

Bath & North East Somerset Council

| | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|------|
| DECISION MAKER: | Cllr Symonds, Cabinet Member for Transport | | |
| DECISION DATE: | On or after 6 th August 2011 | EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE: | |
| | | E | 2222 |
| TITLE: | A36 Cleveland Bridge, Bath HGV Issues | | |
| WARD: | All | | |
| AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM | | | |
| List of attachments to this report: Appendix A : A36 Cleveland Bridge HGV Flows Appendix B: A36 Bathwick St and Beckford Road: Illustration of proposed 18 Tonne Experimental Environmental Weight Restriction | | | |

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) travelling through Bath have been a concern for many years, particularly along A4 London Road and A36 Bathwick Street. Local residents are concerned about the contribution made by HGVs to poor air quality, road safety issues and intimidation experienced by vulnerable road users within the Bath World Heritage Site.
- 1.2 An 18 tonne environmental weight restriction is proposed for vehicles turning between A36 Bathwick St and A36 Beckford Road, in both directions. This proposal will reduce the contribution that HGVs make towards poor air quality in an air quality management area, congestion and intimidation by traffic. A further ban on U turning traffic is proposed extending ¼ mile south of this junction, including the A36 Pulteney Rd/Bathwick Hill roundabout. This is to prevent HGV's avoiding the turning ban
- 1.3 An experimental traffic regulation order is proposed to allow the impact of the proposed weight restriction on alternative routes to be monitored before a decision is taken whether to modify, suspend or make the order permanent.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet member is asked to agree that:

2.1 Subject to consultation with affected local highway authorities, the police, the Highway Agency, Freight Transport Association and Road Haulage Association:

i) A local experimental environmental 18 tonne weight restriction be made for a period not exceeding 18 months under Section 1 of Traffic Regulation Act 1984 on the A36 Primary Route in the left hand turning lane on the A36 Bathwick Street approach to the A36 Beckford Road junction and in the central right turning lane on the A36 Beckford Road approach to the A36 Bathwick Street with an exemption for emergency services.

ii) A experimental 'U' turn prohibition be made for a period not exceeding 18 months under Section 1 of Traffic Regulation Act 1984 on the A36 Primary Route on Darlington Street and Pulteney Road for a distance of ¼ mile in a southbound direction from the junction of Darlington Street with Sydney Place with an exemption for emergency services.

iii) Delegated authority be given to the Group Manager Planning and Transport Policy to modify or suspend the operation of the order, or any part of it, in accordance with Section 10 Traffic Regulation Act 1984 in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The capital cost of the project is estimated to be £34k funded from the Integrated Transport Block capital grant allocation. The whole life cost of providing additional signs is estimated to be £300.

4. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Removing through HGV traffic on the A4 and A36 between the A46 and A36 Beckford Road in Bath will improve transport and the public realm in the local area by helping to reduce pollution and congestion.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 The A36 through Bath is designated as part of the Primary Route Network. The Primary Route Network (PRN) designates routes between major settlements and ports/airports across the UK, and is normally the preferred routing for long-distance traffic, particularly goods traffic, between those destinations.

5.2 A roadside interview conducted in October 2009 on the A36 Bathwick St, Bath, indicated some 335 HGV's (18 hr 2 way weekday flow) in excess of 18 tonnes (maximum laden weight) travelling between the A36 and A46 through Bath, with neither an origin nor destination in Bath & North East Somerset. This amounts to 60% of the total number of HGVs >18 tonnes travelling across the A36 Cleveland Bridge. The remaining 40% using Bathwick Street are delivering to locations in Bath and North East Somerset.

- 5.3 This volume of through HGV traffic is considered to be particularly low for a Primary Route, but nonetheless its impact on the local area is significant in terms, congestion and pollution this causes within the Bath World Heritage Site and designated Air Quality Management Area particularly along the A4 London Road.
- 5.4 Within the Air Quality Management Area levels of NO₂ exceed EU air quality standards. Introducing an 18 tonne weight restriction will help reduce congestion and air pollution in this area and also help to reduce HGV traffic travelling through the World Heritage Site, an important objective of the World Heritage Site Management Plan.
- 5.5 Consideration will also be given to the alternative suitable routes likely to be used for HGV's up to 44 tonnes and other abnormal loads to ensure their expeditious movement on the network, in accordance with the Council's duty under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Traffic Management Act 2004. In exercising this duty, the Council will consult with both the Highways Agency and affected highway authorities before the experimental order is made and monitor the impact of the proposed 18 tonne weight restriction during the experimental period.
- 5.6 From the RSI survey, most HGV through traffic is travelling from the M4 west to destinations to the south and south/east of the district and the most suitable alternative route for HGVs to follow is the M32/A4174/A4/A36 via Saltford and Lower Bristol Road, Bath (Appendix A Fig 1 – Route 1).
- 5.7 Advance signing of the proposed weight restriction outside the district may be desirable, subject to the agreement of the relevant highway authorities, to discourage traffic from using less suitable routes.
- 5.8 The proposed 18 tonne experimental environmental weight restriction on the A36 Bathwick St and Beckford Road and associated U turn prohibition is illustrated in Appendix B.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The report author and Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7. EQUALITIES

The proposal does not affect any of the equality groups and therefore no Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out.

8. RATIONALE

The rationale is to reduce congestion and pollution on the A4 and A36 through Bath by reducing through HGV traffic movements. An experimental Traffic Regulation Order will allow before and after monitoring to take place to establish the impact of weight restriction before a final decision is made.

9. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Bristol/Bath to South Coast Study considered options for building a link road between the A46 and A36 to remove through traffic from Bath, and whilst there are significant benefits for road users, the cost and environmental impact of a link road are also significant and should only be considered as a last resort.

10. CONSULTATION

10.1 Ward Councillor; Cabinet members; Parish Council; Town Council; Local Residents; Community Interest Groups; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer

10.2 The consultation will be carried out by email and letter with the above consultees, Highways Agency, Police, Freight Transport Association, Road Haulage Association and affected highway authorities and by advertisement of statutory notices prior to advertising the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders.

11. ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

11.1 Customer Focus; Sustainability; Other Legal Considerations

12. ADVICE SOUGHT

The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

| | |
|--|--|
| Contact person | Adrian Clarke tel 01225 395223 email Adrian_Clarke@BathNES.gov.uk |
| Background papers | www.bb2scstudy.org.uk |
| Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format | |