



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (TANDRIDGE)

HGVS Problems and Opportunities Information Report to Tandridge Local Committee

1 March 2013

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Tandridge District is the most easterly of the 11 Surrey districts bordering Kent to the east, London to the north and East and West Sussex to the south. Although mainly rural, its location on the edge of London, and on national routes to and from the channel ports, contributes to a number of Heavy Goods Vehicle problems for its communities.
- 1.2 The County Council needs to strike a balance between the economic benefits of HGVs and their impact on the environment. As a transport authority, the Council's has some limited powers to regulate HGV movements, but also has a role to manage freight through information and voluntary agreements.
- 1.3 This report will outline perceived HGV issues within Tandridge, refer to potential solutions within the toolkit and give examples of where similar measures have been implemented elsewhere.

2.0 Traffic Infrastructure in Tandridge

- 2.1 The M25 passes east to west through the northern part of the District. Junction 6 of the M25 is at Godstone. The M23 running north to south cuts through the western part of the District, joining the M25 at Merstham at the border between Tandridge and Reigate and Banstead.
- 2.2 A number of A and B roads pass through the district. The A roads consist of the A25, A22 and A264. The A25 runs east/west across the District from Sevenoaks District in the east to Reigate & Banstead Borough in the west. The A22 runs north/south entering the District at Whyteleafe in the north and leaving the District at Felbridge in the south. Lastly the A264 passes through the south west corner of the District and joins up with the A22 at Felbridge.

2.3 Annex A describes the main road network in Tandridge and highlights its general transport limitations, weaknesses and threats.

3.0 The Surrey Transport Plan and the Freight Strategy

3.1 Surrey County Council adopted the Surrey Transport Plan (STP) in 2011. The Freight Strategy is a core strategy of the STP and can be viewed on the website at:

<http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/surrey-transport-plan-ltp3/surrey-transport-plan-strategies/freight-strategy>

3.2 The Freight Strategy contains a toolkit of potential measures for managing Heavy Goods Vehicle Movements. The toolkit is reproduced as Annex B.

3.3 This report will outline perceived HGV issues within Tandridge, refer to potential solutions within the toolkit, and give examples of where similar measures have been implemented elsewhere.

4.0 Heavy Goods Vehicles Pressures on Tandridge

4.1 The County Council needs to strike a balance between the economic benefits of HGVs and their impact on the environment. As a transport authority, the Council's has some limited powers to regulate HGV movements, but also has a role to manage freight through information and voluntary agreements.

4.2 Tandridge is predominantly rural with 94% of the district designated as Green Belt. However, its position within the national road network means that the area suffers from the effects of HGV traffic passing through on route to other key destinations. The M25 in the district forms part of the strategic road network connecting the channel ports with London and the rest of the United Kingdom. Traffic problems on the M25 in this area often result in traffic diverting on to the A25 which runs parallel.

4.3 Redhill has no direct access to the M25/M23 which means that many vehicles, including HGV's, bound for the town exit the motorways at the Godstone interchange and travel west along the A25 to Redhill. HGV traffic accessing mineral working sites and a waste transfer station alongside the A25 between Redhill and Godstone can compound this problem and has a detrimental environmental impact on the villages along this route (Godstone, Nutfield and Bletchingley).

4.4 A 2010 study of roadside parking in South London and Surrey revealed that many HGV's, after entering the UK at the channel ports, break their journey within Surrey before travelling into London or beyond early the next day. There is very little lorry parking within the London area which puts pressure on areas alongside roads in this part of Surrey. Overnight facilities are provided on the M25 at the Clackett Lane Services and the recently completed Cobham services but many drivers seek avoid the high cost of this service by parking at formal and informal parking areas alongside the A25, A22 and A23.

4.5 With the exception of Caterham, Tandridge north of the M25 is mainly characterised by a hilly landscape with narrow, often steeply graded, which are difficult to negotiate by HGV's.

4.5 To the south of the district there is mostly rural but has pockets of rural industry such as the Lambs Industrial Estate and the Hobbs Industrial Estates accessed of the A22. Lingfield racecourse can generate a large number of large vehicles on race days.

5.0 Practical Uses of Toolkit measures

5.1 Like any other class of road user, HGVs have a general right to use all public roads. The County Council (and other stakeholders such as the Highways Agency) encourage HGV to use the highest category of road for the majority of their journeys and only use local roads for access to their destination.

5.2 **Positive Lorry Routeing** - A review of the **Surrey Priority Network** has recently been completed. Extensive traffic counts across the county have confirmed those roads with the heaviest traffic flows and those primarily used by HGVs. Together with other criteria this information is used to target maintenance funding towards the roads that support the heavies traffic flows, especially HGVs. This is generally the A and B road network but can include some other roads such as those to industrial estates.

5.3 We encourage HGVs to use the most appropriate roads and use distinctive **positive lorry routes signing** to key destinations. However where HGV's regularly divert onto alternative less suitable routes we can impose environmental restrictions to enforce this measure.

5.4 The County Council has powers to apply an **environmental weight limit** which would prevent lorries above a certain weight from using a road. Each application is considered on its merits. For any given application, we will assess whether the limit would divert lorries onto even less suitable roads. We will also assess whether some HGVs would need to be allowed an exception to the limit, for example to service local shops and businesses. An "except for access" clause can be imposed within the restriction but these arrangements can fall into disrepute because they are very difficult to enforce, as Police need to observe an offence taking place. For these reasons environmental restrictions are rarely used unless there is an acceptable diversionary route and there are no shops and businesses within the restricted area.

5.5 If an environmental weight limit is not suitable for a given location, it may be possible to enter into a local voluntary agreement. For example, this may cover the routes that vehicles take and the times that they operate.

6.0 Examples

6.1 In north-west Surrey the key lorry routes from the motorway network to Woking town centre and the Brook lands Industrial Estate have been signed using distinctive white on black lorry route signs. The signing along the A322

between West End and Brookwood has been re-enforced by installing a 7.5 tonne environmental weight limit throughout the Knaphill area. Chobham village centre has a 13 tonne environmental weight limit.

- 6.2 In some more localised areas where problems are encountered on individual roads, we can install **Unsuitable for HGVs signing**. However, as these signs are only advisory and can be abused if overused, we only install them in locations where large vehicles are regularly getting stuck.

7.0 Meetings with TAG 25 Group

- 7.1 A number of meetings, initiated by East Surrey MP Sam Giymah have taken place with the TAG25 group and representatives of the communities of Godstone, Bletchingley and Nutfield to discuss issues concerning HGV movements along the A25 between Redhill and Godstone. These ongoing meetings have considered access to mineral working sites, mitigation measures including revisions to speed limits in the villages and the local Parish Council taking control of a roadside parking area in Nutfield. It is intended to carry forward proposals from these meetings for future consideration within the local highways programme and Tandridge District Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) schedule which is anticipated to come into force in 2014.

8.0 Working with partners to consider freight issues (Planning Applications and Vehicle Operators Licenses)

- 8.1 Surrey County Council will continue to consider freight access and operating issues are fully considered, and advising on the application of suitable conditions, on planning applications and applications for (HGV) Vehicle Operators Licenses.

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