

North Yorkshire County Council
Thirsk and Malton Constituency Committee – 28 November 2018
Update on the Experimental 7.5T Weight Restriction – Norton Level Crossing

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the Experimental 7.5T weight restriction at Norton Level Crossing.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 9 February 2018 an Order was made for the prohibition of heavy commercial vehicles with an operating weight exceeding 7.5 tonnes for an experimental period of eighteen months.
- 2.2 Permits to allow the continued use of the level crossing for businesses in the immediate vicinity of the level crossing, mainly undertaking shorter trips where using an alternative route would be disproportionately excessive. Permits have been granted to 3 businesses covering 18 vehicles.
- 2.3 North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) Trading Standards are engaged in the enforcement of the HGV restriction. 51 vehicles are presently being investigated for breaching the restriction and 7 have been summoned to appear in court in early December.
- 2.4 New and historical traffic counters are being used to monitor the impact of the Order.
- 2.5 The statutory six month period for objecting to the indefinite continuation of the Order has now expired, however, NYCC has agreed to take any further representations up to 1 May 2019, (although the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 provide that no variation or modification of an Experimental Order can be made more than 12 months after the Order was made).

3.0 Traffic Impact

- 3.1 At Butcher Corner the traffic counts have indicated:
- a reduction in HGV's travelling to/from Butcher Corner via Newbiggin
 - an increase in HGV's travelling to/from Butcher Corner via Old Malton Road.
 - surprisingly a slight increase in HGV's travelling towards Butcher Corner from Castlegate, although HGV's travelling into Castlegate from Butcher Corner have decreased.
 - On Yorkersgate the permanent traffic counter indicates that HGV traffic heading eastbound into Malton has remained constant although the number of HGV's travelling through Butcher Corner towards Old Maltongate appears to have increased.
- 3.3 On Church Street HGV's flows have increased in an eastbound direction which is likely to be a result of routing away from the level crossing.

- 3.4 On Welham Road there is a notable decrease in HGV's particularly towards the level crossing.
- 3.5 It would appear that although there has been a reduction in HGV's into and out of Butcher Corner along the Newbiggin arm, this is negated by the increased number of HGV's travelling to/from the junction via the Old Maltongate arm. This is not unexpected as the restriction does not prevent those HGV's which still choose or need to travel into/from/via Malton using Butcher Corner. Only the route to/from Butcher Corner will alter to avoid the restriction on the Level Crossing. Overall the restriction does not appear to be creating a reduction of HGV movements through Butcher Corner.
- 3.6 There has been a notable increase in HGV traffic along Highfield Road/Pasture Lane. This is likely to be contributable to vehicles diverting to avoid the centre of Malton and also due to the constrained road space at Butcher Corner which makes it difficult for large vehicles to make tight turns. NYCC have received a number of complaints regarding the increase in HGV's along Highfield Road/Pasture Lane. Issues raised include:
- Safety implications of HGV's passing two primary schools.
 - Traffic issues, particularly at school drop off/pick up times as HGV's struggle to manoeuvre past parked vehicles.
 - HGV's unable to pass due to the narrowness of the road adjacent the Old Malton Road mini roundabout, causing blockages.
 - Noise of HGV's travelling over the speed humps.
 - Difficulty for pedestrians crossing the road.
 - Amenity issues of HGV's in the residential area.
 - Pollution.
 - Road damage.
- 3.7 When considering the wider area, complaints have also been received from the residents of Harton village who claim that HGV's are using the village as a route to the A64 which avoids Norton and the weight restriction on Kirkham bridge. Concern has been expressed regarding the impact on the amenity of the village, narrow lanes and Howsham and Braithwaite bridges. NYCC are investigating these reports.

4.0 Air Quality

- 4.1 The monitoring sites within the Air Quality Management Area have shown a general downward trend in NO₂ concentrations since 2012/13. A recent examination has shown that this continues to be the case. However, in terms of the HGV restriction, reference is made to the Malton and Norton Air Quality Assessment which was undertaken by Systra in 2017 to support the Ryedale Local Plan. The findings of the report were that there would be no significant benefit of introducing the HGV restriction and that it should not be taken forward. Air Quality will continue to be monitored through the period of the restriction.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 Members to note the contents of this update.

Author: Richard Marr
Area Highways Manager
Business and Environmental Services
North Yorkshire County Council
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