

Council to move ahead with Ivinghoe freight zone.

Buckinghamshire Council has announced plans to move ahead with the implementation of the Ivinghoe area 'freight zone', after some delays due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The scheme, to reduce HGV traffic in the Cheddington, Ivinghoe and Mentmore areas, sits within defined boundaries, east of the A418, north of the A41 and west of the B489. Work to draft the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders needed for the zone is now scheduled to start in mid February 2021, when formal public consultation will take place. Subject to the feedback received, the scheme could be fully operational by spring 2021.

Essential works to strengthen the Brownlow bridge on the B488 have already started and these are expected to be completed by the end of November.

Public engagement on the concept of the freight zone took place last March and was widely supported by local residents, businesses and community groups. It included dialogue with parish councils, local councillors, and businesses, along with drop-in exhibition events in Ivinghoe and Wing and a survey which received 332 responses.

Buckinghamshire Council Cabinet Member for Transport Nick Naylor said he was delighted to announce the news. "I'd like to have got on with things quicker, however COVID-19 restrictions have affected our planning with council officers and resources redeployed to help support the vulnerable and those at highest risk.

"But now I'm delighted we're back on track and that the Ivinghoe area is set for its freight zone. Once drafted, the TROs will be subject to statutory public consultation so people can have their say on all the detail before final implementation. We also need to liaise with colleagues in Hertfordshire and Central Bedfordshire Councils as some of the signage will need to be sited in their areas," he added.

The Orders will include a 7.5 tonne weight restriction on vehicles travelling through the zone. There will be an exception for vehicles travelling to destinations within the zone, which means deliveries and collections for local homes and businesses can continue unaffected.

Monitoring in November 2019 showed an average of 254 HGVs per week passed through the proposed zone, heading for destinations further afield, around 47% of the total HGV traffic in the area.

Local ward councillor and Wing and Ivinghoe Community Board Chairman Anne Wight added, "This is great news. The 'freight zone' would give us that balance between allowing those HGVs that need to come to the area and discouraging those that just pass through. Potentially this scheme could see lorry movements reduced by close to 50%, considerably reducing the negative impacts on local residents, buildings and the environment."

Notes to Editor

The survey results were:

70% agreed or strongly agreed with the freight zone proposals - 95% of these lived within the proposed zone

23% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposals - 69% of these lived in Buckinghamshire outside the proposed zone

7% neither agreed nor disagreed

72% preferred a 7.5 tonne restriction in the proposed freight zone on all roads, including Brownlow Bridge

4% preferred a 7.5 tonne restriction on Brownlow Bridge but not on roads in the proposed freight zone

8% preferred no change to the movement of heavy lorries

12% provided alternative solutions

5% were not sure

For further details about the results, please visit -

<https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/highway-projects/ivinghoe-fz-survey/>

Please note the following is Edlesborough Parish Council's response to the Ivinghoe Area Freight Strategy Engagement which were submitted in March 2020

Edlesborough Parish Council Comments

Edlesborough Parish Council supports the principle of the proposed 7.5t restriction area, but does not agree that in its current form it will achieve its full objective. The intention of the proposal as we understand it is to divert through HGV traffic off unsuitable rural roads onto more appropriate ones designated as 'freight routes'.

There are four main population centres that bound the proposed restriction zone, Leighton Buzzard to the North, Tring to the South, Aylesbury to the South West and Dunstable to the North East. It is reasonable to assume that most of the through traffic in the zone is travelling between one population centre and the one directly opposite. That is between the Aylesbury and Dunstable areas (east/west) or between the Leighton Buzzard and Tring areas (north/south).

Traffic between Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard already uses the A418, traffic between Aylesbury and Tring uses the A41 and between Tring and Dunstable, the B488/489 (i.e. the designated freight routes), as these are the most direct and quickest routes.

Google Maps identifies the most direct and quickest routes east/west as the A41/B489 or the A418/A505. The A41 and A418 are designated freight routes, so the only traffic that would be diverted out of the restriction zone would be HGVs on the stretch of the B489 between Buckland and Ivinghoe, which would then use the B488 through Bulbourne instead.

The most direct and quickest route north/south is the B488 through Horton and Ivinghoe (11.3 miles) and the Freight Strategy document appears to assume that traffic would use the A418/A41 route instead (19 miles). That clearly is not going to happen because that

traffic will simply divert onto the B440/B489/B488 instead (12.4 miles). The B440 is not identified as a freight route but neither is it included within the restriction zone, meaning that a significant proportion of the excluded HGV traffic would obviously divert onto the B440 between the A505 and the B489 junctions.

That is not acceptable because the B440 is unsuitable as a freight route, primarily because of the blind pinch point on Edlesborough Hill. At that location HGV's have to straddle the centre white line despite not being able to see traffic approaching from the opposite direction. Furthermore the pedestrian footway at that point is extremely narrow.

It is therefore essential that a solution to the Edlesborough Hill problem on the B440 must be found before the proposed 7.5t restriction zone is introduced.

Additionally the road surface on the B440 through Edlesborough and Northall is brought up to a standard that can withstand the increased HGV traffic.

If making highway improvements to relieve the Edlesborough Hill problem would be prohibitive, the situation could be overcome by merging the proposed Ivinghoe Division 7.5t Restriction Zone with the existing Central Beds Eaton Bray/Totternhoe 7.5t restriction zone. That would put a 7.5t limit on the relevant section of the B440 and prevent it becoming a rat run between two separate restriction zones. The A505 would then become the missing northern boundary designated freight route.

Yours sincerely

PE Pataky

Miss Penny Pataky
Clerk to Edlesborough Parish