

**Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – Working Group**

**Working together to address the impact of  
Heavy Goods/Commercial Vehicles on roads in Staffordshire**

Tuesday, 20 October 2015 **10.00 am**  
Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

John Tradewell  
Director of Democracy, Law and Transformation  
12 October 2015

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**A G E N D A**

**1. 10:00 Welcome, Introductions and Housekeeping (15 minutes)**

Tina Randall, Scrutiny and Support Manager

**2. 10:10 Background and Scope of Review (15 minutes)**

Councillor David Loades – Chair of Review Panel  
Tina Randall – Scrutiny and Support Manager

**For Information**

- a) Scoping Report (Pages 1 - 6)
- b) Option Review - A515 Weight Restriction, Wood End Lane to B5017 (Pages 7 - 26)  
*Report commissioned by Councillor Martyn Tittley*

**3. 10:25 What is the impact of heavy goods/commercial vehicles on roads and how are they affecting communities in Staffordshire. (60 minutes)**

Evidence from Parish Councils and Schools

Yoxall Parish Council/Action Group and Kings Bromley Parish Council's Presentation (20 minutes)

**4. 11:25 Feedback from County Councillors and Schools (15 minutes)**

Verbal contributions from County Councillors and school representatives.



## **For Information**

a) Summary of feedback from County Councillors

(Pages 27 - 32)

5. **11:40 How are Staffordshire roads and local communities likely to be affected by future plans (45 minutes)**

Borough and District Council representatives verbal update on Local Plans

6. **12:25 Evidence from Staffordshire Fire and Rescue and Staffordshire Police (30 minutes)**

Discussion with Tim Hyde, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Inspector Robert Neeson, Staffordshire Police.

7. **12:55 Summary and Way Forward**

Councillor David Loades, Char of Review Panel

**Date of Next Inquiry Session - Tuesday 10 November, 10am**

### **Working Group Membership**

Len Bloomer  
Tim Corbett  
Carol Dean

David Loades (Chairman)  
Geoff Martin  
Simon Tagg  
Martyn Tittley

### **Note for Members of the Press and Public**

#### **Filming of Meetings**

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**Scrutiny and Support Manager:** Tina Randall Tel: (01785) 276148

Local Members' Interest

## **Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee**

**August 2015**

### **Work Programme 2015-16 – Scoping report – Working together to address the impact of heavy goods vehicles<sup>1</sup> on roads in Staffordshire**

#### **Recommendation**

1. At its meeting on 24 July 2015 the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee agreed to undertake a scrutiny review to investigate the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads in Staffordshire. A Select Committee is not a decision making body, but it can undertake a review and make recommendations to the Cabinet who can make decisions on behalf of the Council.

#### **Report of Scrutiny and Support Manager**

#### **Summary**

##### **What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?**

2. The Committee agreed to review the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads in Staffordshire as part of their 2015-16 scrutiny work programme. An important part of this review is to understand the impact that HGV's have on local communities and our local economy. To take this forward, the Select Committee is asked to consider and agree the Terms of Reference and arrangements for the review, as proposed in this report.

#### **Report**

##### **Background**

3. The identification of this topic for review by the Prosperous Staffordshire was prompted by the receipt in full Council in May 2015 of two petitions from residents in Yoxall and Kings Bromley demanding a weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes on the A515 and auxiliary roads between Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay through Yoxall and Kings Bromley to Wood End Lane. The matter was referred by Council to the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee, as the relevant scrutiny committee of the Council, to consider further.

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<sup>1</sup> A heavy goods vehicle or heavy commercial vehicle is a truck with a gross combination mass (GCM) of over 3,500 kilograms (3.5 tonne) (7,716lb).

## **Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Review**

### **Scope**

4. Following discussion at the Committee meeting on 24 July it was agreed to broaden the scope of the review to consider the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads in Staffordshire. Members stated that the problems recorded in regard to the A515 were being experienced on other roads in Staffordshire and asked that the scope be broadened out to include all roads in Staffordshire.

### **Intended Outcome**

5. To better understand the impact that heavy goods vehicles have on roads in Staffordshire and the impact that they are having on local communities;

6. To identify potential solutions to reduce the impact that heavy goods vehicles have;

7. To understand the impact of any future developments;

8. To identify a way forward and to make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport.

### **Key Objectives**

9. To understand better the current problems caused by the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads (and communities) in Staffordshire;

(A case study example of the impact of heavy goods vehicles use on the A515 will be used)

10. To consider what potential solutions might be considered to reduce the impact on local communities;

(A review undertaken by Amey on behalf of Councillor Martyn Tittley will be considered);

11. To consider how Staffordshire roads (and communities) are likely to be affected in the future.

12. To identify a way forward including potential solutions and to report findings to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport.

### **Lines of Enquiry**

The Working Group of Members is meeting to identify lines of enquiry. These will be forwarded to participants in advance of the Inquiry Day(s).

## **Review Arrangements**

The Committee agreed that the approach to be taken would be to invite key witnesses to give evidence either in person or in writing to a small group of members over two inquiry days. A public call for evidence would be arranged.

The following Members agreed to participate:

- Councillor David Loades
- Councillor Len Bloomer
- Councillor Geoff Martin

It was agreed to invite Councillors Tim Corbett and Martyn Tittley to join the Working Group as they represented the divisions that had petitioned about heavy good vehicles on the A515.

Initial discussions had taken place with County Council officers and an initial proposal on the content of the Inquiry Days has shared with Mary Anne Raftery, Community Infrastructure Manager and Richard Rayson, Community Infrastructure Liaison Manager.

It was agreed that the following organisations may wish to give evidence, in person, or in writing:

- All County Councillors
- Local residents
- Yoxall, Kings Bromley, Draycott in the Clay and Longdon Parish Councils;
- Local authorities in the area;
- Road haulier and freight representatives;
- Local businesses;
- Local schools/community groups;
- Staffordshire County Council Highways Team (including the Council's Traffic Manager);
- Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue;
- Highways England;

The Working Group will be provided with a briefing pack prepared by scrutiny officers at the outset of the review. After this, with officer support, Members can determine the information and evidence they require to address the Terms of Reference. As part of the review, Members may wish to undertake visits, consultation and/or call for evidence from third parties.

The meeting will be a public meeting and will be webcast.

The review will take place over two half days in October/November 2015 and it is anticipated that a report will be prepared and presented to the Committee on 17 December 2015.

The Committee/Working Group is advised to share their terms of reference with the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport at the outset. During the course of the review the Committee/Working Group will make interim progress reports to the Committee and to the relevant Portfolio Holder or Cabinet. The Committee/Working Group will produce a final report, containing any recommendations they may wish to make for submission to the relevant Portfolio Holder/Cabinet or other body.

An Executive Response to any recommendations will be provided to the Committee.

### **Link to Strategic Plan**

The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee is responsible for scrutiny of the achievement of the Council's strategic ambitions for promoting prosperity and economic growth and the scrutiny of highways infrastructure and connectivity.

### **Link to other scrutiny activity**

The Committee has considered a number of key programmes of work and has had the opportunity to scrutinise HS2 and the Transport Review. In 2008-9 a predecessor scrutiny committee undertook a review of Speed Policy Working Group reported to the Corporate Policy Scrutiny & Performance Committee on 20 April 2009.

### **Community Impact**

The Committee/Working Group will be expected to consider the implications of work, or proposed action, on the subject under review and to make reference to implications including those below in their final report:

- Equalities and Legal
- Resource and Value for Money
- Risk
- Climate Change.

### **Contact Officer/s**

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tina.randall@staffordshire.gov.uk

### **Appendices/Background papers**

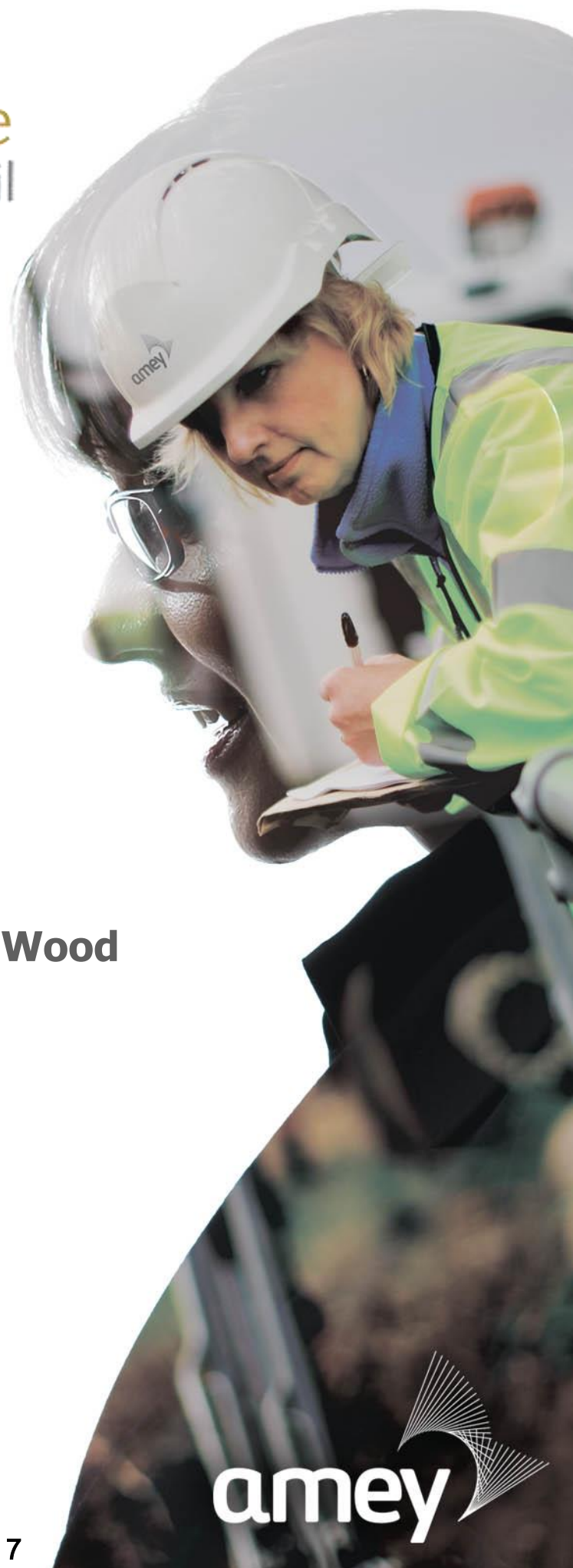
Report of the Speed Policy Working Group – reported to Corporate Policy Scrutiny and Performance Committee – 20.4.09

Freight Strategy

A copy of the report undertaken for Councillor Martyn Tittley will be circulated in the briefing pack.







# Option Review

## A515 Weight Restriction, Wood End Lane to B5017

COSTCDT6562 /002 Revision 02

May 2015



**Document Control Sheet**

Project Name:	A515 Weight Restriction, Wood End Lane to B5017
Project Number:	COSTCDT6562
Report Title:	Option Review
Report Number:	002

<b>Issue Status/Amendment</b>	<b>Prepared</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>Approved</b>
First issue	Name: Raymond Logan Signature: Date: 30/4/15	Name: Chris Barker Signature: Date: 30/4/15	Name: Jeff Webb Signature: Date: 30/4/15
Revision 002 issue	Name: Raymond Logan Signature:  Date: 29/5/15	Name: Chris Barker Signature:  Date: 29/5/15	Name: Jeff Webb Signature:  Date: 1/6/15
	Name: Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:
	Name: Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:	Name: Signature: Date:

## Executive Summary

This study has been undertaken by Amey on behalf of Staffordshire County Council. The works brief was to conduct an independent option review of a potential weight restriction on a section of the A515. The section of road under consideration is the A515 between the junction with Wood End Lane and the B5017 at Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay.

The A515 has been found to be correctly classified as an A road and as part of the Principal Road Network.

The percentage of HCVs in A515 traffic ranges from 7.4% to 11.3% which is acceptable for an A road. HCVs are not over-represented in accidents for the latest 5 year period of accident data available.

The implementation of a weight restriction would need to be with access exemptions. The number of HCVs affected by a weight restriction is not known without further survey work.

The A515 would need to be removed from the Principle Route Network for a weight restriction to be implemented due to an EU requirement.

The A515 is part of the Emergency Diversion Route for the A38 and there is a conflict between this role and a weight restriction.

A weight restriction would be difficult to enforce and without enforcement the restriction is unlikely to be effective.

It is the recommendation of this option review that a weight limit should not be considered. However, should the decision be taken to progress with the establishment of a weight restriction on the A515, a number of issues that need to be addressed before implementation are listed in the conclusions.

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## **1 Introduction**

Amey have been commissioned to conduct an independent review of a potential weight restriction on a section of the A515. The specific tasks Amey were requested to undertake were:

- Determine if the route is designated correctly
- Determine what changes (if any) are required
- Determine if a weight limit (7.5t) is feasible and deliverable.

The section of road under consideration is the A515 between the junction with Wood End Lane and the B5017 at Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay.

## **2 Existing situation**

The A515 is approximately 48 miles long, running from Lichfield, Staffordshire to Buxton, Derbyshire in a roughly north-south orientation.

The section of the A515 under consideration in this report is between the junction with Wood End Lane and the B5017 at Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay. It is a single carriageway road, with at-grade intersections and private and commercial accesses along its length. It passes through rural countryside.

This section of the A515 passes through several communities, the largest being the villages of Draycott in the Clay, Yoxall and Kings Bromley. It is bisected by numerous local routes (including the A513, B5014, B5016, B5017 and B5234) with links to conurbations such as Uttoxeter, Rugeley and Burton-upon-Trent and to the distribution park at Fradley.

Speed limits on this section are generally 50 or 60mph. There are speed limits of 30mph through King's Bromley and Yoxall and a 40mph speed limit through Draycott in the Clay.

This section of the A515 forms part of the Emergency Diversion Route (EDR) for the A38.

### **2.1 Route designation**

Discussions in this report relating to road classification are based on the Guidance on Road Classification and the Primary Route Network document published by the Department for Transport (January 2012).

#### **2.1.1 A Road**

As the name indicates, the A515 is an A road. A roads are defined as "major roads intended to provide large-scale transport links within or between areas." B roads are defined as "roads intended to connect different areas, and to feed traffic between A roads and smaller roads on the network."

A roads are generally among the widest, most direct roads in an area, and will be of the greatest significance to through traffic. There is not a single standard for selecting classes of road; instead classifications are set in a way that reflects the road network in their local area.

Relative to the B roads that intersect with it (eg B5016, B5017, B5234), the A515 has a greater significance to through traffic, and the B roads have in turn a greater significance to through traffic than the surrounding unclassified roads. Given the local relative hierarchy the A515 is correctly classified as an A road.

### **2.1.2 *Principal Road Network (PRN)***

In addition to being an A road, the A515 is part of the Principal Route Network (PRN). The PRN designates roads between places of traffic importance across the UK, with the aim of providing easily identifiable routes to access the whole of the country.

The PRN is constructed from a series of locations (primary destinations) selected by the Department for Transport, which are then linked by roads (primary routes) selected by the Local Highway Authority. Local centres classified as primary destinations include Lichfield, Uttoxeter and Ashbourne.

The A515 is logically part of the PRN given its alignment relevant to nearby primary destinations.

## **2.2 *Freight***

The County Council's Freight Strategy (2011) recognised that the freight transport and logistics industry is an important activity in Staffordshire and the prevalence of the logistics industry with storage and warehousing facilities in the county is, in part, a reflection of good access and the central position in the country to serve a national distribution service. It is evident that there is strong market interest for major logistics operations, particularly in the East Staffordshire and Lichfield areas of the county, and employment in these industries is well above the national average.

The Strategy also identified that much of the HCV traffic in rural areas has a legitimate right of access to a point of collection or delivery and a significant proportion of it is related to business operating in the rural area. However, the County Council recognises that freight movement can have negative environmental and social implications for local communities and has pledged to support ways of moving freight from unsuitable roads and neighbourhoods.



### 2.3 Percentage of HCVs

Traffic counts on the A515 provided by the County Council at Yoxall and Draycott in the Clay indicate that the percentage of HCVs range from 7.4% to 11.3%. This percentage is what would be expected on an A road.

**Table 1: Traffic volumes and calculated HCV content (12hr 2-way 5 day averaged flows)**

Road	Location	HCV volume	Total volume	% HCVs
A515	Yoxall (2012)	321	4364	7.4%
	Draycott (2013)	674	5948	11.3%

### 2.4 Accident analysis

Accident data for the latest 5 year period available (December 2009 to November 2014) for the A515 between the A50 and the A51 was analysed. A total of 73 accidents were recorded on this section of the A515 during the time period addressed. HCVs were involved in 6 of the accidents, which is 8% of the total. A breakdown of accidents per 12 month period is shown in the table below.

**Table 2: Accidents on the A515 between A50 and A51**

Period	Accidents		
	Total	Involving HCVs	Percentage
Dec 09 - Nov 10	15	0	0%
Dec 10 - Nov 11	13	1	8%
Dec 11 - Nov 12	11	3	27%
Dec 12 - Nov 13	16	2	13%
Dec 13 - Nov 14	18	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8%</b>

HCVs are represented in accident figures at a similar rate to their composition in traffic.

A review of the contributory factors for the accidents involving HCVs does not indicate that the presence of HCVs was a factor in the accidents in which they were involved.

### 2.5 Average speed cameras

Average speed cameras are in the process of being installed on the A515 (Duffield Lane to Lower Hoar Cross Road). The installation of average speed cameras may be a deterrent to HCVs using the A515 as a through route. If HCVs were still to use the A515 the average speed cameras are likely to reduce the incidence of them using excessive speed along the route.

The average speed cameras are in addition to the fixed safety cameras already on the route near Draycott in the Clay.

## **2.6 HS2**

The alignment of HS2 stage 1 crosses the A515 at the southern end of the study area, approximately 150m north of the A515 intersection with Wood End Lane.

HS2 Phase One environmental statement volume 5: traffic and transport indicates that construction traffic will affect the southern-most 600m of the study area. The A515 north of this is not included in the proposed routing of HS2 construction traffic and hence should not see an increase in HCV traffic from the construction works.

### **3 County Council Powers, Duties and Responsibilities**

The County Council has a range of powers and duties as the Local Highway Authority including the power to prohibit or restrict HCVs from using certain routes and the power to reclassify a route; but also a duty to secure the expeditious movement of traffic ensuring efficient use of the network.

#### **3.1 HCV restriction**

The County Council uses its powers as Highway Authority under the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 to prohibit or restrict HCV's from using certain roads. Generally restriction orders are used to prohibit the entrance of 7.5 tonne gross weight vehicles, although they may be restricted to 3 tonnes to protect a particularly vulnerable or weak structure. Traffic Regulation Orders are only applicable to vehicles passing through an area and they would not prevent legitimate access to rural businesses. The level of access required within the area is an important factor when considering a restriction, along with the likely impact of displacing vehicles and whether the restriction could be practically enforced.

#### **3.2 Local highway classifications**

In April 2012, the Department for Transport (DfT) passed responsibilities for managing the local highway classifications to local highway authorities. In principle, local highway authorities already fulfilled these responsibilities but they no longer need to seek approval from DfT to implement them. The prevailing guidance has remained unchanged and any decisions made by local highway authorities must be defensible.

#### **3.3 Traffic management**

The Traffic Management Act 2004 was introduced to tackle congestion and disruption on the road network. Section 16 of The Act places a legal duty on local traffic authorities to make sure that traffic can move freely and quickly on their roads and on the roads of nearby local highway authorities, such as the Highways Agency.

In light of the above, many operational processes exist to ensure that works/events/activities are carried out at the right time, taking account of road classification and sensitivity, but that also considers how these will affect other authorities' road networks and the Strategic Road Network (SRN). This also works in reverse where they support Council to develop measures to enable the positive movement of traffic.

### **3.4 Civil Contingency**

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 guides how the government prepares and plans for emergencies including disruption of facilities for transport. It listed County councils (among others) as Category 1 responders, giving the specific responsibility to reduce, control or mitigate the effects of an emergency (along with other responsibilities).

Council has a duty of care to the public stranded in traffic congestion.

Emergency diversion routes are an important component of mitigating the effect of a disruption of facilities for transport.

### **3.5 Strategic plan**

In addition to all of the above, the County Council's Strategic Plan outlines a vision to create a connected Staffordshire, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy. As a result of this vision the strategic plan outlines three priority outcomes –“that the people of Staffordshire will:

- be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth;
- be healthier and more independent;
- feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.”

## **4 Option- Weight restriction**

The implementation of a weight restriction on the A515 between the junction with Wood End Lane and the B5017 at Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay is being considered. This report investigates if a weight restriction is feasible and deliverable.

The weight restriction would prohibit goods vehicles with a plated maximum gross weight exceeding 7.5 tonnes from using the A515 for the length the weight restriction applies unless accessing locations within the restricted area. The restriction would be displayed on route with the installation of signs to diagram 622.1A from the Traffic Signs Manual with a plate to diagram 620 reading, "Except for access".

The implementation of a weight restriction would require access exemptions due to the access needs of residents and businesses serviced by the A515.

### **4.1 Principal Road Network and weight restriction**

The Department for Transport's Guidance on Road Classification and the Primary Route Network (January 2012) states that under EU Directive 89/460/EC, the PRN must provide unrestricted access to 40 tonne vehicles.

Therefore the implementation of a weight restriction on the A515 would require a reclassification of the road to remove its status as a Primary Route.

The Local Highway Authority has responsibility for PRN decisions, but the Secretary of State retains legal responsibility for the PRN and retains the right to intervene. Changes to the PRN do not require public consultation or advertisement.

### **4.2 HS2**

As the overall aim of a weight restriction is to reduce the numbers of HCVs on the A515, it should be noted that there will be an increased volume of HCV traffic on the southern section of the study area during HS2 construction, regardless of the implementation of a weight restriction with access exemptions. The construction traffic would not be affected by a weight restriction with access exemptions as they will be accessing the construction site.

## 5 Option impacts

### 5.1 Primary Route Network de-classification

A Local Highway Authority may decide that there is no need for a primary route to link two destinations. In this case, the authority should be able to demonstrate either a) that direct traffic between the two primary locations is too low to justify a primary route; or b) that a journey of broadly similar convenience is possible through the other sections of the PRN. It may be argued that the A38 could be classed as providing a journey of similar convenience to the use of the A515.

Supporters of the implementation of the weight restrictions have argued that the A38 could be used by HCVs instead of the A515. If this journey represented a "journey of similar convenience" then it may be possible to remove the A515 from the PRN.

#### 5.1.1 *Journey of similar convenience*

Google maps was used to compare a typical journey between Lichfield and Ashbourne to see if a route via the A38 is a "journey of similar convenience" compared to a route using the A515. A comparison of the alternatives offered by the query indicates that a typical journey between the two locations would be 9.2 miles longer and take an additional 3 minutes if the A38 was used instead of this section of the A515.

**Table 3: Journey details Lichfield to Ashbourne (Google Maps)**

<b>Journey via</b>	<b>Distance (miles)</b>	<b>Journey Time (mins)</b>
A515	26.9	44
A38	36.1	47
<b>Difference</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>3</b>

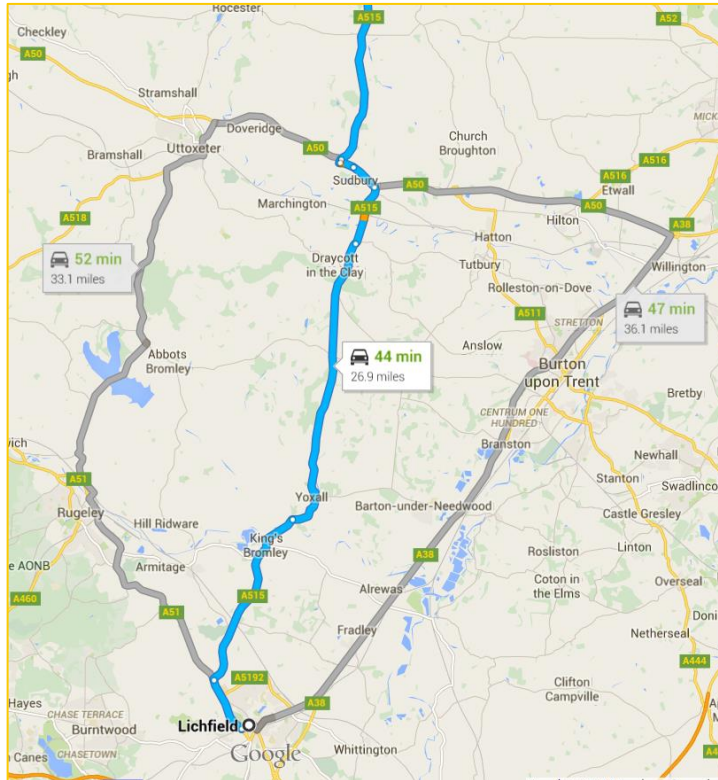


Figure 1: Lichfield to Ashbourne via A515 Route

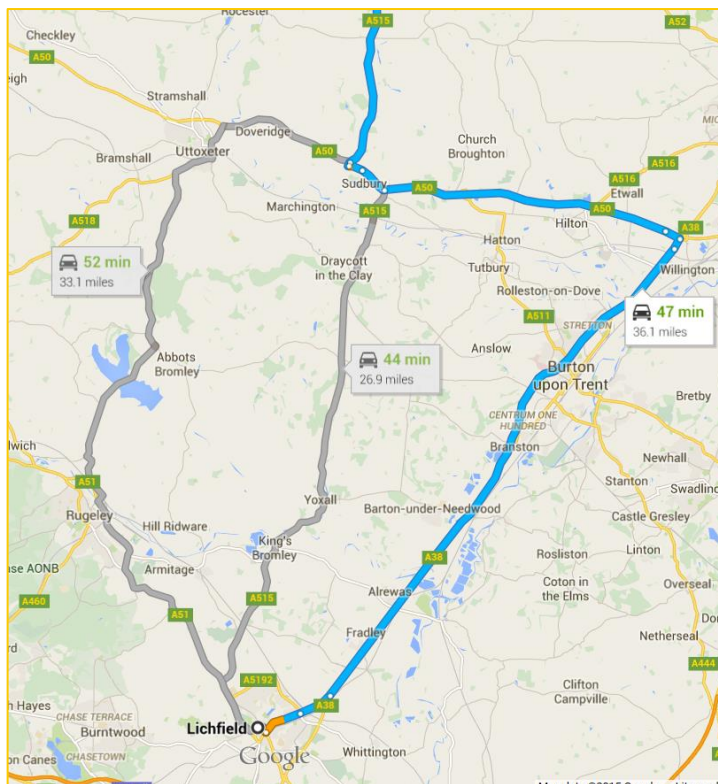


Figure 2: Lichfield to Ashbourne via A38 Route

It is acknowledged that more rigour could be applied to the analysis of the difference between the two routes, but this initial investigation suggests that an argument could be made against the removal of this section of the A515 from the PRN. This is on the basis that the use of the A38 doesn't represent a journey of similar convenience due to the additional distance and travel time caused by using this route instead of the A515.

Before an argument can be made either for or against removal from the PRN, further investigation would be required including assessment of observed journey times, journey time reliability and the impacts on the A38 from the displaced traffic.

### **5.1.2 Signage**

Road signs on the PRN are green with white and yellow text. This colouring also appears on patches and panels on directional signs on adjacent roads. The removal of this section of the A515 from the PRN would require replacement or modification of all signs on this section of the A515 and all directional signs that indicate this section of the A515 is a primary route. The cost of this sign replacement would be the responsibility of the Local Highway Authority and should be part of any consideration of the implementation of a weight restriction.

## **5.2 Emergency Diversion Route**

This section of the A515 forms part of the Emergency Diversion Route (EDR) for the A38. Should a weight restriction be implemented, it would need to be temporarily suspended whenever the EDR is being used, otherwise the weight restriction would hamper the A515's ability to accommodate the HCVs that would inevitably be required to use the route as part of the diversion.

The temporary suspension of a weight restriction is legally feasible; however the practicalities of this would make a suspension operationally difficult. It would also serve to undermine the effectiveness of the ban as it may give the impression to HCV drivers that the A515 is a viable route for them.

If the practicality issues of a temporary suspension are not able to be adequately addressed then the route would need to be removed from the EDR list in the event of a weight restriction being implemented on the A515. Consultation with Highways England would be required and approval for the removal is unlikely to be granted.



Emergency diversion routes are routes deemed to be the most suitable / closest equivalent to the strategic road. The A515 is the logical EDR route for the A38. It is not feasible to direct non-motorway traffic onto a motorway, ruling out the M42 as an alternative and other routes are significantly longer than the A515 route. If EDR routes are too much longer than the route being diverted from, drivers are likely to ignore the route and find their own way, which in the case of an A38 closure is likely to include the A515 regardless of its EDR status. Not having an effective EDR would also cause unnecessary dispersion of traffic through local road network and would contravene Council's legal responsibilities for traffic management and emergency planning.

### **5.3 Enforcement**

Experience in other parts of the country indicates that weight limits with access exemptions are unlikely to be effective unless they are rigorously enforced and enforcement is notoriously difficult. Enforcement would require evidence that "access" to premises along the route was not required. The length of the restriction adds to this difficulty. Due to difficulties in enforcement local Police may not allocate resources to enforce the restriction.

Should a weight limit with exemption be implemented on the A515, a clear and funded plan for enforcement, agreed with and supported by local Police, would be required for the scheme to be effective.

### **5.4 Magnitude of problem**

A weight limit with access exemptions on the A515 would impact HCV through movements only. The remaining HCV traffic would be using the A515 for access and therefore remain unaffected.

It is not known what proportion of the HCV traffic is using the A515 for access and what proportion for through journeys. An Origin-Destination (OD) survey would be required to ascertain the percentage of HCVs accessing the A515 that are using it as a through route and therefore the number of HCVs that would be affected by the weight restriction.

Without knowing the proportion of HCVs using the A515 as a through route, it is not possible to determine if a weight restriction would have any significant impact on the number of HCVs on the route, even if the restriction was 100% effective.

## **6 Conclusions**

### **6.1 Designation**

The A515 is correctly designated as both an A road and part of the Primary Route Network according to the descriptions in the Guidance on Road Classification and the Primary Route Network document published by the Department for Transport (January 2012).

### **6.2 Access exemption**

The implementation of a weight restriction on this section of the A515 would need to be with access exemption so that residents and businesses along the road could still be serviced by HCVs.

The implementation of a weight restriction with access exemptions would only target a (unknown) proportion of the HCVs on the A515 and the effectiveness of the restriction on these HCVs is unlikely to be high due to the length of road covered and subsequent difficulties with enforcement.

The implementation of a weight restriction with access exemptions would require this section of the A515 to be removed from the Primary Route Network. There would be a cost implication for the replacement or modification of signage to reflect this change.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

It is the recommendation of this option review that a weight limit should not be considered. The issues leading to this conclusion are detailed in this report, and are summarised below:

- The A515 contributes to the efficient movement of traffic within the County and to destinations along the route.
- A HCV restriction along the entire route would be practically unenforceable. Enforcement would require evidence to confirm that "access" to premises along the route was not required.
- Restricting HCV movement within just villages along the A515 could serve to displace traffic to other sensitive areas.

- The A515 is designed and maintained to an A road standard, appropriate for HCV usage.
- Freight transport and logistics industry is an important activity in Staffordshire. Any disruption to HCV movements within Staffordshire may have a negative impact on this industry.
- The introduction of a weight restriction would require the A515 to be removed from the PRN. Any changes to the PRN must be defensible and because the A515 is currently correctly included in the PRN, its removal from the PRN would need a strong, defensible argument.
- There would be a cost implication to update signs on the A515 and surrounding road network to reflect the A515's removal from the PRN.
- Construction traffic for the HS2 will use the southern section of the A515 regardless of any weight restriction due to access requirements.
- Without knowing the proportion of HCVs using the A515 as a through route, it is not possible to determine if a weight restriction would have any significant impact on the number of HCVs on the route, even if the restriction was 100% effective.

#### **6.4 Further considerations**

It is the recommendation of this option review that a weight limit should not be considered due to the issues highlighted in this review. However, should the decision be taken to progress with the establishment of a weight restriction on the A515, it is recommended that the following need to be addressed before implementation.

- The number of HCVs affected needs to be determined. Origin-Destination surveys over the length of the study area would show how many HCVs are using the A515 as a through route as opposed to for access.
- Further investigation of the relative performance of the A515 against the A38 is required to determine if the A38 represents a journey of similar convenience and hence whether the A515 can be removed from the PRN.
- The impacts on the A38 and other surrounding roads of a weight restriction on the A515 need to be assessed. It is possible that any displaced HCV traffic onto the other roads may have a significant impact on the efficient traffic performance of those roads.

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- A plan to accommodate a temporary suspension of the weight restriction whenever the A515 is being used as the Emergency Diversion Route for the A38 would need to be developed. If this is not possible, the A515 would need to be removed from the EDR in consultation with Highways England.
  - Funding would need to be allocated for the modification or replacement of road signs on the A515 and adjacent roads to reflect the weight restriction and removal of the A515 from the PRN.
  - A clear and funded plan for enforcement, agreed with and supported by local Police, would need to be developed.

### **Request for information - Feedback from County Councillors**

#### **23.9.15 Philip E Jones Stone Urban (Stafford) – email**

The issue is best addressed in two ways. The environmental impact and the economic impact. In Stone we have two major roads both heavily used by HGV's. Some vehicles are in transit others visiting establishments in Stone. The establishments would not exist in Stone if they could not be served by economically effective road transport and their loss would be a major blow to the local economy. I think that all of us in Stone recognise this and accept the side effects on the environment. As for through traffic, of course it would be better if it could be re-routed, or better still in the case of bulk minerals e.g. quarry products, be rail carried. But we have to be realistic and accept that often there are no feasible alternative routes and we are left with exploring mitigating measures such as lower speed limits, good signposting, acoustic barriers.

#### **24.9.15 Susan Woodward, Burntwood North (Lichfield) – email.**

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Since the opening of the by-pass, this has been far less of a problem around Burntwood than it was before – but we do suffer, as probably elsewhere, by some HGVs ignoring weight limits and the lack of enforcement on these.

#### **28.9.15 Philip Atkins, Uttoxeter Rural (East Staffordshire) - email**

The history of the A515 in my and Tim Corbett's division goes back a long time, and we have tried to work together.

However of all the parishes on the A515, ALL the traffic passes through Draycott in the Clay. The A515 is also a high sided vehicle route.

After Draycott the traffic then goes in 4 directions; off on the B5017 at Six Lane Ends, turns at Yoxall towards the A38 through Barton under Needwood or turns at Kings Bromley towards the A38 at Alrewas or continues on the A515 to Lichfield. All the traffic passes through Draycott. All of this also passes through Tim's division. A weight restriction in one place puts extra pressure on the others.

While I understand the principle of sharing the load, for Draycott's sake a number of measures have been put in place over the years to deter HCVs from using the A515 and stay on the A50 travelling towards the A38. From the A50 there are traffic lights on Dove Bridge at Sudbury, a railway level crossing, a 40 MPH speed limit from before Dovegate Prison with speed cameras through Draycott in the Clay. Then there is the steep hill out of the village in a 40 MPH zone followed by a 50MPH limit at the top with ANPR Average Speed cameras on the A515. These measures should reduce any time or fuel benefit of taking a short cut to the A38.

If weight restrictions were put in place it would be hard to police as there are many places to deliver to on or just off the road. St Georges Park, Lancaster Business Park, Dovegate Prison, numerous farms, Hoar Cross Hall, Eland Riding School, etc.

The B5017 is used as a short cut to the A515 and Burton from Uttoxeter and has Marchington Industrial Estate and another business park accessed off it so I also fear displacement. Measures have been put in place in Marchington village to deter prison traffic. When Marchington Camp was used as an intervention grain store in the 1980s, much damage was done to the rural roads by HGVs which cost over £1M to correct some 20 years ago.

While I understand the emotion behind a petition there has to be a solution that helps both all the villagers and the hauliers. Better routing of lorries and deterrence from using the A515 to make it a route of last resort could be a part solution.

**John Francis, Stafford South East (Stafford) by email 30.9.15**

HGV's especially 44 tonnes are too large for A513 Main Road, this gives us as residents great concern as the lorries encroach on the opposite carriageway outside Milford Hall where the road narrows. It's now a serious issue and serious accident waiting to happen. We already have the refuges on Milford Road & Main Road being damaged at least twice p.a.

**Brian Jenkins – Watling North (Tamworth) by email 1.10.15**

We have a problem on the B5404 in Tamworth, we have a 7.5.tonne limit, but it is not enforced. So everyone ignores it and HGVs roll through the village. The problem is the enforcement authority, does not enforce it. We do not have enough staff in trading standards to carry out these functions, the police only have enough staff to carry out their duties. I did make a suggestion to County Council officers has to a possible solution to the problem, but obviously it was not possible because nothing was said to me afterwards and the idea was probably dropped. Good luck in your enquiry.

**Simon Tagg – Westlands and Thistleberry (Newcastle) by email 2.10.15**

We are currently experiencing issues with HGV's across the Newcastle area:

1. HGV's (gravel, marl removal) ignoring designated routes and using roads in residential areas even though signs have been put up (by SCC via local Councillors DHP's). This is creating highway dangers and destroying the surface of roads not built for such weights.
2. HGV's (supermarket delivery and Parcel Delivery) using local roads, such as Clayton Road (A519) instead of the A34 to resupply super markets and get to delivery depots.

3. SCC seems limited in its response to this and is often ignored by companies - enforcement is an issue. Is it no something MP's could take up and lobby in parliament on behalf of the resident they represent – Legislation is require.

**Bob Fraser, Dove (East Staffordshire) by email 5 October 2015**

Following your request, my feelings on this matter are:

In Staffordshire we are lucky enough to live, and work, in a beautiful part of the country so we have the benefit of many types of road. On the one hand we have country lanes and we must respect those lanes and the restrictions which are applied to them for our benefit, sometimes necessary for our safety. On the other, we have a need for A and B class roads, which are there to allow goods to be transferred to and from factories, warehouses and shops.

I have been driving now for some 50 years in villages, towns and cities. Sometimes professionally, and sometimes for pleasure. A class roads and trunk roads are a requirement. They allow us to go to local shops and buy goods. Goods which have often been delivered by large lorries.

If we restrict those roads, in any way, we increase the cost of those goods.

I strongly dislike the use of so called speed humps. They shake things around and cause drivers to alternatively slow down and speed up, using more fuel in the process, and causing extra noise pollution.

Roads such as the A515, are prime examples of this, and as such I am vehemently opposed to the application of false restrictions on such roads.

On built-up roads in towns and villages, such restrictions can be a requirement. In rural areas they are less valid. I was taught to keep things moving, and I support that. We should share the roads.

**Mike Davies, Wombourne (South Staffordshire) by email 6 October 2015**

People living in Orton Lane (well used) complained that HGVs where using it as a short cut to the quarry in Seisdon delivering demolition type material from a variety of locations in the West Midlands. We discussed the matter with local policing unit for advice. All routes into Wombourne have 7.5t restrictions except for deliveries. We checked that signage was both clear and correctly located. The lorry ownership where identified and received letters from the police cautioning them to cease using Wombourne as a short cut. Things have settled down but I've agreed with the police that any further breach will result in ticketing which carries both a fine and 3 points on their licence. The residents are now monitoring the situation.

**Cheslyn Hay Parish Council – on behalf of Councillor Mike Lawrence by email  
9 October 2015**

The issue of HGV's was discussed at our Parish Council meeting yesterday evening and the problems encountered in Cheslyn Hay are as follows:-

- Not enough enforcement action is taken against height/weight restriction contraventions;
- HGV's delivering to small estates (Glenthorne shops) do not have enough room to manoeuvre and often drive on pavements as they are too large resulting in objects or cars being damaged (bollards near the shop were taken out regularly until removed permanently);
- Satellite navigation systems send HGV's through the Village (ignoring height and weight restrictions) – can any liaison be made with the system providers to update the systems with this information?
- Lorries divert down Wolverhampton Road from the quarry in Essington and lorries take a short cut through Cheslyn Hay if the M6 is blocked.
- Lack of clarity in enforcement approach – foreign drivers are not arrested as they are unable to leave their vehicles unattended.

**Michael Greatorex, Tamworth by email 9 October 2015**

- Watling South (my Division) and Watling North (Cllr Jenkins) and Stonydelph (Cllr Cook and where I live), all border Junction 10 of the M42 and A5.
- There are business parks around Junction 10 including a big park east of the Junction in North Warwickshire – this Park (Dordon) will no doubt service places west of Junction 10 and initially travel on the A5.
- HGVs from Junction 10 will also service smaller parks in Tamworth such as Amington which mainly use main roads and short cuts through residential streets which are either indicated on Satnav or get known by HGV drivers.
- A resident tells me that signs about HGVs on the M42 either side of Junction 10 are poor – I've not checked these myself. No doubt signs may be poor off the A5 bypass.
- Junction 10 is the Tamworth Junction and will service traffic to Tamworth, Lichfield and places east of the Junction.
- Ventura Park is the major retail park alongside the A5 and sits on the main approach road to Tamworth town centre. Ventura Park is popular as a



regional retail park. I have spoken to shoppers there from Burton, Solihull, Nuneaton, Sutton Coldfield etc. etc. It is obviously serviced by HGVs.

- Watling Street (the former A5 before the by-pass was built) is still used by HGVs getting to and returning from Wilnecote, Two Gates, Belgrave, Fazeley etc and this traffic finds shortcuts through residential streets. There are business parks around Ninian Way and Hedging Lane, Wilnecote. There are some local HGV signs but many complaints about HGVs – it might be a shortcut for HGVs coming from Coleshill (a big business park at Hams Hall) and Kingsbury and possibly the eastern part of Birmingham. HGVs use Hockley Road (a main old district service road from Watling Street) which is narrow and littered with parked cars and there was a residential house wall demolished by an HGV at the southern end near Gorsey Bank Road.
- Local business vehicles (light lorries, vans) etc are often parked by drivers overnight in the residential streets where the drivers live. We need to encourage employers to provide off street parking for their vehicles and encourage them to get their drivers to use others forms of travel to pick up / return their business vehicles at the start/end of the working day.
- A local Tamworth Cllr has asked if the Working Group would be able to review issues that are cross boundary falling within Warwickshire viz the junction with Overwoods Road and Trinity Road where the most recent road traffic accident involved an HGV. About 2 years ago three people were killed in another collision at this junction.
- Below is a note provided for me this week from a resident viz
- 1. as mentioned : lorries driving on Watling Street and surrounding areas where the roads are clearly marked for them not too  
2. the section of motorway between J10 and J11 is marked no overtaking for lorries but they still do, thus holding up traffic considerably

As for Trinity Road :

1. getting the speed for that road reduced would help and also slow the lorries down that race along there
2. double white lines in the middle of the road to stop overtaking particularly by the road junctions where the accidents have occurred. This would give better visibility to drivers in those areas
3. Adequate lighting.

- And from another resident viz
- Fri 2nd Oct 17.40 hrs
- Huge articulated truck (details taken) manoeuvring out of Hockley road onto Watling Street B5404.

- A haulage company responsible but didn't get name on cab.
- Mon 20th July 10.37pm
- TWO trucks (details taken) came from Marlborough Way B5400 onto Watling Street B5404 and then turned right into Hockley Road - residential.
- They were NOT making deliveries at 10.30pm - using it as a normal driving route
- Registration No. recorded
  
- Wed 2nd Sept
- Transport co (details taken) - 0161 telephone number proceeding along Hockley Road then turning onto B5404