



Meeting: Transport Working Party

Date: 14th March 2013

Wards Affected: Berry Head with Furzeham, Churston with Galmpton

Report Title: Proposed Environmental Weight Limit – Bascombe Road and Copythorne Road, Churston

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Supporting Officer Contact Details: John Clewer, Senior Engineer - Highways Development & Traffic

Purpose

- 1.1 This report is in response to an additional item which was presented by local ward members at the meeting of the Transport Working Party which took place on 31st January 2013, requesting some form of restriction to control the use of heavy goods vehicles on both Bascombe Road and Copythorne Road, Churston.

Proposed Decision

- 2.1 It is recommended that no change is made at this time, however should Members consider a change is required they approve the proposals outlined in **Appendix 2** to implement an advisory weight limit.

Action Needed

- 3.1 None, unless Members recommend the introduction of an advisory limit

Summary

- 4.1 The Churston, Broadsands and Galmpton Community Partnership feel that as the Bascombe Road/Copythorne Road route is used by school children and is very narrow, it poses a danger to pedestrian users and should be weight restricted to prevent access by larger vehicles.
- 4.2 Local members support the proposals and request a 6 tonne weight limit along these roads, believing that smaller delivery vehicles should be used.
- 4.3 There are three options available for members to consider. One is an advisory signing scheme to deter larger vehicles from using the route, the second is an environmental weight limit, enforceable only by the Police and the third option is to not change the existing network layout.

Supporting Information

Position

- 5.1 This report is in response to an additional item which was presented by local ward members at the meeting of the Transport Working Party which took place on 31st January 2013, requesting some form of restriction to control the use of heavy goods vehicles on both Bascombe and Copythorne Roads in Churston.
- 5.2 The Churston, Broadsands and Galmpton Community Partnership feel that Bascombe Road is used by school children and is very narrow, therefore posing a danger to all pedestrian users. It is a single carriageway road, with no footpaths and therefore they feel it is unsuitable for large vehicles.
- 5.3 Councillor Mills believes there should be a weight restriction to stop the larger vehicles and Councillor Pritchard requested a 6 tonne weight limit along these roads, believing that smaller delivery vehicles should be used. Members report that local farmers have supported the proposal.
- 5.4 There are three options available for members to consider. The first of which is an advisory signing scheme to deter larger vehicles from using the route, whilst the second is an environmental weight limit. Whilst the advisory scheme is not enforceable and may well be ignored by drivers with local knowledge, the weight limit needs a Traffic Regulation Order and is enforceable only by the Police. However this is likely to be a low priority for the local officers in their hierarchy of enforceable offences and therefore could still be ignored by drivers.
- 5.5 For an advisory limit, signage would have to be implemented at both the entry points to vehicles and to advanced points which advise drivers before they make an irreversible decision. An outline scheme design is as shown in **Appendix 2**, showing the approximate sign positions. There are 15 signs altogether, which will come to approximately £4,700.
- 5.6 Chapter 3 of the Department for Transport's Traffic Signs Manual allows signage to be used to give effect to an order prohibiting goods vehicles with a plated maximum gross weight exceeding that shown on the sign (indicated in tonnes). The restriction applies to such vehicles even if they are unladen or they are towing tractors of articulated vehicles and in these conditions their weight is below that shown on the sign, in the case of both Bascombe and Copythorne Roads this would be 7.5 tonnes. This sign is used when goods vehicles are prohibited for environmental reasons, e.g. where roads are narrow and unsuitable for large vehicles, or to protect residents from the nuisance caused by lorries in residential streets. The sign is not used for structural limits, such as those to protect weak bridges.
- 5.7 7.5 tonnes is the most common weight limit to be signed as this includes all heavy goods vehicles with the rear red and yellow markings (including 'Long Vehicle'). This aids vehicle recognition for enforcement purposes.

5.8 As this would be an environmental weight limit there may be exceptions for vehicle access, in which case it may be applicable to add a plate with one of the following wordings:

- Except for access
- Except for loading
- Except for access to off-street premises

This would allow access for agricultural and waste collection vehicles, as well as delivery vehicles, the volumes of which have increased over recent years due to the increased popularity of home shopping via the internet.

- 5.9 The proposal, as detailed in **Appendix 3**, is for an environmental weight limit as described in item 1.7. This increases the number of signs required and would require the advertising of a Traffic Regulation Order and the possibility of attracting objections. There are 18 signs altogether, of which 6 would need to be illuminated, which will come to approximately £15,000, plus the cost of advertising and sealing the legal order at around £1,000.
- 5.10 Members are advised that recent Government guidance from the Secretary of State for Transport is that signage clutter should be kept to a minimum on the highway and particularly in rural areas.

6 Possibilities and Options

The Working Party are requested to consider whether they wish to support amendments to traffic regulation orders in the area as detailed below:

- 6.1 Implement a scheme to sign Bascombe Road/Copythorne Road as unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles, as per **Appendix 2**.
- 6.2 Advertise and implement, should no objections be forthcoming, the changes to the Traffic Regulation Orders as detailed in **Appendix 3** to introduce a 7.5 tonnes environmental weight limit. Any objections will be referred to a future meeting of the Transport Working Party.
- 6.3 Members may wish to recommend that no changes are considered at the present time. It should be noted that there have been no collisions involving HGV's in this area in the last 3 years.

7 Preferred Solution/Option

Members are recommended that the option 6.3 above would be the most appropriate option. No funding is currently available for the works in either of these options.

8 Consultation

No consultation has been undertaken; however support for an environmental weight limit has been forthcoming from both local ward members and community partnership. Correspondence from the community partnership is attached as **Appendix 1**.

Devon and Cornwall Police are a statutory consultee and have been contacted regarding this matter and have commented verbally, however a full site inspection has still to be undertaken.

9 Risks

- 9.1 There is a risk that advertising amendments to the existing traffic regulation orders may attract objections, which will have to be presented to a future meeting of the Transport Working Party.
- 9.2 There would be an expectation for enforcement to be undertaken by the Police, however due to resources, this is likely to be unrealistic. The only time it is likely to be enforced is if a vehicle contravened it and it resulted in a collision.
- 9.3 The route along Bascombe Road and Copythorne Road can be used as a diversion route in the event of planned or unplanned closures on the A3022. If an environmental weight limit exists then a Police presence would be required to direct HGV's along this route during an unplanned closure. For planned closures temporary traffic regulations would be required to lift the Environmental eight limit and all signs would have to be covered.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Correspondence received from the Churston, Broadsands and Galmpton Community Partnership

Appendix 2 – Plan showing signage for a possible advisory 'Unsuitable for HGV' scheme.

Appendix 3 – Plan showing signage for a possible 7.5 tonnes environmental weight limit scheme.

Additional Information:

None

Documents available in Members' Rooms:

None

Background Papers:

None