

Agenda Item IMD27

NOTICE OF INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

ITEM NO.	IMD 2015-27
TITLE	B3349 Basingstoke Road and Charlton Lane, Swallowfield (Experimental 7.5 Tonnes Restriction) Order 2015
DECISION TO BE MADE BY	Councillor John Kaiser, Executive Member for Planning and Highways
DATE AND TIME OF DECISION	Tuesday 11 August 2015 at 10.05 am
VENUE	WSP Room, 2nd floor, Council Offices, Shute End
REPORT TO BE PUBLISHED ON	Monday 3 August 2015

**INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION
REFERENCE IMD: 2015-27**

TITLE	B3349 Basingstoke Road and Charlton Lane, Swallowfield (Experimental 7.5 Tonnes Restriction) Order 2015
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Councillor John Kaiser, Executive Member for Planning and Highways
ON	Tuesday 11 August 2015
TIME	10.05 am
WARD	Swallowfield
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR	Heather Thwaites, Director for the Environment

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

There will be an improvement to road safety at this junction by prohibiting turning manoeuvres by large vehicles which have occasionally blocked the junction and also it would prevent further damage to private property on one of the corners.

There are also community benefits that can be achieved in other roads in the vicinity where vehicles displaced by the restrictions have used alternative routes and created other safety concerns.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Member for Planning and Highways:

- 1) approves the permanent making of the WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL (B3349 BASINGSTOKE ROAD AND CHARLTON LANE, SWALLOWFIELD) (EXPERIMENTAL 7.5 TONNES MAXIMUM GROSS WEIGHT RESTRICTION) ORDER 2015.
- 2) instructs officers to remove the advisory direction signs diverting traffic via Part Lane; and
- 3) informs those who have responded to the consultation accordingly.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Turning manoeuvre by large vehicles have raised safety issues at the junction of the B3349 Basingstoke Road and Charlton Lane in Swallowfield and also damaged property on the corner of the junction. The council introduced an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to ban certain movements by large vehicles in response to requests from the police to prevent further damage or safety issues occurring. The particular movements which have been banned have reduced as a result of the ETRO, but other concerns have been raised about the displaced vehicles using alternative routes and creating other safety concerns. Despite these other concerns it is considered that the restrictions in the ETRO still offer benefits in road safety terms to the community and it is therefore recommended that the restriction is made permanent.

Background

There has been an increase in Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) using Charlton Lane in Swallowfield, in particular to gain access to Valley Farms Ltd., at Springalls Farm in Trowes Lane. The volume and size of this traffic has created safety issues at the junction of the B3349 Basingstoke Road and Charlton Lane, as larger vehicles were unable to complete some of the turning movements safely and also nearby property was being damaged by these vehicles. The police requested the council introduce restrictions to prevent the movements that were causing these road safety problems, namely:

- i. left turn from B3349 Basingstoke Road into Charlton Lane
- ii. right turn from Charlton Lane into B3349 Basingstoke Road.

The police were consulted about the best means of enforcing any turning restrictions and it was agreed that a turning ban for all vehicles over 7.5 tonnes maximum gross weight would be the simplest means of achieving this. The signs for this type of restriction required Department for Transport authorisation, and this was granted on 21 March 2014. The Council introduced the ETRO on 3 April 2014, and the signs are an essential part of the scheme, if it is to be enforced by the police. The Council also subsequently installed direction signs (using the lorry symbol) to advise drivers of an alternative route which meant that HGVs were advised to travel via Part Lane in order to reach Springalls Farm. The resulting impact of that redistributed traffic, upon the local amenity, has been a significant factor in comments received during the consultation period.

Consultation

The ETRO process means that no formal consultation is necessary prior to making of the order, but any comments received during the first 6 months of operation shall be considered before the order can be made permanent. The order can only last for a maximum of 18 months, and so this provides a period of time for the council to consider whether to make changes to the order, to revoke it or to make it permanent.

Response to TRO Consultation

21 comments were received during the six months, and these are summarised at appendix A. Of these, 1 gave unqualified support for the restriction, 8 gave tentative support (see below), 11 objections were received and 1 other comment which was vexatious in nature and not in response to the restriction.

Many of the comments received, both in tentative support or objecting to the restrictions also referred to the direction signs (using the lorry symbol) installed to advise drivers of an alternative route. This route (via Part Lane) enters Trowes Lane from the south (rather than via Charlton Lane) past a row of cottages that are quite close to the carriageway, and this has contributed to some deterioration of the verge and road surface at the Trowes Lane/Part Lane junction. There are no significantly better routes for large vehicles to access Springalls Farm, and Trowes Lane generally. However, there are alternative routes to Part Lane that would redirect traffic back to the Charlton Lane junction more safely. It is therefore suggested that the signs directing lorries to an alternative route via Part Lane are removed. This would ameliorate some (but not all) of the concerns raised by those commenting on the ETRO.

Recommendation & Conclusion

It is recommended to proceed with making the ETRO permanent, and to remove the advisory direction signs diverting traffic via Part Lane.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£500	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

N/A

Cross-Council Implications

Does not impact on other services but will allow the safe movement of vehicles on the highway.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Strategic Director - Resources	No response
Monitoring Officer	I have no specific comments to make on the report.
Leader of the Council	I fully support the actions detailed in this report.
Town and Parish Councils	
Swallowfield Parish Council	Swallowfield Parish Councils supports the proposal for Basingstoke Road/Charlton Lane junction traffic signage and the removal of advisory signs in Riseley directing lorries via Part Lane.
Local Ward Members	
Cllr Stuart Munro	I entirely agree with the comments made by the parish council.

List of Background Papers

TRO documents, letters of objection and support , Drawing Number 5049-1831-C

Contact Mike Horton	Service Environment
Telephone No 0118 974 6202	Email Michael.Horton@wokingham.gov.uk
Date 24 th July 2015	Version No. 2