



Cllr Mike Baldock
Chair Western Area Committee
Swale Borough Council
Swale House
East Street
Sittingbourne
ME10 3HT

Members' Desk

Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent
ME14 1XQ

Tel: 03000 419986

E-mail: members.desk@kent.gov.uk

Your Ref:

Our Ref: 28274844

Date: 26 May 2022

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 31 March 2022 in relation to a proposal to implement a Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) restricted zone on the A2 from the A249, Key Street Roundabout, Sittingbourne to the A278 (Tesco/Bowaters roundabout) Hoath Way, Gillingham.

Some concerns from residents living near to the A2 have been highlighted to us in the past and I am, of course, acutely aware of some of the negative issues HGVs can have on local communities, particularly when they use unsuitable routes, such as the inappropriate use of narrow, country lanes. However, the road in question is the A2 which, as you have identified in your letter, is a classified 'A road', intended to provide the most-direct large-scale transport links between areas and therefore, is suitable for all types of traffic.

I can confirm that we would not support the introduction of an HGV restriction on the A2 as this is a local distributor road. I would be concerned that the introduction of any restrictions placed would encourage HGV's to use alternative, inappropriate rural routes, such as through Lower Halstow and Hartlip. Implementing restrictions such as HGV bans does not cause the vehicles to disappear, they just end up being displaced often to less suitable routes. The A2 has a vital function in the area, and is the designated diversion route for all classes of vehicle when there are maintenance works (or incidents) taking place on the M2.

On a strategic level the council has adopted a Freight Action Plan that has a specific objective to try and tackle the routing of HGV's. The intention is to

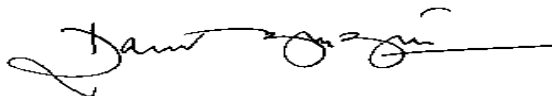
encourage the use of strategic roads for the transportation of goods across the county to minimise the impact on all communities. This document is available to view at [Freight-action-plan.pdf \(kent.gov.uk\)](#)

Officers are being asked by residents and elected officials to investigate weight limit bans on the various rural roads located between the A2 and the A20 / M20 (within Maidstone Borough). These routes in many cases are unsuitable for HGV's, and officers are having to look at this in an holistic way which will be difficult. Any weight limit proposals on the A2 will likely have a detrimental effect on these investigations and attempts to reduce HGV movements through the rural villages located between the two east/west motorway corridors.

In terms of the A2 at Newington in particular the KCC Schemes, Planning and Delivery (SPD) Team have recently installed a highway improvement project which includes a new 20mph speed limit running through the centre of Newington on the A2 and its surrounding side roads, and a right turn ban from the A2 into Bull Lane. These measures should have a positive impact on air quality in the area by reducing vehicles emissions and the amount of stop start traffic caused by having to give way to traffic entering Bull Lane off the A2. This scheme has only been installed in the last month and officers are continuing to monitor this site. This scheme was funded via the crash remedial measures budget in response to a cluster of injury related crashes at the Bull Lane junction.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Brazier', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Brazier
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport