



Report to Missendens Community Board

Date:	24 th August 2021
Title:	Response to the Petition to Ban HGVs in Holmer Green
Relevant councillor(s):	Peter Martin (Cllr) – Community Board Chair; Cllr Mark Dormer; Cllr Mark Flys; Cllr Jonathan Waters
Author and/or contact officer:	Graham Hillary / Transport Strategy Officer (Freight)
Ward(s) affected:	Penn & Old Amersham
Recommendations:	It is recommended that work with the petitioners and local representatives on scoping the challenges identified in the petition be undertaken via the Community Board; to facilitate development of the most appropriate solution balancing costs and benefits.

Reason for decision:

This recommendation ensures that it is possible to identify any short-term factors that may be managed by greater engagement with the generators of the HGV traffic; The recommendation offers an opportunity to gain an understanding of the scope and scale of the challenges identified in the petition; to capture the causes of any measured increase in HGV traffic and to generate options with recommendations for the most appropriate approach to adopt supporting local businesses while minimising the impact on the communities.

It is noted that this area is not identified as one of the priority locations Freight Strategy is planned to focus on in the initial period covering to the end of 2022-23. Freight Strategy has been allocated a budget and resource to meet the initial suite of interventions only. There are no available funds or resources available to take on additional ad-hoc demands. Any demand on Transport for Bucks to conduct any appraisal of the issues identified, including traffic studies and options generation will require funding. Any implementation of Community Board prioritised solution is likely to need match-funding.

1. Executive summary

A Petition has been submitted requesting the Council implement 7.5 tonne weight restrictions at identified locations to effectively ban Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) within the Holmer Green area. The petition states that: -

- There has been a marked increase in large commercial vehicles travelling through the village, some towing very large trailers causing damage to the carriageway edges, verges and trees, particularly when meeting other (large) vehicles travelling in the opposite direction or when negotiating junctions etc.
- Introducing a 7.5 tonne weight limit (except for delivery purposes within the village) at the entry points listed below will prevent HGVs using Holmer Green as an alternative to the main roads.
- The intention is to make the 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 sited at the entrances to the village viz:
 - Watchet Lane (at its junctions with Beech Tree and Wycombe Roads);
 - Penfold Lane (at its junction with Winters Way);
 - Sheepcote Dell and Earl Howe Roads (at their junctions with the A404).

This document has been prepared to provide a considered response taking relevant available information and to make recommendations how to proceed. This identifies the need for further investigations to develop the most appropriate approach.

2. Options considered

2.1. Position environmental weight restrictions as petitioned

To introduce weight restrictions as petitioned would require the use of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO). These legal instruments would require a full appraisal of the impact and benefits of the proposal, consideration would need to be demonstrated that affected communities have been considered. The proposal, if supported by the Council Leadership will need to go through statutory consultation and may take around 12-18 months to take effect.

These orders are enforceable by Trading Standards and the Police only, the Local and Highway Authorities do not have any powers to enforce. It should be noted that 'crimes against the person' and 'protecting the vulnerable' are priorities for both Trading Standards and the Police at this time.

- Allows access for vehicles beyond the weight restriction by exception, including the provision of local services, residential deliveries, moving service providers and emergency and critical services.

- Enforcement is by Thames Valley Police and Trading Standards who have a focus on 'crimes against the person' and 'protecting the vulnerable'.
- Should eliminate HGV through traffic subject to a robust enforcement capability.
- Can take 6-12 months to implement as subject to public consultation; may typically cost, depending on studies, between £10,000 and £25,000 to install.

It will be necessary to undertake studies to understand the profile of the traffic in the area to understand the frequency, direction and as far as possible the source of the HGV movements. This will inform the blend of local and through HGV traffic and should provide some indication as to where the proposed restrictions may displace traffic to. This in turn will facilitate appreciation of the impact on residents and communities of affected by the displaced movements.

2.2 Introduce 'Unsuitable for HGV signage

The use of the blue advisory signage stating the road is unsuitable for HGV traffic is used to let HGV drivers aware that the route may be difficult to navigate or it's use may have significant impact of the landscape and community.

As an advisory measure it is not legally enforceable but should offer some constraint on vehicle movements along unsuitable roads. They are relatively quick to introduce, not requiring any legal considerations or statutory consultation and as such they are also relatively low costs.

- Advisory signage, not legally enforceable.
- Suggests HGV traffic not appropriate for this route, should discourage trucks using this road unless access is needed.
- Unlikely to completely stop use of this route by trucks
- Relatively quick to implement; cost of approximately £3,000 - £5,000 depending on surveys and scoping.

It will also be necessary to undertake studies for the introduction of advisory signage to understand the underlying profile of the traffic in the area and to provide an awareness of the impact across the area and on roads and communities where traffic may be displaced to.

2.3 Undertake further studies to define the problem.

To conduct studies to better define the challenge, identify root causes and to determine the most appropriate approach.

The petition does not unfortunately identify the problem outside of the headline statement about increases in HGV movements and the risk to landscape, property and people. We would need to understand the below amongst other aspects:-



- Has there been an increase in HGV movements on the route(s)?
 - Is there a known reason behind the increase? (Potentially some residential construction in the area.)
 - Is there any information about the volume and frequency of truck movements in the area highlighted?
- Is there any information about where the HGV traffic on the identified roads is from and going to?
- Are there clear alternate routes that do not potentially, significantly increase journey times and costs to serve?
- Are there any known commercial / residential access requirements?
- Where is any displaced HGV traffic likely to go? What would be the impact on these roads and residencies?

Building the background data and identifying the challenges raised by this petition would help the generation of potential options and the selection of the most appropriate approach. Given the request of the petition and the unavailability of supporting evidence makes it essential that further studies are undertaken to ensure delivery of the most suitable recommendations.

3.0 Legal and financial implications

There are no identified legal or financial implications identified at this stage.

4.0 Corporate implications

There are no identified implications on the corporate plan priorities from this report affecting any of the aspects listed:-

- 4.1 Property
- 4.2 HR
- 4.3 Climate change
- 4.4 Sustainability
- 4.5 Equality (does this decision require an equality impact assessment)
- 4.6 Data (does this decision require a data protection impact assessment)
- 4.7 Value for money

5.0 Consultation with local Councillors & Community Boards

This petition and the draft response will be presented to the Chair of the Community Board along with the Community Board Coordinator to discuss the request of the petition; to capture some local knowledge and explore short, medium and long-term factors that may have influencing the submission.

6.0 Communication, engagement & further consultation

This response reflects consultations with Transport Strategy management and Management from Transport for Bucks who will provide necessary 'subject matter expertise' to identify the most appropriate approach to best address the purpose of this petition.

7.0 Next steps and review

Subject to discussion and determination at the next available Community Board meeting, the Board may chose to approve and promote acceptance of the recommendation to engage in studies to analyse the challenges and identify the most appropriate solution to take forward for TfB to consider. TfB involvement in any studies may be subject to costs.

