

HGV Enforcement and Clamping Update

To: Joint Transportation Board

**By: Catherine Darlington – Parking Team Leader,
Safety & Wellbeing Service**

Date: 5 December 2023

Classification: For information

Ward: Across the Borough – Various

Summary:

Kent suffers from issues because of HGVs parking in unsuitable locations. This causes danger, distress to residents and results in environmental waste in many locations. The Ashford clamping trial was a joint initiative between Kent County Council (KCC), Ashford Borough Council (ABC) and the Department for Transport (DfT).

The experimental HGV clamping trial operated between 30 October 2017 and 30 April 2019. It was extremely successful in reducing the number of HGVs parking in inappropriate locations within the Ashford borough. During the 18-month trial 2754 HGVs were clamped. The number of HGVs parked in Ashford borough reduced by 61% with little displacement to neighbouring districts. The trial allowed first-time clamping of vehicles that contravene restrictions.

The Permanent Traffic Regulation Order commenced in September 2019. This is part of a zonal parking ban that operates between 8pm and 7am and covers the A20 between Charing and Ashford, the Orbital Park, Sevington, Ellingham & Wotton Industrial Estates.

Background:

1. Ashford Borough Council (ABC) with Department for Transport (DfT) and Kent County Council (KCC) ran an 18-month lorry clamping trial (end date 30/04/2019) along part of the A20 and in 4 industrial estates in Ashford. DfT gave permission for ABC to a) clamp on issue of the first PCN and b) charge an increased clamp release fee of £150.
2. Following the successful conclusion of the trial, the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was made permanent by KCC. Therefore, ABC continued to enforce the TRO and the continuance of clamping HGVs parked in contravention of an overnight waiting ban.

3. From 1 January 2021 – The DfT gave KCC the same powers to run a trial across other parts of Kent. ABC, therefore, suspended the TRO and passed enforcement to them. A request to extend this was refused at the end of June. KCC immediately stopped enforcement, but the DfT confirmed ABC could revert to back to our previous TRO and continue enforcing with clamping in the previously agreed areas.
4. On 1 September 2022 a 12-month trial commenced with the current contractor London Parking Solutions issuing the PCN and clamping the vehicle. This allowed enforcement to be done on differing nights which was not possible with our small internal CEO team.
5. On 9 August 2023 following a procurement process, a three-year contract was rewarded to London Parking Solutions to continue with enforcement and clamping. The clamping company have the availability and flexibility to enforce on a variety of nights to ensure drivers are not aware when enforcement is taking place, and no patterns occur.
6. CEOs are not required to attend, which gives more availability for daytime priorities under the Traffic Management Act which is ensuring the free flow of traffic. This was being impacted whilst we were carrying out overnight enforcement.
7. All appeals are dealt with internally by our own Representation & Appeals officers at ABC.

Current Position & Summary

8. To date in 2023, (19 November 2023) a total of 850 vehicles have been clamped across the five locations within the scheme.
9. The breakdown of vehicles issued in each location in 2023 is:
 - A20 between Charing and Ashford – 282
 - The Orbital Park – 335
 - Sevington Business Park – 198
 - Ellingham Industrial Estate - 28
 - Wotton Industrial Estate – 7
10. Since 1 January 2023 there has been 19 appeals against the penalty charge notices issued to HGVs in contravention. 13 have been rejected with 6 cancelled on evidence provided.
11. One appeal has been taken to the next stage, Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT). ABC was successful with this case.

12. There have been two police reported incidents where clamps have been cut off and the vehicles left without payment in 2023.
13. The Ashford Truck Stop reports that they continue to have near to full capacity most nights.
14. Displacement parking of HGVs into other Industrial estates & locations continues to be monitored, the numbers are comparable to before the commencement of the trial.

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Reporting to Alison Oates, Safety & Wellbeing Manager