
HGV Clamping Trial and Overnight HGV Parking Survey results and Recommendations.

To: Ashford Joint Transportation Board – 8 March 2016

**By: Jo Fox
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Ward: Across the District – Various

Summary:

An update and summary of the pilot scheme to clamp persistently evading illegally parked HGVs in the Ashford Borough was presented to Ashford Joint Transportation Board on 8 December 2015. Since the trial KCC has agreed that clamping of persistent evading HGVs can continue. In addition, work has been done to address the parking problems identified at Wotton Road and Ellingham Industrial Estate, South Ashford, details of these recommendations are included within the 'progress of recent traffic management proposals report', on this agenda. The concerns identified at various locations on the A20 Hothfield continue to be investigated with KCC and the residents.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The purpose of the trial was to ascertain if the clamping of persistently evading HGVs at two industrial Estates (The Orbital Park and Ashford Business Park Sevington) where an overnight waiting restriction had been in place for many years would increase compliance. The trial was extended to Henwood Business Park Ashford, there is not an overnight waiting restriction here but the numbers of HGVs parking overnight had become a serious concern. The clamping was intended to increase compliance where 'no waiting at any time' restrictions already existed. It was acknowledged that it would not remove all overnight HGV parking.
- 1.2 Increased enforcement operations over the years at The Orbital Park and Ashford Business Park, Sevington had resulted in the displacement of many HGVs to both Henwood and the Cobbs Wood Industrial Estates. During the trial overnight checks were carried out in areas known and reported to have problems caused by the overnight parking of HGVs, including laybys and residential areas. This was to ascertain the extent of the problem and to assess the impact enforcement action and continued clamping would have.

1.3 The trial and the observations during the trial revealed that:

- The threat of clamping drastically reduced the numbers of HGVs parking overnight at the three target locations.
- The threat of clamping HGVs where the driver had persistently evaded payment of Penalty Charges also changed driver behaviour. In order **not** to become a persistent evader more Penalty Charge Notices are now paid before being referred to collection agents.
- During the trial three HGVs were clamped and most existing persistent evaders relocated to Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate Ashford.
- Whilst there was the occasional incursion of HGVs into residential areas there was no trend towards residential parking of HGVs.
- There was a belief that HGVs were choosing to park on street rather than using lorry parks, this cannot be substantiated, as our findings show that the majority of nights all off road parking facilities were full to capacity. For 6 out of 7 nights up to 40 HGVs were being turned away from The Ashford international Truck Stop. An average of 55 HGV's a night were being turned away from Stop 24, with some nights in excess of 140 were turned away.
- The full extent of HGV parking in Laybys, slip roads and along main roads was noted during the trial and ABC continue to work closely with KCC and the police on Operation Kindle to address these issues.
- It also became apparent that the legislation supporting clamping is inconsistent and inadequate.
- There is no evidence that the clamping trial has been the cause of the displacement of HGVs.
- The parking of HGVs in laybys, motorways and major roads is a growing countywide problem caused by the lack of off road provision and the growing numbers of HGV using the county's roads.
- There **was** a significant increase in overnight HGV parking during the trial in Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate.
- One area Wotton Road, which is partly residential, has been identified as needing further restrictions. An overnight and evening HGV waiting ban was identified as being needed here and at the nearby Ellingham industrial Estate. Both are comparatively small industrial estates.
- Hothfield laybys have also been identified as a concern and ABC are working with KCC and local residents to address these concerns.

2.0 Since the HGV Clamping Trial

2.1 The numbers of HGVs parking overnight has slightly reduced since the trial however this has been partly due to the Christmas and New Year holiday. We have noticed that the numbers have started to increase in February but the overall numbers are still significantly lower than before the trial started in April 2015. The averages at the targeted areas are as follows:

	Orbital Park	Sevington Business Park	Henwood Business Park
Before trial.	20	12	40
During trial	12	7	8
Since trial	8	5	5

- 2.2 Persistent evading HGVs continue to avoid the three targeted areas and no further HGVs have been clamped. There has been a shift towards weekday parking and this includes British registered HGVs. The enforcement team have increased weekly enforcement to address this change. The numbers of HGVs turned away from the Lorry Parks is at its highest on a Wednesday night.
- 2.3 Following a decline in numbers in early January parking on main roads and in particular in laybys in Hothfield, these have now returned to the numbers noted during the trial and this continues to be a growing problem. Kent Police do have a policy of moving on dangerously parked HGVs however the scale of the problem and the level of resource has an impact.
- 2.4 The Police have advised that they will be tasking local CSUs (Community Safety Units) to target anti-social behavior caused as a result of HGV parking. The police have also advised that they will be allocating dedicated officers in affected areas to coordinate and address these problems. Since December 2015 the police have moved on approximately 1000 HGVs and issued 322 Fixed Penalty Notices. They have also advised that the problems are starting to be reported outside of Kent.
- 2.5 Plans to implement over night and weekend HGV waiting restrictions by creating Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) in Wotton Road and Ellingham Industrial estates have been completed and will be presented at this meeting.
- 2.6 The Parking Enforcement teams continue to enforce in the three trial areas and wherever HGVs commit decriminalized parking contraventions in the borough. KCC have agreed that we can continue to clamp in the trial area, and future clamping will be carried out on joint operations with the police and collection agents. Together with KCC we will be seeking changes from central government in enforcement powers for Civil Enforcement officers.
- 2.7 ABC continues to work with KCC and other agencies to manage the HGV parking issues, whilst taking into account the need for more parking provision. The introduction of more restrictions other than those we have identified would only risk displacement into residential areas and aggravate the already extensive problem of major road parking.

3.0 Available off road HGV parking.

- 3.1 Off road parking remains very limited in the borough. The only dedicated off road HGV parking is at the Ashford International Truck stop at Sevington. An area of land off Victoria Way, Ashford continues to be used

for off road parking of up to 40 HGVs. The International Truck Stop has in January 2016 increased its capacity by 65 spaces to a total of 385. Stop 24 at Junction 11 on the M20 has

- 3.2 Pressure on the International Truck Stop in Sevington continues and as with other trends we have noted this year's numbers of HGVs increasing. This is also the case for other Lorry parks along the M20 corridor which on most nights are full to capacity.
- 3.3 We have supported the option for further overnight lorry parking provision in the operation stack consultation (separate information paper) at this Joint Transportation Board.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 We are continuing to enforce and clamp to ensure compliance is as high as it can possibly be. We are working with KCC to review the areas that have the biggest impact on residents and their quality of life. We will continue to work proactively with other agencies and Kent Local Authorities, as part of Operation Kindle, to assist in delivering a countywide approach.

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