

Farnham Infrastructure Improvements Programme

Farnham Board Meeting

AGENDA ITEM: 5

DATE: 20 NOVEMBER 2020

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REPORT OF: MR TIM OLIVER – BOARD CHAIR

LEAD OFFICER: CHRIS TUNSTALL

SUBJECT: HGV STUDY

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To note the outcome of the recent Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Study (Annex A) and agree the recommended short-term/ quick-win interventions for further consultation and implementation and those interventions to be considered as part of the wider Optimised Infrastructure Plan (OIP).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Note the outcome and recommendations of the HGV Study; and
2. Agree the following short-term improvements for further consultation and implementation:
 - Restrict HGV through trips via Castle Street/ Folly Hall and Upper Hale via weight restriction on A287 (e.g. no vehicles beyond 7.5T);
 - Provision of temporary loading bays (whilst Covid-19 restrictions are present);
 - Provide alternative mailboxes for local residents e.g. Amazon lockers;
 - Produce guide/ protocol for loading and unloading in the Town Centre;
 - Undertake speed survey study of Upper Hale and the Town Centre;
 - VMS height warning for Wrecclesham Railway Bridge;
 - Liaise with local business to understand willingness to consolidate deliveries in partnership with neighbours; and
3. Agree those interventions to be considered as part of the wider OIP considerations detailed in paragraph 22.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

HGVs within Farnham Town Centre have been cited as a key concern by local members and residents.

As a result of this Project 1 'Quick Wins' within the Farnham Infrastructure Programme identified the need for an early Study in respect of HGV movements within the Town Centre and its immediate environs such as Upper Hale.

The Study (Annex A) details the findings and makes recommendations as to those interventions that could be pursued now, short-term improvements and those that should be part of the wider OIP consideration.

DETAILS:

Background

1. Understanding the issues and developing effective solutions for the town centre is a critical part of the OIP. Key stakeholders have emphasised the need to rapidly understand the current problems, their causes, and potential solutions. There is a need for both quick wins and long-term solutions to the problems faced in the town centre.
2. A specific problem perceived with HGVs has been identified. As a critical issue to the success of the overall OIP, this study has been undertaken to understand issues caused by HGVs in the town and identify how they might be addressed.
3. The study comprised:
 - ▶ Review of existing traffic reports, data and evidence base;
 - ▶ Identification of critical HGV issues and, where possible, root causes; and
 - ▶ Identification of a range of potential intervention measures, opportunities, constraints and recommendations.
4. Whilst the study's primary focus is HGVs, the assessment is not limited to this classification of vehicles. For clarity, the definitions adopted for this Study are:
 - ▶ Car – vehicles including taxis, estate cars and other passenger vehicles (for example camper vans) with a weight of less than 3.5 tonnes.
 - ▶ Light Goods Vehicle (LGV) –all goods vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes, including car delivery vans, transit vans, small pickup vans and milk floats.
 - ▶ Other Goods Vehicle 1 (OGV1) –all rigid vehicles over 3.5 tonnes with two or three axles, including ambulances, tractors and box vans.
 - ▶ Other Goods Vehicle 2 (OGV2) –all rigid vehicles with four or more axles and all articulated vehicles.
 - ▶ Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) –comprising OGV1 and OGV2.

Where “Goods Vehicles” are referred to in this study these include LGV, OGV1 and OGV2 for ease of reference.

5. It should be noted that due to the impact of Covid-19 the current traffic flows identified are not representative of pre Covid-19 flows but every effort has been taken to correlate the pre and post flows as far as is possible.
6. Any Short-Term/ Quick-Win interventions will need to be agreed, consulted on and implemented with the Highway Authority, Surrey County Council.

Findings

7. Full details of the findings and the background to them can be found in Annex A

Goods Vehicle Demand

8. Whilst the survey data indicates that HGVs make up a small proportion of total traffic, it is clear that there is a higher volume of other Goods Vehicles (LGVs, which includes other commercial vehicles such as transit vans and small pickup vans) in the town centre and Upper Hale. It is therefore important that any potential interventions include consideration of all goods vehicles, and not solely focus on HGVs.
9. The CCTV data indicates that there has been a drop in general traffic during the Covid-19 pandemic. This data may also have been influenced by local roadworks, including on Folly Hill and South Street. Whilst HGV volumes appear to have been largely unaffected, there may be changes to routing due to roadworks. The perceptions of HGV volumes may also have been impacted by the drop in general traffic in 2020, with a similar volume of HGVs making up 25% of all traffic during the pandemic compared to 2% in 2019.
10. Mix of through vehicles:

AM Peak Period:

- Between 07:45 and 08:30 – approx. 15 OGVs entering the Town Centre per 15 mins, of which 7-10 look to be delayed (so assumed loading) – up to 67% assumed to be servicing or delivering.
- Outside of this time – approx. 10 – 20 OGVs entering the Town Centre per 15 mins and up to 3 look to be delayed – indicates higher proportion of through trips, only 15-30% assumed to be servicing or delivering.
- Whilst it’s difficult to split through routing from servicing it appears that the highest volumes of OGVs typically enter on West Street and Castle Street and leave on South Street and Castle Street before 9am. After 9am East Street looks to become more well used.

PM Peak Period:

- Less activity all-round compared to AM.

- Between 16:15 and 17:00 – up to 10 OGVs entering the Town Centre per 15 mins, of which up to 6 look to be delayed (so assumed loading) – 60% assumed to be servicing or delivering.
- Outside of this time – approx. 4 OGVs entering per 15 mins and 1-2 look to be delayed (25% - 50%) by servicing/ delivering.
- Again it's difficult to split trips however on initial review they appear to be focused between West Street and Castle Street, although South Street is seen to be used in a few time periods.

11. The low bridge at Wrecchlesham on the A325 has a history of bridge strikes.

Goods Vehicle Routing

12. Journeys between Basingstoke and Guildford may find routing via Folly Hill or Upper Hale more attractive than the A331 based on comparable average journey times and distance.
13. The right turn from Upper Hale Road to Alma Road causes delays when a vehicle is waiting to turn right.

Speeding

14. Whilst no speed checks have been undertaken:
- There is local desire for the town centre and Upper Hale to be subject to a 20mph limit; pupils of local schools must cross the A325.
 - Vehicles speeds have been suggested by local Councillors to be high on the A325, through Heath End, on Upper Hale Road and Farnborough Road.

Kerb-side Servicing and Delivery

15. Anecdotal evidence and site observations indicate that vehicles delivering and servicing at kerbside often impact the free flow of traffic, with drivers required to filter into other live traffic lanes to manoeuvre around parked vehicles. This can result in queues and delays. This has been exacerbated by:
- Loading outside permitted times;
 - Limited off-street loading provision.
 - Parking and servicing occurs in multiple locations with multiple restrictions in the town centre, which can cause confusion.
16. On-street parking in Upper Hale restricts the free flow of traffic and can cause safety issues when cars follow the vehicle in front when manoeuvring around parked vehicles.

Interventions

17. Potential interventions have been developed in broad alignment with the key issues identified and 'type' of measure. The interventions have

then been reviewed using an appraisal framework to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each measure against objectives aligned to:

- ▶ Policy Fit (consistency with wider strategies and the OIP Vision objectives);
- ▶ Tackling Issues (ability to address the issues identified in this report); and
- ▶ Deliverability (technical feasibility, cost and affordability, likely acceptability and ease of implementation).

18. Each intervention has been considered on an individual basis, and assigned a rating against each objective:

- ▶ Red / -1 –does not align with objective or would have a negative impact
- ▶ Amber / 0 –neutral alignment with objective or negligible impact
- ▶ Green / +1 –aligns with objective or would have a positive impact

19. The results of this can be seen at page 20 of the Study, Annex A.

20. Whilst the priority of interventions will be dependent on the weighting given to each objective, each has been considered on a 'unweighted' basis and those that perform highest categorised into:

- ▶ Quick wins –those which could be implemented in a relatively short period of time, and independent of the OIP.
- ▶ Longer term –those which would need to be considered as part of the OIP.

Short term / quick wins

21. The following short term improvements to be subject to further consultation and implementation:

- Restrict HGV through trips via Castle Street/ Folly Hall and Upper Hale via weight restriction on A287 (e.g. no vehicles beyond 7.5T);
- Provision of temporary loading bays (while Covid-19 restrictions are present).
- Provide alternative mailboxes for local residents, e.g. Amazon lockers.
- Produce guide/ protocol for loading and unloading in the town centre.
- Undertake speed survey study of Upper Hale and the town centre.
- VMS height warning for Wrecclesham Railway Bridge.
- Liaise with local business to understand willingness to consolidate deliveries in partnership with neighbours.

To be considered as part of OIP

22. Interventions to be considered as part of the wider OIP considerations:

- Introduce loading pads (with timed restrictions) on widened footways.
- Refresh speed signage in Upper Hale / School 20mph Zone (Upper Hale).
- Parking capacity variable message signing in the town centre.
- Introduce micro-consolidation centres at local locations.
- Upper Hale –on-street parking restrictions.
- Introduce consolidation centre at strategic location.
- Upper Hale – all traffic right turn ban (onto Alma Lane).

CONSULTATION:

23. Internal Surrey consultation will be required in addition to consultation with Hampshire County Council, Highways England the Police and other Emergency Services in respect of the proposed weight restrictions together with Local Committee approval.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

24. The Board and Forum have no Statutory powers and as such any decisions requiring approval by the responsible Authorities Constitution, in this case Surrey County Council, will have an individual risk assessment.

FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

25. The cost of the works will be identified within the Surrey County Council Report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTARY

26. As proposals are developed that require necessary Surrey County Council approval, individual S151 approvals will be sought.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – MONITORING OFFICER

27. Neither of the Boards nor the LLF have any Executive Powers. Any decisions made would require Surrey County Council to follow its own legal advice and its approval procedures.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

28. As part of Surrey County Council reporting requirements individual Equality Impact Assessments EIAs will be undertaken.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

29. There are no other implications in respect of this Report.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

30. The proposed short term improvements will be worked up in more detail for implementation and progress reports brought back to the Board.

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Annexes: Annex A – WS Atkins HGV Study

Sources/background papers: As detailed in Annex A

Annex A – WS Atkins HGV Study

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