



Amersham Community Board meeting

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| Title: | Response to the ePetition for a 7.5T Weight Limit Restriction for Coleshill Village |
| Date: | February 2021 |
| Author and/or contact officer: | Graham Hillary – Transport Strategy Officer (Freight) |
| Ward(s) affected: | Coleshill Village |

1. Executive summary

An ePetition has been submitted requesting the Council introduces a 7.5 tonne weight restriction on HGVs entering Coleshill Village to stop drivers using the village as a cut-through when the A355 and A404 roads are congested. The petition states that:

- Introducing a 7.5 tonne weight limit (except for access) at the four entry points to the village will prevent HGVs using Coleshill Village as a cut through when the main roads are congested. This is intended to make Coleshill Village safer for residents, walkers and cyclists, and minimise damage to roads, verges, trees and property throughout the village.
- The weight limit signs would be displayed at the four entrances to the village: New Road, Tower Rd, Magpie Lane and Sampsons Hill. Large vehicles will still be able to make deliveries to houses in the village.

This document has been prepared to provide a considered response identifying relevant available information and some recommendations how to proceed. These include:

- Introduce a 7.5 tonne Environmental Traffic Regulation Order
- Install Advisory 'Unsuitable for HGV' signage
- Conduct investigations to identify the most appropriate solution

Recommendation:

The village residents and their representatives work with the Community Board, Transport for Bucks and other interested stakeholders on investigating the concerns of the petitioners around Heavy Goods Vehicle movements (HGVs), providing expertise and local

knowledge and making recommendations via the Community Board as to the most appropriate approach to minimise the potential negative impact of HGVs on the village.

Reason for recommendation: Taking into account the level of local opinion it is apparent that, although there is no historical record of a negative impact of HGV movements through Coleshill village, there is concern that without doing something, it is possible that congestion outside of the village, due to HS2, may result in increases of HGV traffic beyond what the village can cope with.

Committing to work collaboratively with residents, local members, commercial interests, the Parish Council, the Community Board and other stakeholders offers the opportunity to generate the most suitable approach, taking this forward via the Community Board for a qualified, cost efficient and effective solution.

This proposal ensures that short to medium term HS2 works are considered and that a long-term resolution is developed. This may require working with HS2 and their main construction contractors in the area on understanding planned works and co-ordinating notifications and actions to minimise the impact on communities. Gaining the active support of HS2 contractors will assist in the investigations necessary and facilitate robust resolution.

TfB and Freight Strategy are working on a methodology and 'checklist' for the progression of transport proposals through the Community Boards to TfB for consideration. It is expected that this will help in the analysis and investigation of problems to be addressed and the development of solutions. It is hoped that this will be ready for use by the end of February.

2. Considerations

To investigate the suggested actions made through the ePetition, the following enquires were made:

- with the Road Safety Team to establish any records of injury collisions in Coleshill;
- with Transport for Bucks to determine any records identifying damage to roads, verges, trees or property attributed to heavy goods vehicle (HGV) movements within the Coleshill Village and;
- with Transport Strategy to determine the records of report heavy goods (HGV) vehicle concerns raised within Coleshill

2.1 Road Safety – Collision Injury Records

There are no reports of injury collisions within the last 5 years of data in Coleshill (dates: 01/10/2015 – 30/09/2020).

The only record of collisions in the area are on the main roads either side of the village, the A355 or A404.

2.2 Transport for Bucks – Damage History

Transport for Bucks (TfB) records for repairs (scheduled and unscheduled), maintenance, inspections, street works and logged reported issues for the period 20th January 2016 to 20th January 2021 have been reviewed. This included in-house works and works carried out by third parties such as Affinity Water, BT and local resident contracted construction developments.

Incidents and Issues reported to involve HGV movements were:

- **06 May 2017** - Edge of the road subsided due to lorries so bottoms of cars catch on the carriageway. **Barracks Hill at the entrance to Wychwood**
- **31st Jan 2018** – Mud on the road from HGVs encroaching on the verge. **Village Road**
- **27th March 2018** – A question raised over damage caused by construction traffic from the Hertfordshire House development. **Coleshill Lane**
- **19th January 2020** – Overhanging branch hit by diverted HGV. **Hill Meadow**

2.3 Transport Strategy – Heavy Goods Vehicle Records

Reports of HGV incidents submitted to the Freight Mailbox and enquires sent direct to the officer working on the Freight Strategy, relative to Coleshill, are outlined below:

- **September 2020** - Community Board Co-ordinator question over possibility of introducing a weight restriction in Coleshill to manage HS2 contractor movements.
 - HS2 construction vehicles are to follow prescribed routes which include the A413 and A404; they are not to divert through Coleshill or any other villages. Any HS2 vehicles not following approved routes must be reported to the HS2 Helpline.
 - It did appear that there was some roadworks on the primary routes and vehicles, non HS2, may have sought diversionary routes. HS2 cannot control non HS2 traffic movements.

- HS2 have volunteered to install some signage advising HS2 traffic not to enter the village.
- **December 2020** – Copied in on advice of a submission via the Community Board to TfB of a request for a speed limit and weight restriction within Coleshill Village.
 - TfB submission form completed along with pictures of various roads of concern.
 - No results of any traffic surveys conducted attached, though commentary suggests the proposed restriction is required to manage increased HGV numbers that may result due to congestion on the local primary routes, that could be HS2 related.

This information informed the generation of options available and the identification and qualification of a recommended selection.

2.4 Summary of Evidence

There are no known incidents of collision injury resultant from HGV movements in Coleshill Village, neither have any specific concerns be reported relating to an increased risk of damage to roads, verges, trees or buildings from HGVs.

Concerns regarding HS2 traffic using the village have been taken up with HS2 and their contractor companies. They have agreed to add signage to key points and recommend the use of the helpline established to deal with construction vehicles failing to comply with approved routes.

It is, of course, possible that HS2 traffic may add to existing traffic flows and could result in some additional congestion at key points on the primary routes. It is difficult at this early stage in the HS2 construction phase to predict when, where and to what severity congestion may happen.

3. Options considered

This section outlines potential options for the management of HGVs through the Coleshill Village.

3.1. Introduce a 7.5 tonne Environmental Traffic Regulation Order

To implement a weight restriction in the village, signposted at the 4 entrances to the village off the primary routes of the A355 and A404 and allowing for local access for residential and commercial considerations.

Pros

- Focuses on prohibiting use of the village for HGV traffic passing through and using it as a cut-through.
- Will signpost on the primary routes that use of the village by HGVs is inappropriate.
- Should minimise the risk of damage to roads, verges, trees, motor vehicles and buildings.
- Should reduce any risk or personal injury to other road users, be they on foot, cycle or on horse.

Cons

- Is only enforceable by Thames Valley Police and Trading Standards, Buckinghamshire Council, like other local authorities outside of London have no powers to enforce.
- Will not guarantee that there will not be increased traffic in the village if, and when there is congestion on the primary routes.
- Requires full Statutory Consultation and has legal aspects to be applied.
- Is an expensive and lengthy option. (Costs subject to TfB surveys and studies but could be as much as £10-25,000; could take 6-12 months to implement depending on complexity).
- Is not included in the initial suite of intervention locations in the Freight Strategy, which covers the period up to 2022-23 and as such may require 'match-funding'.
- Records of collision injury and damage to roads, verges, trees, buildings and other motor vehicles by HGVs within the village do not support the creation of a robust business case.

3.2. Install Advisory 'Unsuitable for HGV' signage

To install 'Unsuitable for HGV' signs on the primary routes of the A355 and A404 at junctions for the Coleshill village discouraging the use of the village by HGV traffic without a reason to enter.

Pros

- Relatively quick and inexpensive to introduce, easier to justify. (Could cost up to £5k depending on the actual scope)
- Can be a high visibility option on the primary routes to discourage HGV access to the village.
- Should minimise the risk of damage to roads, verges, trees, motor vehicles and buildings.
- Should reduce any risk or personal injury to other road users, be they on foot, cycle or on horse.

Cons

- Is advisory and not enforceable.
- Is not included in the initial suite of intervention locations in the Freight Strategy, which covers the period up to 2022-23 and as such may require 'match-funding'.
- Will not guarantee that HGVs will not enter the village.
- Will not guarantee that there will not be increased traffic in the village if, and when there is congestion on the primary routes.

3.3. Conduct investigations to identify the most appropriate solution

To work with Transport for Bucks (TfB) to understand the challenges the petition is seeking to address, to conduct investigations and promote what is the most appropriate approach to minimising the potential impact of HGV on the village.

Pros

- Identifies all the concerns of the community
- Through a collaborative approach, explores root causes and develops qualified options to resolve.
- Ensures that the proposed solution generated is viable, cost effective and best meets the needs of the village.

Cons

- Demands a commitment from the community to work on finding the best solution for the village
- May need some local funding for the necessary analysis
- Is dependent on TfB resource availability.

4. Legal and financial implications

Options are subject to further study which cannot at this time determine any legal and financial impact. However, Traffic Regulations do have statutory and legal aspects. Both the TRO and Advisory Signage options have cost implications subject investigations by TfB.

5. Corporate implications

At this point no potential implications on the relevant corporate plan priority from this report has been scoped. The implications for the issues listed below should be considered as part of the business case for the approach adopted.

- 5.1.1. Property
- 5.1.2. HR
- 5.1.3. Climate change
- 5.1.4. Sustainability
- 5.1.5. Equality (does this decision require an equality impact assessment)

5.1.6. Data (does this decision require a data protection impact assessment)

5.1.7. Value for money

6. Consultation with local Councillors & Community Boards

Some outline discussion with Councillor Tim Butcher took place on the 08th February to gain his understanding and to advise him of the options identified in this report which will be submitted to the Amersham Community Board meeting on the 18th February 2021.

Comments from Cllr Butcher: *I am very supportive of this proposal. There has been an ongoing issue over many years of HGV's using the village as a short cut.*

Before Christmas, the A355 was closed and many large vehicles used the village as a diversion causing a great deal of anger and damage to the village verges roads and trees.

The purpose behind the weight limit is to try and prevent HGV's using the village as a diversion. Residents are very concerned that during the construction of HS2 this will increase the number of HGV's using the village roads. This modest proposal will prohibit HGV'S from using the village. Coleshill has many narrow roads and use by HGV's is unsuitable.

7. Communication, engagement & further consultation

To assist in preparation of this report approaches were made to the Road Safety Team and Transport for Bucks for input with available data regarding collision injury, damage incidents and reports logged. This report considers the views of these key functions as subject matter expects.

The draft report has been circulated within the Transport Strategy Group for comment before submission.

8. Next steps and review

Following a review of this report at the Amersham Community Board meeting on the 18th February, it would be useful to have a decision regarding how the Board would like to proceed. Depending on this outcome, it should be able to determine how best to coordinate any traffic studies and considerations necessary to proceed.

9. Background papers

None