

Individual Executive Member Decision

Title of Report:	Petition - HGV Restriction for Mill Lane, Newbury
Report to be considered by:	Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT and Customer Services
Date on which Decision is to be taken:	29 June 2011
Forward Plan Ref:	ID2216

Purpose of Report: To respond to a petition that has been submitted to the Council.

Recommended Action: That the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational) & ICT resolves to approve the recommendations as set out in section 4 of this report.

Reason for decision to be taken: To provide a response to the petitioners

Statutory: **Non-Statutory:**
Other:

Other options considered: As set out in the report

Key background documentation: The petition.
Results of the vehicle survey

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor David Betts - Tel (0118) 942 2485
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Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Andrew Garratt
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Implications

Policy:	None arising from this report.
Financial:	The introduction of slight changes to programmed signing improvements for the A339 would have minimal financial impact.
Personnel:	None arising from this report.
Legal/Procurement:	None arising from this report.
Environmental:	None arising from this report.
Partnering:	None arising from this report.
Property:	None arising from this report.
Risk Management:	None arising from this report.
Community Safety:	None arising from this report.
Equalities:	EIA Stage 1 attached as Appendix A..

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council: Councillor Graham Jones -To date no response has been received, however any comments will be verbally reported at the Individual Decision meeting.

Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman: Councillor Brian Bedwell agrees with the officers recommendations.

Ward Members: Councillor David Allen - To date no response has been received, however any comments will be verbally reported at the Individual Decision meeting.

Councillor Roger Hunneman - This is the second such petition to be received by the Council making this request. This persistent problem has been acknowledged as such by the Council in view of the past decision (Section 1.2 of the report) to continue monitoring the situation of HGVs using Mill Lane and indeed the recommendation in para 4.2 that "...HGVs using Mill Lane should be continued to be monitored."

Although I accept that the few local businesses in Mill Lane itself require servicing, I do not consider it unreasonable that HGVs serving the Hambridge Road Industrial Estate should take the A4 / Hambridge Road route in the interests of providing a better environment for Mill Lane residents.

I also note that there is an admission that "banning HGV traffic will make for a better environment" in the Equality Impact Assessment accompanying the report

Further I do not accept the officer's objections in Para 3.3 to introducing a weight restriction with an "access only" exemption because of the perceived difficulty of enforcement - The mechanism he describes to carry out the enforcement must be common to many roads where such weight limits exist and if this is taken as a valid reason not to introduce this weight limit then no such weight limits will ever be introduced.

I note a common theme running through the report that the possible introduction of "a new link road through the Sterling Industrial Estate" is likely to significantly reduce the the volume of HGVs using Mill Lane. I understand that this is a disincentive to introduce a ban in Mill Lane but as the officer says - this may be some years away. In the meanwhile the Mill Lane residents will continue to suffer.

I note in para. 1.5 that a report on the protected line of the new link road was considered by the Transport Policy Task Group on 25th February 2011 and that " Members resolved to approve the retention of the protected line and for officers to take every opportunity to secure funding through local developments to enable the link road to be built" This is a view I as ward member completely support and it would, when built, provide an excellent alternative route to Mill Lane (and remove HGVs from a section of King's Road as well). I feel that the Council should be much more proactive in getting this much needed link in place.

In conclusion I suggest that the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational) and ICT does not approve the recommendations in the report and does implement an HGV ban in Mill Lane.

**Opposition
Spokesperson:**

Councillor Keith Woodhams - To date no response has been received, however any comments will be verbally reported at the Individual Decision meeting.

Local Stakeholders:

N/A

Officers Consulted:

Mark Cole and Mark Edwards

Trade Union:

N/A

Is this item subject to call-in.	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:</p> <p>The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Considered or reviewed by OSC or associated Task Groups within preceding 6 months <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Item is Urgent Key Decision <input type="checkbox"/></p>		

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 A petition containing 66 signatures was submitted to the Council on 9th December 2010. The petition states:

“We the undersigned request that Heavy Goods Vehicles over 7.5 tonnes are banned (except for access) from using Mill Lane and Boundary Road, Newbury and that HGV access to the Bone Lane Industrial Estate and elsewhere is by the A339, A4 and Hambridge Road”

- 1.2 A previous petition regarding HGV use of Mill Lane was considered by the Newbury Area Forum at its meeting on 17th January 2007. It was agreed that due to the possibility of constructing a new link road through the Sterling Industrial Estate that the situation of HGV's using Mill Lane should continue to be monitored.
- 1.3 Mill Lane is a one-way road with access from the A339 and is subject to a 30 mph speed limit. The carriageway width is approximately 5.5 metres and there is a footway, which is approximately 1.2 metres wide. On-street limited waiting and permit holder only restrictions operate on the south side in marked bays, with a prohibition of waiting at any time on the north side leaving an available running lane width of 3.6 metres for passing traffic.
- 1.4 The majority of residential properties have no off-road parking facility although they do make use of the on street parking bays. There are a number of businesses on Mill Lane which include a garage / tyre suppliers and bus depot. Mill Lane is also the only access for traffic, including HGV's, serving the Newbury Industrial Estate from the A339 with their likely egress being via Kings Road.
- 1.5 There is a protected road alignment for a link road through the Sterling Industrial Estate on Kings Road. As part of the redevelopment of this site the link road will form a new access from the A339 to Hambridge Road and thus to Newbury Industrial Estate. A report on this protected line was considered by the Transport Policy Task Group on 25th February 2011. Members resolved to approve the retention of the protected line and for officers to take every opportunity to secure the funding through local developments to enable the link road to be built.

2. Results of Survey

- 2.1 To determine existing HGV movements a survey was carried out in March 2011 for a duration of a week. The results of the survey showed that a total of 38,316 vehicles were recorded using Mill Lane of which 1,033 (2.7%) were over 6.5 metres in length and likely to be classed as an HGV.
- 2.2 A total of 768 (74.3%) of HGV movements were recorded between the hours of 08:00 and 17:00. The daily average and 85th percentile speed of all traffic was recorded at 25mph and 29mph respectively.
- 2.3 Further analysis of the traffic data showed that the daily weekday average of HGV movements was 191 with an average of 151 daily movements occurring between 08:00 and 17:00.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 It is considered that the majority of HGV's using Boundary Road require access.
- 3.2 HGV traffic using Mill Lane is inevitable given the local businesses that require servicing and that it is the main route to Newbury Industrial Estate from the A339. An alternative route for HGV traffic accessing Newbury Industrial Estate could be via the A4 and Hambridge Road. However this would add an extra 4.5km to the journey and would almost certainly be ignored.
- 3.3 Introducing a weight restriction that permits access would lead to enforcement difficulties due to the legitimate HGV movements requiring access. Enforcement is a very time consuming process and likely to be very low on the priority enforcement list as an HGV entering the restriction needs to be followed to ensure that it does not require access. It is also likely to raise the expectations of residents that it will be enforced by the Council's part time enforcement officer who has to cover all the weight restrictions in West Berkshire. Unfortunately with this level of resources enforcement will be very occasional at best.
- 3.4 Enforcement action could be undertaken by the Police but it is known that this is a very low priority for them and is unlikely to be realised.
- 3.5 Reducing HGV movements through Mill Lane and Boundary Road could be achieved by positively signing the industrial area with the use of the HGV symbol on direction signs. This could be included within the upgrade of the signing programmed for the A339 this financial year. Officers feel that this would be the best option at this time.
- 3.6 The possible introduction of the link road through the Sterling Industrial Estate is likely to significantly reduce the volume of HGV's using Mill Lane and Boundary Road. Unfortunately this may be some years away as it is very expensive and passes through contaminated land. It is only likely to be realised if the site is developed and contributions can be obtained from developers. The Council is being as proactive as it can be to try to get this much needed link road.
- 3.7 As part of the initial consultation with ward members, Councillor Hunneman made a number of comments. The report was revised to seek to address the comments, but as the recommendation did not significantly change Councillor Hunneman requested that his original comments remain.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended by officers that direction signs incorporating the lorry symbol be included as part of the A339 signing improvements programmed for this financial year and that monitoring of the impact of HGV's using Mill Lane and Boundary Road should continue. Due to the enforcement difficulties and therefore limited benefits that an HGV ban except for access would bring for Mill Lane and Boundary Road, it is not recommended that the ban should be implemented.
- 4.2 Monitoring should continue for a year after the completion of the A339 signing improvements to assess its effectiveness. After this period further consideration

could be given to the introduction of a ban despite the officers concerns about its effectiveness.

4.3 That the petition organiser be advised of the recommendation.

Appendices

Appendix A - EIA Stage 1