

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)

DATE: Friday 8 December 2017



LEAD OFFICER: Jeffrey Wilson, Graduate Transport Planner

SUBJECT: SURREY HILLS HGV AND COUNTRY LANES REVIEW

DIVISION: CRANLEIGH & EWHURST AND WAVERLEY EASTERN VILLAGES (Waverley)

Also Dorking Hills (Mole Valley), Shere and Shalford (Guildford)

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

This report summarises the feasibility work and further consultation carried out during the review of Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) movements through the study area (Annex A).

The report also outlines the proposed measures for HGV management, including safe measures to conserve and enhance country lanes within the area that have been considered during this process and puts forward a recommended strategic concept for Local Committee approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Waverley) is asked to:

- (i) Acknowledge the outcome of continued dialogue with local parish councils regarding the development of HGV interventions in the area.
- (ii) Agree the concept of a proposed 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs' pilot zone to cover a defined area of the Surrey Hills within the wider study area.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To ensure that Members are kept informed of the outcome of local stakeholder engagement regarding HGV and country lane management measures.

To enable the proposed concept to be agreed across all affected boroughs and districts and subsequently included in relevant forward programmes of transport measures for future development and implementation in collaboration with parish councils and local community groups via appropriate funding streams.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

Introductory Note: Earlier committee reports refer to a 'Quiet Lane / Unsuitable for HGV' pilot zone. Concerns were since raised by officers that this title could be potentially misleading given that a number of roads in the area carry relatively high

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numbers of rural traffic and do not fit with the conventional definition of a Quiet Lane. Therefore this zone is hereon referred to as 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs'.

- 1.1 In response to requests from the parishes within the Surrey Hills, the Surrey County Council Local Highways Team agreed to carry out a review of HGV routes through the area with the aim of understanding the current levels of HGV demand on the local network and to establish a consensus on routes or zones that might be particularly unsuitable for HGVs.
- 1.2 Given an overlap in geographical and topical areas of concern, it was agreed to combine the HGV review with an ongoing 'decluttering' initiative undertaken by the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) office through the De-Cluttering Working Group. In doing so this enabled consultations to be streamlined and help ensure the following AONB aims for the area are met:
 - Discourage through traffic and inappropriate use by HGVs.
 - Conserve and enhance the rural and historic character of country lanes and villages
 - Reduce traffic speeds and make lanes safer, quieter and help to enhance accessibility for walkers, cyclists and equestrians.
- 1.3 Parish Councils in this area, and the wider study area bounded by the A25/A29/A281/A248 (Annex A) have been central in developing proposals to reduce and manage HGV activity and identify and reduce superfluous road signs and roadside clutter.
- 1.4 A proposal for a zone that would be designated as 'Unsuitable for HGVs' was established following the conclusions of a 2016 feasibility study, however a previous report intended for the December 2016 Local Committee was deferred pending further consultation with parish councils and Surrey Police regarding the feasibility of HGV restrictions.
- 1.5 Some legal width restrictions do currently exist on isolated roads within the study area, mainly within the Holmbury St Mary/Peaslake area.

2. ANALYSIS:

Shere and Ewhurst HGV Feasibility Study

- 2.1 A Surrey County Council feasibility study report on the area was produced in early 2016 to both assess the current traffic flows and consider options for management of HGV traffic (available as Annex B).
- 2.2 As part of the study, both manual and automatic traffic counts were conducted in March 2015 on Houndhouse Road, Barhatch Road and Shere Road to quantify the number of 7.5 tonne HGVs using these roads to travel through the area to/from Shere and Ewhurst (see appendices to Annex B for detail). The manual count was located at the junction of the three roads whilst automatic counters were located on each of the roads. A summary of the observed data is as follows:

	HGV manual count (3 Mar 2015, 7am-6pm)		HGV typical automatic count (9-15 Mar 2015, 24hr)	
	Northbound	Southbound	Northbound	Southbound
Houndhouse Road	7	4	6	6
Barhatch Road	4	1	3	9
Shere Road*	3	3	22	16

*The report accounted for the difference in manual and automatic counts on Shere Road based on additional HGVs using Shere Road to/from Peaslake.

- 2.3 Due to the low number of observed HGVs, the report concluded with a recommendation for the introduction of advisory signage that would designate roads as being unsuitable for HGVs and divert traffic around the periphery of the area onto the A road network as soon as possible.
- 2.4 The report indicated that a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to introduce a legal 7.5 tonne HGV ban in either a localised or wider area would not be appropriate due to the possibility of diverting large vehicles onto even more restricted areas, a difficulty of police enforcement and ascertaining whether identified HGVs were legitimately entering the area for access or as a through-route.

Pilot Zone Concept

- 2.5 Subsequent to the feasibility study, further work has been conducted to develop the study's recommended proposal for enhanced advisory and directional signage into a wider strategy to address HGV movements along unsuitable roads in the area. This has led to the development of a pilot zone concept to cover a defined area of the Surrey Hills.
- 2.6 The pilot zone would create an area around the periphery of which advisory measures and messaging could be introduced to deter HGV drivers from entering unless necessary for access purposes. The expected outcome would be to encourage HGVs to remain on larger principal roads whilst avoiding displacement onto other less suitable minor roads in the area. This proposal has been termed a 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs' zone.
- 2.7 The area covered by the pilot zone is shown in Annex C (note the south western boundary has been altered slightly in rev1.17 following further input from the parishes).
- 2.8 The proposed boundary was agreed with the parish councils as it was felt it covered a key geographical area of concern and would avoid displacement of HGVs onto other unsuitable roads by keeping them on the principal roads along the boundary.
- 2.9 In keeping with the decluttering initiative, Surrey Hills AONB and parish councils are keen that strategy does not lead to significant levels of additional signage clutter and are keen to utilise innovative low-cost measures where possible that are sympathetic to the local surroundings.
- 2.10 Surrey Police have expressed their support for this proposal.
- 2.11 As part of any pilot zone it would be necessary to consider a monitoring regime to be put in place that would enable the comparison of HGV flows before and after scheme implementation. This would enable the effectiveness of the scheme to be analysed and inform future proposals for similar zones.

Formal HGV Restrictions

- 2.12 Following the development of the pilot zone concept, Shere and Albury parish councils indicated that they felt that proposals did not go far enough in addressing localised HGV issues in their area and sought a meeting with Surrey Police to put forward a separate proposal for a 7.5t HGV ban covering the village of Shere which would divert HGVs through Albury. Surrey Police's position following the meeting is provided as Annex D.
- 2.13 Taking into consideration: the conclusions of the feasibility report; Surrey Police's position; feedback from Surrey Highways officers; and further mitigation measures Albury parish indicated they would require prior to supporting the proposed ban, it was concluded that a formal ban would not form part of the 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs' pilot zone proposal. It should be noted that the zone would not inherently prevent the implementation of a legal 7.5 tonne HGV ban in this area or others should this be pursued in future.

Committee Approval

- 2.14 As the 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs' pilot zone within the Surrey Hills would cross three local authority boundaries, a consensus is required from the members of Waverley, Guildford and Mole Valley Local Committee.
- 2.15 A similar report to this one was presented to Guildford Local Committee on 19 September 2017 where members approved the recommendation for the proposed zone. The corresponding report to Mole Valley Local Committee is intended to be presented at their meeting on 30 November 2017.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 During the HGV review, a number of concepts have been raised to potentially solve the issue of HGVs using unsuitable roads when travelling through the area. These have been narrowed down to the following option:

The introduction of a 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs' zone to cover the pilot area shown in Annex C.

- 3.2 This option is recommended to address the perceived issue of HGV traffic using unsuitable roads within the area based on the recommendations of the Surrey County Council feasibility report, a consensus of support from Surrey Police and Surrey Hills AONB and approval of the concept by the members of Guildford Local Committee.
- 3.3 The zone would form an area where advisory measures and signage could be introduced around the periphery to deter HGV drivers from entering unless necessary for access purposes and direct them on to the nearest suitable roads.
- 3.4 The nature of the area also makes it challenging to find a 'one-size fits all' solution for each affected road within the zone. It is therefore suggested that key entry points and junctions will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis to determine the type of measures that would be effective, appropriate, sensitive to the character of the area and offer value for money.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 The project is being delivered in collaboration with the Local Highways Team and the Surrey Hills AONB Quiet Lanes and Decluttering Working Group.
- 4.2 Consultation has taken place with parish councils and local district and county members.
- 4.3 Consultation has taken place with Surrey Police to establish their position regarding the proposed 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs' zone.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 Initial costs for the feasibility study and further review have been absorbed through existing revenue budgets.
- 5.2 Opportunities for funding and resourcing from local sources have so far been key to progressing the decluttering initiative, driving forward a locally important issue at a time when county resources are constrained.
- 5.3 The work required to install the proposed limited signage identified in the feasibility report was estimated to cost approximately £8,000. Additional signage and measures required around the periphery of the pilot zone to create the 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs' area would exceed this and requires feasibility / design work to establish robust estimates.
- 5.4 Given the current financial pressures which the council faces it is recognised that it may prove difficult to secure a significant enough sum to address all entry points into the zone in a single approach. It may therefore be more practical to address clusters of, or individual key junctions when and where appropriate funding streams become available.
- 5.5 Surrey Hills AONB is currently seeking to utilise a portion of their annual Defra funding to develop a concept design for one of the entry points into the area which might provide a case study for other key junctions in the zone. Upon completion it is expected that Surrey Highways will review and feedback on the design proposals.
- 5.6 Further budget should also be considered to cover future monitoring of HGV flows within the zone to establish the success of the scheme.
- 5.7 No current funding streams have as yet been confirmed to cover the scheme design or implementation. It is therefore proposed that the pilot zone be included on a future Local Transport Strategy Forward Programme so that it may be considered for future funding opportunities once they become available.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 No significant implications from this project.

7. LOCALISM:

7.1 Parish councils have been central in the identification of issues and development of potential solutions with the project.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Set out below.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report

Sustainability implications

8.1 The overall aim of the project is to conserve and enhance country lanes by reducing the number of unnecessary large goods vehicles movements through the area so that they are more suitable for use by sustainable transport modes (walking, cycling, and horse riding).

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.1 Given the outcome of the analysis and consultation, it is recommended to proceed with a 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs' pilot zone.

The Local Committee (Waverley) are therefore asked to:

- (i) Acknowledge the outcome of continued dialogue with local parish councils regarding the development of HGV interventions in the area.
- (ii) Agree the concept of a proposed 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs' pilot zone to cover a defined area of the Surrey Hills within the wider study area.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

10.1 The proposed 'Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs' pilot zone will be taken to the Local Committee of the neighbouring district of Mole Valley for approval.

10.2 The proposed measures will be included within a future Local Transport Strategy Forward Programme to enable consideration for design and implementation when appropriate funding streams become available.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

The project has been developed through consultation with:

Rob Fairbanks (Surrey Hills AONB office)
Graham Cannon (Surrey Police)
Local Area Highways officers for south and west Surrey (Surrey County Council)
Systems and Services Improvement Team (Surrey County Council)

County and district council members and parish councils within the study area.

Annexes:

Annex A – Wider Surrey Hills AONB study area map
Annex B – Shere Road – 7.5t ban feasibility study
Annex C – ‘Country Lanes Unsuitable for HGVs’ pilot zone map
Annex D – Surrey Police correspondence 16-05-17

Sources/background papers:

SHERE RURAL AREA HGV REVIEW, Guildford Local Committee 19 September 2017.

SHERE RURAL AREA HGV REVIEW AND DE-CLUTTERING PROJECT, Waverley Local Committee 9 December 2016

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