would

then be faced with the decision to either carry out a U-turn manoeuvre in the bellmouth of that junction, which I consider to be dangerous, or to contravene the restriction. In my opinion any westbound driver within the weight restriction could readily level an accusation of entrapment, which would make enforcement of the restriction impossible.

I appreciate that you have attempted to measure by the traffic surveys the number of vehicles that would be affected by the proposed restriction. In my view even with the numbers involved, the safety and enforcement risks outlined above make this proposal unfeasible.

The traffic survey data also shows that School Road, Cadbury Road and Chertsey Road could experience a noticeable increase in HGV traffic if the weight restriction were to go ahead. I am sure the residents of those roads would be deeply unhappy about that.

If this were to be advertised formally in the context of a Traffic Regulation Order I would register a formal objection in the strongest terms.

2.12 The Freight Transport Association and Road Hauliers Association were both consulted by e-mail sent on 4<sup>th</sup> September. No response had been received at the time of drafting this report.

2.13 In view of the road safety concerns arising out of this proposal, it is recommended to defer formally the proposed new weight restriction in Feltham Road until such a time as the London Borough of Hounslow are favourable to the introduction of advanced warning signs for the new restriction within the Hounslow administrative area.

2.14 It is recognised that this conclusion would be deeply disappointing to the local community in and around Feltham Road, and a relief for the local community in and around Cadbury Road. Both these roads currently take HGV traffic, which the respective communities feel is detrimental to their quality of life.

2.15 In view of the Borough-wide freight movement undertaken in 2012, there were three interventions that could be considered to respond to HGV traffic:

- Restrictions to prevent inappropriate HGV route choices;
- Positive signs to encourage appropriate HGV route choices;
- Mitigation of the impact of HGV traffic in roads where HGV traffic cannot be reduced.

2.16 In the case of both Feltham Road and Cadbury Road, there is no opportunity for HGV restrictions. Positive signs to encourage HGV drivers to avoid these roads would need to include signs in LBH, which LBH would not agree to. Therefore Members are invited to consider whether mitigation measures should be investigated to reduce the impact of HGV traffic in these roads. Such mitigation measures might include major resurfacing, moving ironwork, improving road alignment and drainage, or measures to encourage reduced speeds.

2.17 Members were previously invited to suggest to officers which sites elsewhere in Spelthorne might benefit from one or more of these three

interventions. At the time of writing officers have not received any suggestions.

### **3. OPTIONS:**

3.1 None.

### **4. CONSULTATIONS:**

4.1 As detailed above.

### **5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 The cost of the public consultation was £1,050. The cost of the consultation has been shared between the various allocations available to the Divisional Members whose Divisions are affected by the proposed weight restriction, and by the Ward Member for Ashford East.
- 5.2 The traffic surveys undertaken in September 2013 cost approximately £5,000. This will be funded from the Divisional Allocation for the Ashford Division.

### **6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:**

6.1 It is an objective of Surrey Highways to treat all users of the public highway equally and with understanding.

### **7. LOCALISM:**

7.1 The Local Committee has explored a proposal that would satisfy a local priority. Unfortunately the proposed weight restriction is not feasible at the present time.

### **8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

8.1 A well-managed highway network can contribute to reduction in crime and disorder as well as improve peoples' perception of crime.

### **9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

9.1 There is no strong technical justification for a new weight restriction. The number of HGV journeys in Feltham Road is not disproportionately high, when compared to similar locations in Spelthorne. There are legitimate destinations for HGVs served from Feltham Road. There is no pattern of collisions in Feltham Road involving HGVs.

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9.2 The introduction of a new weight restriction in Feltham Road would give rise to road safety concerns, as it would not be possible to provide advanced warning signs for the new restriction.

9.3 Surrey Police have indicated that without advanced warning signs the proposed new weight restriction would be unenforceable.

9.4 The results of the public consultation suggest that although the local community in and around Feltham Road would welcome a new restriction, the local community in and around Cadbury Road would oppose the new restriction.

9.5 The proposed new weight restriction is not feasible at the present time.

### **10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

10.1 The proposed new weight restriction would be removed from the forward programme of ITS schemes. Any similar future proposal for a new weight restriction on Feltham Road would need to consider carefully whether the circumstances had changed.

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**Contact Officer:** Nick Healey, Area Team Manager (NE)

**Consulted:** Local residents and businesses, London Borough of Hounslow, Transport for London, Surrey Police, Road Hauliers Association, Freight Transport Association.

**Annexes:** Five.

**Sources/background papers:** None.

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