

Marlborough and Tidworth Community Area A338/A346 Working Group.

Summary of Report on LGV Issues dated 30th March 2010

Introduction.

The A338/A346 Corridor stretches for 34 miles from Salisbury in the south to the M4 Junction 15 near Swindon in the north and is classified as a National Primary Route, marked in green on road maps and on road destination signs.

This single carriageway route passes through Marlborough and a number of villages, and great environmental damage is caused by the many Large Goods Vehicles (LGVs) which use this route.

Objective.

The objective of this report is to examine ways in which the amount of through LGV traffic may be reduced along the Corridor.

Factors.

- 1. Volume of traffic.** A survey carried out by Wiltshire County Council in 2006 established that the volume of traffic along the Corridor is heavy. There are about 7,000 vehicles per day between the A303 and Marlborough, and 15,000 north of the town of which about 10% of the traffic consists of LGVs. North of the A303, 26% of the LGV northbound traffic along the Corridor was through traffic i.e. 13 LGVs per hour in each direction. The volume of Corridor traffic between the A303 and Salisbury is less than in the north, but still substantial.

Conclusion. Based on the information contained in the main report, this road is inadequate and unfit for purpose for the volume of traffic which passes along it.

- 2. Priority locations.** The report describes the main problem Locations along the Corridor, and the dangers they present.

Conclusion. This road is unsuitable for the level of LGV traffic which it already has to bear.

- 3. Future increases in traffic.** Vehicle movements to and from the proposed Andover Airfield and the Solstice Park Regional Distribution Centres may increase LGV through traffic along the Corridor by up to 14 movements to about 39 movements per hour.

Conclusion. This adds weight to the conclusions in Factors 1 and 2 above.

- 4. Social Impact.** Poor air quality and noise pollution are at serious levels in Marlborough. Also LGVs are a major problem in villages south of Marlborough.

Conclusion. LGVs have a serious impact on the quality of life of those living along the Corridor.

- 5. Accidents.** In a 5 year period along the length of the Corridor there have been 205 accidents resulting in 343 casualties, including 10 fatal and 45 serious injuries, with most sections of the Corridor having an accident rate which is above the average for 'A' roads in Wiltshire.

Conclusion. LGVs were involved in 12% of the accidents and 40% of the fatalities. Based on data contained in the main report, if the through LGV traffic along the Corridor is removed it could result in a reduction in the number of accidents involving LGVs by 40% and hence in the number of people being killed and seriously injured.

- 6. The National Primary Route Network.** The Corridor is part of the nationally designated National Primary Route Network. The imposition of any weight or other restrictions on these roads is against Government policy.

Conclusion. The chances of achieving any restrictions which would reduce through LGV traffic along the Corridor are slim unless the Corridor road is de-primed so that its status is reduced from its current status as part of the National Primary Route Network.

7. Bypasses.

Attempts have been made to secure bypasses along the Corridor. All but the one for Burbage have been unsuccessful due to cost, technical problems and environmental issues.

Conclusion. It seems unlikely that any bypasses will be built along the Corridor in the foreseeable future.

8. Satellite Navigation Systems.

There are various technical problems which offer little prospect of reducing LGV traffic through SATNAVs, except in the long term. See main report for further details.

9. Economic Impact- Alternative Routes.

A viable alternative route, as stated in the WCC's Strategic Lorry Plan, to the Corridor road is available via the A303 to the east, north along the A34 and then west along the M4 to Swindon. Details given in the main report show that the running time for LGVs using this alternative route compared with the Corridor road is similar, and in some cases slightly less than up the A338/A346. Proposed Government Plans are for all Primary Routes to be used by LGVs and if this policy is approved the fact that the A338/A346 is not a Wiltshire Strategic Lorry Route will no longer apply.

Conclusion. The likely environmental gain from using the A303, A34 and M4 route rather than the Corridor is substantial, and the economic impact is likely to be broadly neutral.

Options Available.

1. Bypasses.

Unlikely to be available in the foreseeable future, and if any are built they will merely encourage more vehicles to use the Corridor road and add to the existing problems.

2. De-Priming.

It may be possible to arrange for the A338/A346 to be declassified as part of the National Primary Route Network. If that is done, it could allow for restrictions to be imposed on those roads to prevent through LGV traffic from using the Corridor road.

The Preferred Strategy.

Option2, De-Priming, after which weight/width/length and night-time restrictions to be imposed along the Corridor and on other roads such as the A345. Once the principle of de-priming has been accepted, a detailed study will be required to determine the location of appropriate signage to prevent through LGVs from using the Corridor route.

RELATED DOCUMENTS. The full Report and all attachments may be viewed online at the Collingbourne Ducis website www.collingbourne-ducis.com/A338-346WG