

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Decision to remove the structural weight limit restrictions at Parsons Pole bridge, Brampton Bryan, Herefordshire.
Date of decision:	5 th July 2024
Decision maker:	Service Director for Environment and Highways
Authority for delegated decision:	Economy and Environment Scheme – Highways and Transport 75. To act on behalf of the council in respect of the legislation specified in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The authorisation limit is within the financial procedure rules and is sufficient for the decision and that the officer has authority under the contract procedure rules.
Ward:	Mortimer
Consultation:	<p>A Formal (Statutory) Consultation process was undertaken from 7th August 2023 to 28th August 2023, whereby an initial consultation letter and proposal plan was sent to all Statutory Consultees via email. During this process, no objections were raised. A summary of the responses received during the Formal (Statutory) Consultation process is included as Appendix C.</p> <p>The Notice of Proposal stage allowing the general public and Statutory Consultees to issue comments/concerns was undertaken from 9th November 2023 to 1st December 2023. During this process no objections were raised from the Statutory Consultees, nor from members of the public. A summary of the Notice of Proposal responses is included as Appendix D. The responses received from the Statutory Consultees are outlined briefly below.</p> <p>Ward Councillor (Mortimer) – Offered no objections to the proposals.</p> <p>Traffic Management Advisor (TMA), West Mercia Police – Offered no objections to the proposals.</p> <p>Border Group Parish Group – Issued no response to the consultation.</p> <p>Locality Stewards – Issued no response to the consultation.</p> <p>Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service – Issued no response to the consultation.</p> <p>Road Haulage Association – Issued no response to the consultation.</p> <p>Freight Transport Association – Issued no response to the consultation.</p> <p>West Midlands Ambulance Service – Issued no response to the consultation.</p>
Decision made:	<p>Considering no objections have been raised during the Formal (Statutory) Consultation and Notice of Proposal Stages, a Traffic Regulation Order be revoked under Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as proposed in the Notice of Proposal, the effect of which will be to remove the existing structural weight restrictions on the C1001 at Parsons Pole Bridge, Brampton Bryan. Additionally, “Unsuitable for HGVs” signage should be installed to discourage larger vehicles from using the route unless accessing local properties or businesses.</p> <p>A full schedule of the proposals is included as Appendix B.</p>
Reasons for decision:	This scheme originated as a result of the recent strengthening works undertaken by Balfour Beatty Living Places. Consequently, as part of these

works, budget was set aside to review the appropriateness of the existing structural weight restriction on Parsons Pole bridge.

An on-site assessment was undertaken in July 2023. Confirmation of the strengthening works at Parsons Pole Bridge was provided by the Bridges team at BBLP at this time and it was therefore established that it was indeed appropriate for the existing structural weight restrictions to be removed, in full, along with the associated signage. Due to the narrow and twisty nature of the carriageway approaching the bridge, it was decided that “Unsuitable for HGV” signage should be installed in order to prevent HGV through traffic.

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According to the Road Traffic Regulation Act (RTRA) 1984, it is the duty of a highway authority to ‘manage their road network’ and ‘to improve road safety’. Section 122 of the RTRA 1984 states that local authorities must, so far as is practicable, exercise their functions under the RTRA so as to ‘secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic’. Additionally, Section 1 of the RTRA states the permitted purposes of a TRO which include ‘avoiding danger to road users’ and ‘preserving/improving the amenities in the area’. It is therefore, prudent that the existing weight restriction on the C1001 at Parsons Pole Bridge should be revoked, in order to ensure vehicles (particularly heavy goods vehicles and agricultural vehicles) can navigate the roads more easily, unobstructed by any weight restrictions now that the bridge has been strengthened.

It is, therefore recommended to progress with the recommendations outlined in this report for the reasons set out above.



Appendix A.pdf



Appendix B.pdf



Appendix C.pdf



Appendix D.pdf



Appendix E.pdf

Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:

Community impact

The recommendations outlined above will have a limited impact on the local community. The road is extremely rural and are narrow in its nature, meaning that there is no obvious shortcut that would encourage Heavy Goods Vehicles to pass on the road more frequently. It is highly likely that this road will continue to be used by a low volume of local traffic, including some agricultural vehicles for access. The proposals are, therefore, in alignment with Sections 1 and 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Environmental Impact

Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public, and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire’s outstanding natural environment.

The development of this project has sought to minimise any adverse environmental impact and will actively seek opportunities to improve and enhance environmental performance.

Equality duty

The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.

The recommendations set out in this report are considered to be low impact with regards to equality. The restrictions aim to maintain road amenity and safety, thus paying regard to the council's duty according to the Equality Act 2010 as set out below.

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Any impact as a result of the scheme will be equal to all parties.

See Appendix E of this report for Equality Impacts and Needs Assessment (EINA).

Resource implications

The cost of the implementation of the proposals is approximately £10,000. This includes costs for statutory consultation, preparing and making the TRO, signage, road markings and advertising. This cost has been identified from this year's existing budgets in the current Annual Plan.

Legal implications

The introduction of a new TRO under Sections 1, 2 and 3 of Part I and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 will be required.

Part 2 of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 ('the 1996 Regulations') lays out the procedure prior to making an order. Regulations 6 and 7 require the Council as Highway Authority to undertake a formal consultation on the TRO and publish the proposals. Regulation 8 allows for any person or persons to make objections and requires that the Council, as Highway Authority, consider any objections received after the formal statutory consultation process, (which includes advertising in a local newspaper).

The Council has discretion to amend its original proposals if considered desirable, whether or not in the light of any objections or comments received, as a result of such statutory consultation. If any objections received are accepted, in part or whole, and/or a decision is made to modify the original proposals, if such a modification is considered to be substantial, then steps must be taken for those affected by the proposed modifications to be further consulted in accordance with Regulation 14 of the 1996 Regulations.

The Council has received no objections to the proposals. If the Council proceeds to make an Order, it will be necessary within 14 days of the order being made it is necessary in accordance with regulation 17 of the 1996 Regulations to publish a notice of making in a newspaper circulating in the area in which any road or place to which the Order relates is situated.

	<p>The Order cannot come into force before the Order has been publicised in accordance with these requirements. The time period for challenge is three months from the date of the making of the Order.</p> <p>Risk management</p> <p>The Local Transport Plan sets out to reduce the number and severity of casualties on the highway network in Herefordshire and provide a highway network that is safe and efficient. A Key Performance Indicator is contained in this Local Transport Plan and details a locally set target for a reduction in fatal or serious injuries on the highway network. The adoption of the recommendations in this report would contribute to these objectives in the Local Transport Plan.</p> <p>It is important for safety, and their effectiveness that weight restrictions are removed appropriately having regard to the type of factors considered in this report. This is the case at Parsons Pole Bridge.</p> <p>There is a risk that removing weight restrictions may encourage more vehicles to use the C1001 at Brampton Bryan. However, the installation of 'Unsuitable for HGVs' signage in Brampton Bryan, and to the north of the bridge on the C1001, will act to discourage non-local Heavy Goods Vehicles from using the road as a shortcut, which is important given the narrow nature of the road. The C1001 at Buckton, is not a through route and as such it is unlikely HGVs will utilise this route other than for access.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Not to make any changes to the current restrictions– This is not recommended as recent works have been undertaken by Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) to strengthen the bridge that is the subject of the weight limit on the C1001. At present, the structural weight restriction on the C1001 means that this section of road is impassable to larger vehicles (and particularly agricultural vehicles). Without the revocation of the existing weight restriction at this location, it is not possible for Heavy Goods Vehicles to legally use this route. Therefore, it is pertinent that the existing weight restriction is revoked in order to ensure safe, convenient, and expeditious movement of vehicles (including agricultural and emergency service vehicles) here. Overall, the proposed revocation of the restriction is in alignment with sections 1 and 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Not to proceed with the recommendations would be in direct conflict to the recent strengthening works undertaken by Balfour Beatty Living Places on the weak bridge.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date:

Please ensure that signatures are redacted before publishing.