

Subject RE: Agreed Route Maps
From Houghton, James <James.Houghton@cumbria.gov.uk>
To Jane Coltman <clerk@eandkpc.co.uk>
Copy Upton, Victoria M <Victoria.upton@cumbria.gov.uk>
Date 16/09/2022 10:18



FAO – Clerk – Ennerdale and Kinnesdale Parish Council

Dear Jane

Please find the following updated statement on behalf of Cumbria County Council:

Further to the continuing concerns with regard to timber transport movements in and around Ennerdale we have the following update.

The Council takes all these matters very seriously, and in the light of previous concerns, there have been separate discussions at a sub-group of the Cumbria and Northeast England Timber Transport Group (CNETTG – Cumbria County Council is a member of this group), set up to specifically discuss the general concerns raised and mitigation actions being taken for this route. That reviewed all the concerns, the evidence available at that time, and the proposed mitigation measures.

The route from Bowness Knott car park through Croasdale and Ennerdale to the A5086 is an agreed Timber Transport Route, and has been used previously as the main Timber Transport route from the forest. It is also used by other HGV traffic, including agricultural vehicles, on a 365-day per year basis, and there are no weight limits in place along this route.

*There is an understanding that there are continuing concerns from a few people that the scope of the mitigation did not go far enough. As you are probably aware, there is a critical timescale for this work due to the presence of *Phytophthora ramorum*. Nevertheless, progress around operations does not stop further engagement, and in fact, we have had assurances from the CNETTG group that they remain open to approaches from all interested parties as the aim is to promote good practice and raise awareness of timber transport within the region. The group has affirmed that the focus will continue to be one of proactive engagement.*

The County Council is a member of the CNETTG and the involvement is both to protect the highway asset and to seek to influence positive engagement around "Traffic Management" to mitigate as far as reasonably practicable the impacts from these movements. From the experience of working with a multitude of business operators, the timber industry does take a far more proactive stance than most. While many rural, unclassified roads are structurally weak, the condition of this route and bridges have been assessed to be acceptable. I can confirm that we are unaware of any issues that would require actions to restrict HGV movements.

Nevertheless, it is possible for the authority to seek to recover costs where roads are damaged through negligence, and if we become concerned about the safety of the users of the road, to

consider applying regulation, restrictions, and limits through the use of Traffic Regulation Orders (though please be aware that any of those measures are around control of the use of the highway by all road users and not around timber transport movements only). A more recent concern was raised in regard to the close proximity of buildings and highways. This is not unique to this locality and is replicated on many roads throughout the county, some of which see significant vehicle movements, including HGV's, and damage to property is unlikely to occur as a result of vibrations caused by this traffic. Many structural problems are not related to the public highway but instead are caused by other factors. In such cases, our advice is for homeowners or their insurers to consider commissioning a structural survey of their property. The council will reasonably consider any supporting engineering evidence that vibrations are a contributing factor due to the condition of the highway.

On balance, this authority is content that the mitigation proposed by Forestry England following the consultation is both proportionate and reasonable for the proposed movements.

Nevertheless, in consideration of the ongoing concerns, there is a genuine commitment from both the Council and the CNETTG Group to keep this matter on the table, and for feedback to be sent through on any issues experienced, so that these can be reviewed both during and after operations have concluded. Forestry England will be your first port of call for day-to-day issues. Nevertheless, please do not hesitate to contact the Council or the CNETTG group if you believe that matters need wider attention and action.

Thanks

James

Kind regards

James Houghton IEng FIHE

Traffic Manager | Highways Assets and Strategy | Highways and Transport

Economy and Infrastructure Directorate | Cumbria County Council

Parkhouse Building | Kingmoor Business Park | Carlisle | CA6 4SJ

m: 07880 294991

www.cumbria.gov.uk