



17th September 2013

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, HIGHWAYS

ENVIRONMENTAL WEIGHT RESTRICTION ON THE C3 NEWARK TO ELTON ON THE HILL ROAD

REVIEW OF EXPERIMENTAL ORDER

Purpose of the Report

1. To review and assess the effect and impact of the C3 Environmental Weight Restriction Experimental Order (3176) which came into force on 6th April 2012 along the C3 through Orston, Alverton and Kilvington.

Background

2. The C3 route connects the A52 (Trunk Road) in the vicinity of Elton and Bottesford with Newark. The general nature of the road is rural and passes through a number of small villages. The route is considered to be a short-cut for vehicles requiring access to the southern end of Newark and in particular to business and industrial premises. The rural nature of the route encourages high traffic speeds and the narrowness and alignment results in significant overrunning of verges and damage by larger vehicles.
3. At the 14th March 2012 Transport and Highways Committee it was agreed to introduce an Experimental Environmental Weight Restriction (EWR) order rather than a permanent one as this would offer an opportunity to assess the impact of the restriction on traffic movements in the area. This decision was taken in light of concerns expressed by local Parish Councils that trips would increase in other villages as vehicles divert from the C3.
4. An experimental order is initially monitored for a period of 6 months to assess its impact during which time representations are invited from interested parties. The report recommended that the Experimental Order be made for a period of 18 months with potential for review on expiry of the 6 month objection period. 18 months represents the maximum period that such an order can be made but it is not mandatory that this period is fully utilised.
5. The C3 Environmental Weight Restriction Experimental Order (3176) came into force on the 6th April 2012 and having not been the subject of any further Committee report is due to expire on the 6th October 2013. A total of 60 consultation letters were distributed on 27th March 2012 to affected Parishes, businesses and other interested bodies to advise of the introduction of the EWR.

Consultation Response

6. Following the introduction of the experimental order responses were received from eight interested parties during the initial 6 months consultation period and one outside the period. These are available as background papers to this report but can be summarised as :
- a) Two parish councils reported an observed reduction in heavy goods vehicle traffic and supported making the Experimental Order permanent
 - b) Two interested parties queried the extents of the order and how it was being monitored
 - c) One parish stated that due to the A46 works the unsuitable for heavy goods vehicle signs had not been replaced
 - d) One interested party stated that maintaining access to the landfill on the C3 had increased the number of heavy goods vehicles on the roads.
 - e) Objections were received on 5th October and 29th October on behalf of a local business through its legal representative. This continues from previous objections written on 15th December 2011, 10th January 2012 and 12th March 2012. In addition representation was sent directly to the Chair of Transport and Highways Committee on 9th January 2013 which resulted in the report being deferred from the Committee of 10th January 2013 and 6th February 2013. Further correspondence was received on 25th April 2013 from the Operations Manager of the business on the grounds that the EWR is damaging to the company's business, the environment and the safety of Newark residents. This correspondence which summarises that previously submitted is included as Appendix A of this report. The location of the business is shown on the accompanying drawing C3/DWG/01.
 - f) Cllr Wallace, the County Councillor for Newark West has expressed concerns regarding the number of diverted trips by HGV's from the C3 onto the residential streets of Boundary Road and Bowbridge Road in south Newark (also shown on attached drawing C3/DWG/01). These are routes through very densely populated areas and significant pedestrian movements take place accessing schools, hospitals and other local services.
 - g) An objection was received on 3 July 2013 outside of the six month period from Lincolnshire County Council which reported that it did not receive the consultation correspondence sent on 21st February 2012 and 27th March 2012 and no consultation had been entered into with Lincolnshire Constabulary. During the consultation on the permanent order sent on 23rd May 2011 Lincolnshire County Council replied with no objection to the permanent proposal. There is no difference between the permanent and experimental proposal. The introduction of the experimental order does not alter or impact the existing environmental weight restrictions within Lincolnshire County Council and would not be enforced by Lincolnshire Constabulary.

Review and Assessment

7. Before and after traffic data has been collected at various points between the A46, A52 and A1. Surveys have been conducted in February 2012 (before EWR introduction), August 2012, November 2012 and June 2013 (post EWR). Automatic traffic counter loops were installed at a number of locations for a period of one to two weeks. The amount of surveys completed is intended to thoroughly assess the traffic patterns within the area and to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the traffic regulation order.
8. An analysis of the results show that over the four surveys completed there has been a variation of between +10% and -10% change in heavy goods vehicles movements at each of the survey points on the C3 and these figures have fluctuated between positive and negative over the surveys, there has not been an overall trend. Prior to the introduction of the EWR on the C3 there were consistently less than 100 heavy goods vehicle movements recorded by the automatic traffic counters on an average weekday so the change has been fewer than 10 vehicles. The surveys indicate that general traffic travelling in the area bounded by the A1 and the A46 has decreased overall and this is considered attributable to the A46 improvements. The improved A46 scheme offers a more reliable journey time along that route which is applicable to all classes of vehicle.
9. Origin and Destination traffic surveys were carried out during November 2012 and June 2013 to establish more precisely the specific movements across the area. These surveys, when coupled with evidence from the Lorrywatch scheme, indicate that HGV movements have essentially been restricted to trips which are generated from business within the zone and very few illegal manoeuvres are taking place. The registration surveys show that it is often the same vehicle making multiple trips between sites. Across the areas as a whole in both surveys, between 70 - 85% of HGV trips are confirmed as local traffic. It is considered that a significant proportion of the remaining heavy goods vehicle trips will also be legitimate movements serving the local area.
10. The surrounding villages outside the restriction recorded very low numbers of heavy goods vehicles in the before and after surveys, often averaging in the region of 10 movements in a 24 hour period, therefore any fluctuation in heavy goods vehicles recorded has a large statistical impact. The flows are subject to seasonal variations due to the agricultural nature of the area. All the data from the different surveys shows that there has been no transference of heavy goods vehicles from the C3 onto the roads within the surrounding villages as numbers have been consistently below 10 movements.

Assessment /Conclusion

11. Evidence suggests that the introduction of the C3 EWR has had a benefit to communities on the C3 by removing extraneous trips from the route this has not resulted in increased trips through adjacent villages which have benefitted from the recent A46 Improvement scheme.
12. The EWR has led to an increase in HGV movements along Boundary Road/Bowbridge Road in Newark. This is largely due to one specific business

being located outside of the EWR area and is outlined in its letter of 25th April 2013 being forced into Newark. The use of Boundary Road and Bowbridge Road by HGV's has generated local concern as reported by County Councillor Wallace. These routes show significant pedestrian activity and the presence of important local facilities cannot be considered anymore suitable to take HGV traffic than the C3 itself from where trips are being diverted.

13. It is therefore proposed to extend the limits of the C3 EWR, subject to statutory procedures being carried out, such that the key business north of the existing EWR area is permitted to use the C3 to access and egress the Trunk Road network at the A52. This will increase HGV activity along the C3 but continue to prevent longer distance extraneous trips from using the route as a short cut from the A52 to Newark and beyond and will be an improvement on the situation prior to the introduction of the experimental EWR.
14. Extending the restriction to include Bowbridge Lane (between Staple Lane and Hawton Lane), and Staple Lane (between London Road and Bowbridge Lane) would enable local businesses on these two routes to continue to operate and minimise use of Boundary Road.
15. The Nottinghamshire Police and the Parish Councils along the route were supportive of the proposals to introduce the experimental EWR. Local County Councillors Sue Saddington, Martin Suthers and Keith Walker continue to support the EWR.

Other Options Considered

16. Options considered are:-
 - a. To make the Experimental Order permanent with no proposed changes to its extents
 - b. To withdraw the Experimental Order and remove all the associated signage, reinstating the previous permanent order to the original extents on Valley Lane, Bottesford Lane, Longhedge Lane and New Road and its associated signage.
 - c. To make the Experimental Order permanent and then to amend it to include Environmental Weight Limit orders on Bowbridge Lane (between Staple Lane and Hawton Road roundabout) and on Staple Lane (between Bowbridge Lane and London Road)

Reasons for Recommendations

17. The recommended option to make the experimental order permanent is made in view of the support outlined and evidence that the transference of heavy good vehicle movements onto the neighbouring rural road network has not occurred.
18. Making the Order permanent will continue to protect rural communities along the C3 from intrusive and extraneous journeys by HGV's whilst extending the order to include Staple Lane and Bowbridge Lane would allow local businesses on these two routes to continue to operate and minimise use of Boundary Road which is not a preferred route for such trips. It should be noted that the

amendment of the permanent order would be subject to the traffic regulation process and objections to the proposal could be received.

19. It is considered that the introduction of the Weight Restriction along the C3 has had the effect of minimising the number of extraneous journeys by HGV's along the route. As with any such order, transference of trips onto the highway network elsewhere will occur and these will be mitigated by extending the order to include Staple Lane and Bowbridge Lane

Statutory and Policy Implications

20. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

21. The Experimental Environmental Weight Restriction scheme was funded from the Local Transport Plan budget for 2012/13. The cost of implementing the scheme was in the region of £12,000. The decision to make this order permanent has no financial implications from a capital spend perspective as no signing alterations are required.
22. The provision of the amendment to include Bowbridge Lane and Staple Lane is to be funded from the Local Transport Plan budget for 2013/14. The cost of implementing this is £4,500.

Crime and Disorder Implications

23. Nottinghamshire Police has raised no objection to the proposals.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1. It is recommended that The Nottinghamshire County Council (Alverton, Aslockton, Balderton, Cotham, Elton on the Hill, Flawborough, Kilvington, Orston, Shelton, Staunton in the Vale and Thoroton, Nottinghamshire) (Weight Restriction) Experimental Order 2012 (3176) be made permanent and the Traffic Regulation Order process be commenced to consider an amendment to include Staple Lane and Bowbridge Lane.

Andy Warrington
Service Director (Highways).

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Mike Barnett, Team Manager - Major Projects and Improvements

Constitutional Comments (SHB 08.08.13)

24. Committee have the power to decide the Recommendation

Financial Comments (TMR 09.08.13)

25. The financial implications are stated in paragraphs 21 - 22 of the report.

Electoral Division and Members Affected

Bingham, Cllr Martin Suthers

Balderton, Cllr Keith Walker

Farndon & Muskham, Cllr Sue Saddington

Newark East, Cllr Stuart Wallace

Newark West, Cllr Tony Roberts

Background papers

Report to Transport and Highways Portfolio 7TH February 2012

Report to Transport and Highways Portfolio 14th March 2012

Consultation Letter dated 27th March 2012

Orston Parish Council response via letter dated 30 September 2012

Shelton Parish Council responses via e-mail dated 4 July 2012 and 11 October 2012

Member of Public response via e-mail dated 25 April 2012

Cllr Wallace letter dated 25th February 2012.

Cllr Wallace response via letter dated 18 April 2012

Member of Public response via e-mail dated 23 May 2012

Elston Parish Council via Karen Nurse dated 10 July 2012

Formula (Saint Gobain) via e-mail dated 2 October 2012

Trethowans LLP representing Formula (Saint Gobain) objection received via e-mail dated 5 October 2012 and 29 October 2012

Trethowans LLP representing Formula (Saint Gobain) received via e-mail dated 9th January 2013

Formula (Saint Gobain) letter dated 25 April 2013

Lincolnshire County Council letter dated 3 July 2013

Summary of Boundary Road accident statistics 1/1/10 – 31/5/13

Summary of Bowbridge Road accident statistics 1/1/10 – 31/5/13