

**P-05-1031 Inhibit the diversion of Heavy Goods Vehicles through residential areas,
Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 22.10.20**

P-05-1031 Pwyllgor Deisebau 3.11.20 / Petitions Committee

Thank you for considering this petition which unfortunately, was approved at the same time as the UK Lockdown which prevented it from being fully implemented. It had been the aim to gather signatures mainly by hard copies as so many of the people affected are of the older generation who cannot or do not use the internet. It had been hoped the Lockdown would have been lifted much sooner but with continued restrictions, this petition could not be given its proposed involvement within the community.

Background information

Although this petition has come about as a result of HGVs being diverted through the town of Buckley, the problems are not unique to Buckley. They affect many small towns and villages along the stretch of the A55 and indeed anywhere in Wales where these vehicles are diverted through heavily populated residential areas, along roads not built to withstand such heavy freight vehicles. It is only right that this petition supports all such areas throughout Wales.

Buckley is a historic town known for its brick making and pottery. The main road was originally used by horse and carts with workers cottages built along the roadside. Buckley is not a town with through traffic as it only serves the people who live in the town. Even so, Buckley has the largest population of any town in Flintshire. The main road through is subject to parked cars which presents difficulties to larger vehicles as the road is narrow in parts due to many of the houses being built when there were no or very few cars on the road. The road was never built to sustain the amount of everyday traffic we see today. It certainly was not built to sustain larger heavy freight vehicles on route to the ferries at Holyhead.

Response to letter from Ken Skates dated 16th October 2020

Contraflow systems are used effectively throughout the UK and are preferable to the trauma created by diverting HGVs through densely populated areas along roads not built for such heavy vehicles. Although the diversion route is agreed with the Local Highway Authority, I understand that they do not have a choice. Therefore, discussion is about how and when the diversion will take place. With the last diversion through Buckley, Mynydd Isa, New Brighton, Sychdyn and Northop, this was scheduled to last 4 weeks with one lane closed on the A55 during the day when the traffic was at its busiest, and overnight and weekend closures thus diverting all HGVs through Buckley and 4 villages. The majority of overnight traffic being heavy freight vehicles. In defense of the HGV drivers themselves, they are heading for the ferries with time constraints, therefore, diversions through these residential areas are often difficult to negotiate with parked cars and narrow roads. It certainly does not “support the comprehensive and commercial freight services which fundamentally support our economy”.

The effects on the communities

With many houses being in such close proximity to the road, residents experience high levels of air pollution and noise. With freight vehicles passing within feet of their bedroom windows, they are unable to sleep. Many who normally sleep with their windows open have to shut them which causes further problems, especially in the warmer weather. The properties vibrate with every passing lorry which is experienced in both the old and new homes.

The lack of sleep over just a few nights can have serious effects on mental health. It renders a person unable to effectively complete activities of daily living and their ability to do a day's work to required standards. It also affects the abilities of children in school. This does nothing for the

health and well-being of the people in Wales who are unlucky enough to live along these inappropriate diversion routes. The Welsh Parliament has a Duty of Care to the people of Wales. Additionally, whereas superficial damage to the roads caused by the HGVs may well be put right, there is the long-term damage to consider which places costs on Local Governments and so to the community taxes, therefore adding further burden on the communities.

Vivienne Blondek
Town Councillor Buckley Bistre East

Supporting Evidence

Comments received from [REDACTED]

Good evening Viv,

If it is of any support for your efforts to keep the Heavy Vehicles diverted from the A55 due to roadworks out from village and town roads which were never built to carry them, I can state our experiences of some months back when I and other members of our CSW team here in Buckley were on the receiving end of complaint after complaint about the diverted lorries rumbling through Buckley at all hours of day and night, making buildings shake and vibrate, keeping people from sleeping and waking up children of all ages who, in some cases were scared by the noise and vibrations created by these mobile monsters, not many of whom paid any great deal of attention to the 30 and 40mph speed limits, particularly once the hours of darkness set in.

You are welcome to use these observations to support your petition.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]
Co-ordinator, Buckley Community Speed Watch Team

Email evidence

To All,

I am emailing to voice serious concerns regarding the decision to divert HGVs through Buckley during the current closure of the A55.

Myself and my family are residents on Brunswick Road. We received no communication regarding the diversion so we have had no opportunity to raise concerns.

The diversion route is a busy road on a normal day to day basis, however what we endured over the past weekend was absolutely beyond belief.

During the daytime the road was relentless, with increased vehicles as well as HGVs. Many disregarding the 30mph speed limit.

During the night was equally as bad. HGVs thundering past all night. I was actually woken up by our house shaking at one point. I counted 4 HGVs driving past at speed.

My concerns are around the safety of residents and pedestrians using the footpaths, the noise pollution from constant traffic, the quality of our air due to increased traffic and damage to property due to continued vibration from HGVs.

Speeding HGVs through our town will only result in injury or death, and having traffic now forced through Buckley it is now only a matter of time.

Residents have the right to live and sleep in a peaceful environment. Currently it is like living on the hard shoulder of the motorway.

I understand most lorries are built to release lower emissions however it is still increasing the daily amount in our community.

The risk of property damage due to excessive vibration is a major concern of ours. Our house literally shakes with each passing HGV. Our belongings shake on our units inside the house as do doors. It is unacceptable. The impact on our buildings may not become apparent immediately..... Who will help us in the future? Will liability be accepted for any damage caused by the diversion? Our neighbours wall collapsed yesterday. We believe she is away, so is not yet aware. It damaged 2 cars too. There is no coincidence that we have a weekend of diverted HGVs speeding past our houses then this happens.

I want the voice of my household heard. We should of been consulted and considered before anything was agreed. I am extremely disappointed and angry that this did not happen.

I would like confirmation that my email has been received and my concerns have been noted.

Regards


Brunswick Road resident.

Hello Vivienne, and others included in this email.

I live at [REDACTED], on [REDACTED], [REDACTED] between the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and have resided here since 1974.

I am sadly unable to attend the residents meeting planned for Thursday 5th March as I am having my hip replaced tomorrow 4th March at Wrexham Maelor Hospital.

My preparation for this important operation has been interrupted sleep every night since the weekend caused by continental size HGV vehicles thundering through Mold Road and at speed. Our bungalow vibrates from the impact of the lorries on the road and the sound regularly interrupts my sleep, despite double glazing.

Apart from the noise, it is dangerous to other road users, on a road with narrow footpaths.

I am 72 years of age and I expect to be home by the weekend to recover from this major surgery and now face the dreadful thought of another 3 weeks of sleep disturbance.

I ask that you read all of this email out and raise the following issues...

- 1 Why couldn't these vehicles be routed via M56/A56 rather than a narrow road running through a heavily populated residential town .
- 2 Having made the inappropriate choice of the, route what measures are in place to restrict the speed of these vehicles ?
- 3 Was any consideration given to the road surface which has only recently undergone resurfacing after several years of neglect leading to potholes causing more misery.
- 4 What consideration was given to the effect on residents of Buckley ?
- 5 Will those affected, receive any form of compensation for the disruption.
- 6 What is the likelihood of such a diversion being used again in the future.

I feel neglected by Councillors who I expect to represent us in matters of this nature.

I don't think I am alone in feeling I have been treated shabbily by uncaring people in positions of power. The work has obviously been planned for sometime and we should have been consulted. I expect an inflation busting Council Tax rise in April and am seriously considering withholding payment if this issue isn't resolved.

Please feel free to circulate this email to all local media.

I look forward to positive responses.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Dear Clr. Blondek.

Unfortunately I am unable to attend your meeting this evening. However, I do wish to express my concern about the damage to our properties on Brunswick Road being caused by these rather large lorries rumbling through nose to tail. The constant rumble is definitely not doing our properties any good at all. In fact part of a wall came down between mine and next door over the weekend. I must assume that the wall was vulnerable but have no doubt that the rumble of these lorries may have hastened its demise. Knowing that I also fear for the fabric of my home. Why should we be exposed to this danger? Is there anything that we can do about it? Together with this there is the exposure to pollution caused by this larger than usual volume of traffic passing close to our homes. I would be interested to know the outcome of your meeting this evening and what if anything we may be able to do about it.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear sir/madam

As a resident of buckley and more precisely Brunswick road I have been advised that once again a division is in place starting tonight for all traffic on the a55 running through the heart of Buckley.

As previously no notification to the local residents was given and only through our community counsellor Vivienne blondek

Who I am grateful took the time to advise us of the impending noise and disruption which will most certainly will impact the local residents.

My house is within 5 metres of the highway and 44 tonne trucks travelling in excess of 30 mph will have an impact on myself family and the community on the given route .

Numerous pot holes compact the issue increasing noise levels and frustration given that single carriageway or other routes have not been implemented.

In my opinion this is a danger to the public with significant pollution increases along with pedestrians being put at risk (even if it is in the early hours) .

I believe that the timescale for the diverted traffic which has been set for one month is madness considering that this stretch of road is amongst the busiest in wales.

Thanks

Good Afternoon

I am emailing regarding the current road closure A55/Diversion through Buckley. I live on the main road in a house which is only around 15 years and as you can imagine doesn't have the thickest walls.

Since the diversion started throughout the night at regular intervals the number of lorries passing through is causing major vibrations to my house, causing the house to shake and doors to rattle it's like living through an earthquake multiple times during the night. I am so concerned that this is causing damage to my home and until this started my back door opened with no problem yet all of a sudden I cannot open my back door. I live alone and this is causing me so much stress and I am not sleeping and now scared that I cannot even open my back door and wondering what other damage this is causing to my property.

During last weekend it took me over 1 hour to get to Chester at around 9.45am due to the temporary traffic lights at roundabouts and roads around the area. Its so concerning that if there is an emergency you would be stuck. Even walking on the street these huge lorries are so close to us and people with small children must be concerned walking along the main road. We are being told that this work to the A55 is essential, but who is going to fix our main road after the damage that will be done due to this diversion and who is going to fix my house or any other home that is damaged by this. No one!

The volume of traffic is crazy and dangerous and as I cannot attend the meeting arranged on Thursday night I wanted to make my concerns known and would love to know how we can stop this happening again

Many Thanks

██████████

Hi Viv

I would like to add to your objections. On Bistre West this route is heavily used by children walking to school. This will be dangerous for the children walking to Southdown primary school and both the Elfed and Argoed. Is it safe to send heavy goods through a route that has a heavily used lolly pop man?

I also share your concerns for residents who live on the main road. The heavy goods vehicles passing through at all hours will have a derogatory affect on the residents wellbeing.

I believe an alternative route must be found for heavy goods vehicles as sending them through the heart of our town is extremely dangerous.

Regards

Town Councillor Buckley Bistre West

Diversion Map



