

Joint Transportation Board 11 June 2019

Operation Brock – M20 - Report of Cllr Bartlett, Vice Chairman, Joint Transportation Board

I wish to raise the issue of the continued use of the barriers on the M20 to restrict London bound traffic to two lanes. When I recently raised this matter with Highways England I received the following response:-

"Brock is for now (until a permanent solution is identified and agreed by DFT) part of the preferred solution for responding to severe traffic congestion at the port and/or Eurotunnel. In effect replacing Op Stack. Operation Brock remains a temporary arrangement but the barrier takes 3-4 weeks to install and 3-4 weeks to remove from the road, and has significant time, expense and roadworks implications. HE would need a high level of confidence that there is no disruption expected to be able remove the barrier completely to return the M20 London bound carriageway to normal running.

*At this stage, staying at two lanes on the London bound carriageway is essential to enable Brock to be implemented again within a short timeframe if necessary. **Re-opening three lanes would also require the repositioning of the steel barrier, which is fixed to the road surface and positioned to direct traffic to cross over on to the coastbound carriageway at each end.***

The gaps in the central reservation have been left open to reduce the time to re-activate Brock should it be required. Increasing the capacity of the London bound carriageway would also add an unacceptable risk for road users because at the crossover points there are gaps in the central reservation barrier.

However, be assured that this situation will be kept under constant review and we will be meeting regularly with our partners – DFT, Police, district and borough colleagues to continue to discuss preparations for Brexit, including the future of Brock."

I have highlighted above the section that I take issue with Highways England (HE) on and I consider that the repositioning of the steel barrier just at either end of Brock is small piece of work and would take just 48 hours to implement. In my view I think that it is unacceptable for Ashford and Folkestone residents to suffer for 6 months plus just to save HE 48 hours of work. I would like the Joint Transportation Board to discuss this matter and if they are so minded to ask the Chairman to make representations to the respective Government Minister and ask him to reconsider this matter.

Cllr Paul Bartlett- Vice Chairman Joint Transportation Board