

A4146 Water End Heavy Goods Vehicle Ban

Background

The new A5-M1 link road (Dunstable Northern Bypass) provides an opportunity to address longstanding concerns voiced by residents of the villages living along the A4146 between Hemel Hempstead and Leighton Buzzard about heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) using the road.

Hertfordshire County Council's Highways department is working with Central Bedfordshire Council and Buckinghamshire County Council on two cross border changes affecting the A4146 Leighton Buzzard Road. This concerns the section of the A4146 between Galley Hill (A4147) roundabout in Hemel Hempstead and the A505 roundabout just south of Leighton Buzzard.

The two cross border changes are:

1. the A4146 should be reclassified to a 'B' road (B440), and that HCC will lead the administrative work (not part of this consultation); and
2. a prohibition of vehicles over 7.5T at Water End on the A4146, and three zonal HGV bans in Central Bedfordshire.. These zonal bans do not form part of this consultation.

Further information about the changes outside of Hertfordshire are available here:

- <http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/a5-m1-link-dunstable-northern-bypass/>
- www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/weightlimits

A4146 Water End Heavy Goods Vehicle Ban Consultation

A public consultation on a HGV ban on the A4146 is planned in advance of a formal application for a Traffic Regulation Order to ban HGVs over 7.5 tonnes crossing Water End bridge.

The consultation will run between 12 September and 2 October 2016. A copy of the consultation leaflet and feedback form are available at www.hertsdirect.org/A4146TRO.

What happens next?

The responses we receive from the consultation will determine the final programme, but for now we anticipate:

- Consultation on the proposed changes 12 September - 2 October 2016
- Review feedback and finalise proposals October 2016
- Statutory consultation on the draft TRO November 2016- February 2017
- Traffic signs in place (subject to approval of TRO) spring 2017
- Monitoring and review of effectiveness of the HGV ban autumn 2017

Where to go for more information

Please contact Hannah Smith (hannah.smith@hertfordshire.gov.uk) if you would like more information about the proposed scheme.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we need a ban?

The ban would address the effects of HGVs on the A4146. For a long time residents have wanted to reduce the environmental impact of HGVs in Water End and neighbouring villages.

Traffic surveys indicate that currently over 300 HGVs drive through Water End between 7am and 7pm on weekdays.

The bridge at Water End is a listed structure. This bridge has been damaged a number of times, and it is thought the damage is caused by HGVs.

Highways England's work to build the A5-M1 link (also known as the Dunstable Northern Bypass) is almost complete. The road will link the A5 with a new junction (11A) on the M1. It will provide a quicker route for strategic traffic between Hemel Hempstead and Leighton Buzzard and beyond; and will remove the need for this traffic to use the A4146. Effectively Water End will be bypassed.

Journey times have been calculated to be quicker using the A5-M1 link and motorways between

- A505 roundabout Leighton Buzzard and junction 9 M1
- A505 roundabout Leighton Buzzard and junction 8 M1
- A505 roundabout Leighton Buzzard and junction 20 M25

The construction of the A5-M1 link road gives us an opportunity to change the local road network and reinforce the M1 as the most appropriate route for through traffic.

A 7.5-tonne ban will mean that restrictions on the A4146 can be legally enforced by the police.

What is a HGV?

A HGV or heavy goods vehicle has been used in this instance to refer to any vehicle weighing over 7.5 tonnes, identified by the yellow and orange markings on the rear of vehicles.

Where will the HGVs go instead?

Directional signs in Hemel Hempstead and Dunstable will direct HGVs onto the M1. In the short term, there may be some local rerouting of HGVs that would have previously used the A4146.

It is not expected that HGVs will transfer to other local roads in the long term as the A5-M1 Link will offer a quicker route.

What will happen if HGVs go on other local routes?

The ban will only be enforceable by the police along the banned section of the A4146; however we do not expect HGVs to transfer onto other local roads as the A5-M1 Link will offer a quicker route.

I am worried about my road, can HGVs be banned from my road too?

Once the A5-M1 Link Road is open, we expect that HGVs drivers will choose to use M1, as it is quicker. We will monitor the number of HGVs on A4146 once the ban has been introduced, and we will also monitor the numbers of HGVs using the nearby roads. This monitoring should happen about 6 months after the ban is introduced to give everyone time to get used to it.

We have shown the proposed monitoring locations on the consultation plan. There can only be one monitoring position per road, regardless of its length. Please let us know if you are worried about HGVs on a road which does not have a monitoring position. If roads see significant increases in HGV traffic further action may be required.

How will deliveries get to my house with the ban in place?

If your property is within the banned length, deliveries will be unaffected. If your property is outside of the banned length, the prohibition will apply and the driver will be required to find an alternative route as they will be unable to drive through the banned length.

Can the barriers be removed on the bridge with the ban in place?

Yes, the barriers should not be needed once the ban is in place.

What is a TRO?

A TRO or Traffic Regulation Order is the legal document required to support a range of measures which govern or restrict the use of a public road. In this case, one is required to make a 7.5 tonne limit on Water End Bridge enforceable by the police.

Applications for Orders are made in line with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). To make an order the following steps must be followed:

1. Any body specified in Regulation 6 of the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulation 1996 must be consulted, and a notice must be made in the local newspaper. Notices should also be displayed in the relevant area, and sent to local properties.
2. Anyone may object in writing to an order by the date specified on the notices. A public inquiry would not be required for a scheme like this in line with the Regulations. A decision would be made balancing these objections against the reasons for the scheme.
3. Orders cannot be made before the statutory period for objection ends. Once this ends HCC can make an order, and we must place an advert in the local newspaper within 14 days of the decision. At this point we would write to any objectors outlining our decision to proceed. The signs relating to the order must be in place before it can come into force.

How will the decision about whether to proceed with a TRO be made?

Your views are important to us, but they are not the only factor taken into account in decision making. Decisions on any highways scheme will also take into account safety, cost, and environmental impacts; as well as local and regional issues.