

Committee	Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment
Date	19 September 2016
Report By	Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
Title of Report	Rotherfield Heavy Goods Vehicles Management
Purpose of Report	To consider the results of the public consultation and progress to detailed design and construction a request to restrict Heavy Goods Vehicles over 10 metres in length from travelling through Rotherfield village and, additionally, considering a request from Crowborough Town Council for the inclusion of additional signage.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member is recommended to:

- (1) Note the results of the public consultation; and**
 - (2) Agree that the proposals for a restriction on Heavy Goods Vehicles over 10 metres in length (except for access), together with the request from Crowborough Town Council for additional signage, should be progressed to detailed design and construction.**
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1 Background

1.1 Traffic data shows that the size and volume of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV's) traffic travelling through Rotherfield has increased over the last few years. This has caused significant congestion problems and damage to buildings in the centre of the village; one building, the Grade II listed Kings Arms public house, has been struck on numerous occasions by HGVs in recent years. Our analysis of the movement of HGVs has concluded that it is the longer HGVs (those over 10 metres in length) that are the major cause of the problems within the village. The area of the village most affected by HGV turning movements is shown in Appendix 1a.

1.2 Between 2011 and 2015 the average number of HGVs travelling through Rotherfield per day was 124. Of these, 16 (or 12.7%) were HGVs over 10 metres in length.

1.3 If a ban were introduced, those vehicles over 10 metres in length travelling east to west towards Crowborough would be diverted from the A267 via Bunny Lane to the A26. Those vehicles needing to access the southern side of Crowborough could continue southwards along the A267 and use the A272 to Maresfield to reach the A22/A26. However, vehicles over 10 metres in length making deliveries in the village would still need to be given access.

1.4 A proposal to ban all vehicles over 10 metres in length was considered to be unworkable because of the need to sustain access for local businesses and for local residents to continue to be able to receive deliveries from larger vehicles.

2 Supporting Information

2.1 In April and May 2016 a public consultation exercise was undertaken on proposals to ban longer HGVs (those over 10 metres in length) from using the centre of the village. The proposed ban relates to "through traffic" only and would involve the introduction of new signage and 'Keep Clear' markings near the junction of Station Road and High Street. Details of the roads that would be subject to the proposed HGV length restriction are shown in Appendix 1b. Any vehicles over 10 metres in length making deliveries in the village would still be permitted to do so. Buses would be unaffected by the ban.

2.2 A staffed exhibition was held in Rotherfield Village Hall on Friday 29 and Saturday 30 April 2016. The proposals were also made available on the County Council website between 29 April and 20 May 2016. The public were asked to complete a questionnaire either at the exhibition or online via the County Council's website.

2.3 The exhibition was well attended with a total of 304 responses being received during the consultation period. Analysis of the results showed considerable support for the proposals with over 97% of those responding to the questionnaire supporting the ban on longer HGVs (those over 10 metres in length) and over 91% supporting the 'Keep Clear' markings. Details of all the feedback received during the consultation are included in Appendix 2.

2.4 In addition to the public feedback, a response was also received from Crowborough Town Council. The response asked for further signage to be introduced on the A26 to highlight the length restriction and to remind HGV drivers of the existing "low bridge" at the bottom of Crowborough Hill in Jarvis Brook. It was felt that this would reduce the likelihood of HGV drivers having to do a "U Turn" in the centre of Crowborough. This suggestion from Crowborough Town Council will greatly reduce the impact on Crowborough residents of the Rotherfield HGV management proposals and it is recommended that they are included within the proposals and are taken forward to detailed design and construction.

2.5 The construction works to introduce the scheme would involve the installation of several new signs, the upgrade of existing HGV signage and the provision of additional road markings in the centre of the village. The cost of these works would be met from the County Council's 2016/17 Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements. The estimated cost of the capital works amounts to £20,000.

2.6 In our discussions with Sussex Police, they have advised they would not be able to proactively enforce the ban. However, recognising the local issues in Rotherfield, they advised that they would act on photographic evidence provided by the local community of drivers who are ignoring the ban. The County Council has been made aware that the Parish Council may be willing to get involved in organising and collating such evidence on behalf of the local community and forwarding onto Sussex Police.

2.7 If the Lead Member were to agree to the introduction of the measures then a detailed design would need to be prepared and a Traffic Regulation Order advertised. This would take place in Autumn 2016 which means the earliest that the new restrictions were likely to come into operation would be Spring 2017.

3 Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

3.1 The results of the consultation show strong support for the proposals to restrict longer HGVs in Rotherfield from travelling through the village. It is recommended that the HGV management proposals for Rotherfield are agreed, together with the additional signage requested by Crowborough Town Council, and both are progressed to detailed design and construction, subject to any minor modifications found necessary during the detailed design process.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillors Standley, Stogdon, Tidy, Whetstone

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Exhibition Drawings and copy of Questionnaire