

FALKIRK COUNCIL

**Subject: EXPERIMENTAL 7.5T (WITH ACCESS) WEIGHT RESTRICTION,
A905 BEANCROSS ROAD, GRANGEMOUTH – UPDATE REPORT**
Meeting: PLANNING COMMITTEE
Date: 28 NOVEMBER 2012
Author: DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Ward: Grangemouth

**Local Members: Councillor David Balfour
Councillor Allyson Black
Councillor Joan Paterson
Councillor Robert Spears**

Community Council: Grangemouth (including Skinflats) Community Council

Council Officer: Russell Steedman – Network Co-ordinator

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Reference is made to the report by the Director of Development Services to the Planning Committee of 1 December 2010.
- 1.2 This report updates Members on the effectiveness of an experimental weight restriction, to prohibit heavy goods vehicles, on the A905 Beancross Road, Grangemouth between Earls Park Roundabout and Beancross Roundabout.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following complaints from local residents about noise and vibration from heavy goods vehicles using A905 Beancross Road, the Planning Committee agreed on 1 December 2010 to introduce an experimental 7.5T environmental weight restriction. The weight restriction prohibits HGV traffic on the A905 as shown on the attached plan.
- 2.2 The experimental restriction is a “with access weight restriction” which prohibits the through movement of HGV’s along Beancross Road. However, those HGV’s accessing premises within the restricted area are permitted.
- 2.3 This type of weight restriction is known as an environmental weight restriction and is 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 the towing tractors of articulated vehicles, even if in these conditions, their weight is below that shown on the sign.

- 2.4 The experimental weight restriction has been in place since September 2011, and is due to expire on 07 April 2013.
- 2.5 Members may be aware that the experimental traffic regulation order for the weight restriction on Beancross Road contained a typographical error whereby Beancross Road was referred to as the A904, Beancross Road instead of the A905, Beancross Road. Central Scotland Police advised the Council on 13 September 2012 that they could no longer enforce the traffic regulation order due to this error. A new traffic regulation order with the same terms as the September 2011 traffic regulation order has now been made and came into effect on Friday 09 November 2012. This issue has had no impact on the collation of performance data for the purpose of this report as the traffic was analysed from January 2012 to July 2012.

3. EFFECTIVENESS OF EXPERIMENTAL ORDER

- 3.1 Traffic counts have shown a significant reduction in HGV volumes on the A905 Beancross Road during the restricted times. The counts also indicate a corresponding increase in HGV's onto the A9 and A904 alternative route.
- 3.2 The percentage of HGV's between 6pm and 8am has dropped from 6% of the 24hour volume to 2% of the 24hr volume. This accounts for approximately 200 fewer HGV's per day during the restricted period.
- 3.3 A consultation exercise on the effectiveness of the experimental order has been carried out with Central Scotland Police, NHS, Central Scotland Fire and Rescue Service, Freight Transport Association, Road Haulage Association, various Council Services and Local Members and Grangemouth (including Skinflats) Community Council. Responses received are summarised in paragraph 3.4.
- 3.4 Central Scotland Police have commented as follows:
- Additional and improved signage should be provided to provide better advanced warning of the restriction.
 - Current signs are difficult to understand due to excessive wording.
 - Carbon footprint of HGV's is increased due to higher mileages.
 - No HGV accident history or quantifiable damage to the road makes it difficult to justify supporting a continuation of the restriction.
 - Other more pressing policing issues require resources compared to a weight restriction on environmental grounds.
- 3.5 Falkirk Council's Transport Planning Unit have advised they are unaware of any issues arising from the introduction of the experimental weight restriction and have no objection to this restriction being continued.
- 3.6 Feedback from local residents via a local Member indicates that the experimental order was largely effective in reducing noise/vibration during the operation times. Residents are generally in support of a continuation of the restriction and favour the restriction being extended to 24hrs a day.

- 3.7 Grangemouth Community Council favour a 24hrs a day restriction being implemented. It is their view that this is required due to the absence of policing and lack of an effective monitoring method to catch offending drivers.

4. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The following 4 options have been considered. The advantages and disadvantages of each are contained in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.5.

4.2 Remove weight restriction.

Advantages

- reduced carbon footprint for local hauliers
- reduced running costs for local hauliers in terms of mileage and time
- no requirement for expensive signing

Disadvantages

- increased noise levels for residents
- increased wear on existing road surface

4.3 Confirm weight restriction as per current experimental restriction 6pm – 8am Mon – Fri and weekends.

Advantages

- reduced noise in evening and weekend periods for local residents
- allows HGV operations to use road during daytime hours with reduced carbon emissions and fuel costs

Disadvantages

- potentially confusing time restriction signs for HGV drivers to understand
- improved advance signing would be required at a significant cost

4.4 Revise weight restriction to 6pm – 8am 7 days a week.

Advantages

- reduced noise in evening periods for local residents
- easier to understand by HGV drivers
- signage can be simplified
- allows HGV operations to remain during daytime hours with reduced carbon footprint and fuel costs

Disadvantages

- improved advance signing would be required
- increase noise levels for residents during daytime hours at weekends

4.5 **Revise weight restriction to 24hrs 7 days a week.**

Advantages

- noise reduction for residents
- reduced wear on road surface
- simple signing

Disadvantages

- greatly increased carbon footprint and running costs for local hauliers
- potential impact on the accessibility and attractiveness of Grangemouth as a strategically important economic location
- increased congestion on alternative routes at peak times
- improved advanced signing would be required

4.6 On balance the option described in paragraph 4.4 of this report is considered to be the best compromise of reducing the impact of HGV's on residents whilst simplifying signing and minimising fuel cost implications of the restriction on local businesses and their carbon footprint.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 **Members are asked to consider the terms of the report and agree to promote a traffic regulation order promoting a weight restriction between 6pm and 8am 7 days a week as per paragraph 4.4.**

.....
Director of Development Services

Date: 20 November, 2012

Contact Officer: Russell Steedman, Network Co-ordinator, 01324 504830.

APPENDIX A

Plan of extent of weight restriction

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Consultee responses