
Transport Committee inquiry on Operation Stack Update

To: **Ashford Joint Transportation Board - 8 March 2016**

By: **Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager**

Classification: **For information**

Ward: **All**

Background : **Lorry Parking Update JTB 9 December 2015**

Summary: This report provides an update on the council's response to the Transport Committee's request for any of the issues identified in evidence taken by the Committee on 14 October 2015.

Introduction

The Transport Committee took evidence on the impact of Operation Stack on 14 October 2015 following a summer in which Operation Stack was used on an unprecedented number of days. In November 2015 the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced funding up to £250 million for a permanent lorry park to increase resilience in Kent, by taking pressure off the roads in the event of Operation Stack. The Government will consult on a preferred site at Stanford and other alternatives shortly. In the short term, the former Manston Airport site will continue to be used as a lorry park.

1.0 Outcome of the Stage 1 tasks

1.1 Evidence has been submitted 29 February 2016 a copy of which is appended to this report for the Board's information.

2.0 Next steps

2.1 Await the outcome of the Transport Committee's inquiry.

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Transport Committee inquiry on Operation Stack Update – Council Response issued 29 February 2016

In response to your consultation to address Operation Stack lorry parking may we bring to your attention our comments linked to addressing overnight lorry parking as follows:

1. *The predicted benefits and disadvantages of changes to Operation Stack consequent on the building of a lorry park on the economy (locally and nationally) and local communities:*

The current consultation options may impact on the private sector lorry parks when considering whether to continue to operate, to remain the same or to expand. The most important thing is that a time-bound decision is made with a clear goal to ensure the private sector consider their options in line with the decision and the real need to develop in line with the lorry parking need.

2. *The extent to which current negative impacts will be mitigated by the creation of a lorry park:*

The creation of a lorry park will mitigate the impact that Operation Stack has on the local and national economy and on the community. The allocation of 500 spaces for constant use will also go some way to alleviate the overnight HGV parking problems in the county. We would like to bring to your attention that whilst this is a very positive measure the introduction of a network of smaller lorry parks along the M20 corridor would further assist in solving the overnight HGV parking problems. Whilst Operation Stack has a significant impact, overnight HGV parking also has an ongoing negative impact that business and residents have to endure all year round.

3. *The other actions that central and local government need to take, including those on road maintenance and improvement, upstream and downstream from the proposed lorry park:* All decisions need to be mindful of legislation. If overnight lorry parking provision is to increase (as per option 3) and the provision for overnight HGV parking generally is also increased it would be helpful if legislation was amended to ensure that Lorries are encouraged to use the facilities with the enhancement of some civil enforcement powers. Specifically it would be helpful if Civil Enforcement Officers were given the authority to inspect the registration documents of foreign registered vehicles to facilitate locating the keeper should penalties not be paid. The ability to clamp offending Lorries as a last resort is a power already available to Civil Enforcement Teams however this should not result in a cost to the tax payer. Current legislation is inadequate to deliver this enforcement option and needs reviewing. Provision and enforcement need to work hand in hand.