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Lorry restriction proposals for Ivinghoe 'freight zone'

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Ways to stop heavy goods vehicles using rural roads around Cheddington, Ivinghoe and Mentmore to cut across country are being drawn up by Buckinghamshire County Council.

Proposals will be presented to parish councils, business and community groups in an area-wide public engagement and appraisal programme this month (February), and will include public drop-in events at Wing village hall on Wednesday 4 March (2pm-7.30pm) and at Ivinghoe Old School Community Hub on Thursday 5 March (2pm-8pm).

A public survey on the Your Voice Bucks website <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/highway-projects/ivinghoe-fz-survey/> (<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Ftrack.vuelio.uk.com%2Fz.z%3F1%3DaHR0cHM6Ly9ldXlwMy5zYWZlbGlua3MucHJvdGVjdGlvbi5vdXRsb29rLmNvbS8%25>) has also started. It runs until Saturday 14 March and invites people to feed back their comments.

Plans envisage an environmental weight restriction at entry points to a 'freight zone' east of the A418, north of the A41 and west of the B489. The 7.5 tonne limit would restrict HGVs to 'access only', and prohibit lorries over this weight from passing through.

Surveys in November 2019 showed that 254 HGVs a week simply passed through the proposed 'freight zone'. That represents 47% of the total HGV traffic in the area.

Paul Irwin, the County Council's Deputy Cabinet Member for Transport, said the proposed environmental weight restriction 'freight zone' would:

- Reduce the impact of HGVs on residents, buildings and the environment
- Minimise unnecessary traffic on local roads
- Maintain access for HGVs to homes and businesses within the zone
- Redirect HGVs driving through the zone to more appropriate routes, such as A and B roads
- Support local business to thrive, including farms, shops, pubs and restaurants
- Allow access to buses, farm traffic and public service vehicles

"We want to work with parish councils, residents and local businesses to shape these proposals to relieve our residents of a noise and vibration nightmare they tell us has been affecting their lives for many years," said Paul. "I don't believe a total HGV ban will work, because it would necessarily include essential vehicles, like buses, fire engines and refuse vehicles.

"I'm keen to hear everyone's view on these plans, which I believe take a balanced approach giving residents respite, without disadvantaging businesses within the area. After all, these firms employ a good number of people who live locally and they contribute significantly to the local economy."

The Ivinghoe 'freight zone' proposal forms the first of five schemes inspired by the countywide freight strategy, compiled during the past couple of years from analysis and feedback from local communities on volumes of HGVs.

Once the survey findings have been compiled, the County Council will publish an update and; if it's decided to go ahead with the plans, make any amendments and then draft Traffic Regulation Orders. These will be subject to formal public consultation and so there will be a final opportunity to comment.

At the same time TfB will repair and strengthen Ivinghoe (Brownlow) Bridge, which carries the B488 across the Grand Union Canal. Structural surveys last year showed the 200-year-old listed bridge, which currently has a temporary 18 tonne weight restriction, was no longer capable of carrying 40 tonne loads.

Following ecological surveys, checking for possible bat activity, the bridge will be repaired and strengthened in the autumn at a cost of £100,000, which would allow vehicles over 18 tonnes access to the local area.

Details of the proposed 'freight zone' can be found on the County Council website at <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/transport-and-roads/transport-plans-and-policies/freight-strategy/ivinghoe-area-freight-engagement/> (<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Ftrack.vuelio.uk.com%2Fz.z%3FI%3DaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYnVja3NjYy5nb3YudWsvc2VydmljZXMvdHJhbnNwb3J0LWFuZC>)
