

SUTTON UNDER WHITESTONECLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

A170 Sutton Bank Application for a Permanent Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for Prohibition of HGVs

The purpose of this document is to support a request from Sutton under Whitestonecliffe Parish Council for a Permanent TRO on Sutton Bank for prohibition of any lorry in excess of 7.5 tonnes, **unless issued with a permit**, e.g. for local and /or frequent operators.

The reasons for this request are:

1. The deep concern that the Parish Council and local residents have for the safety of road users.
2. The economic effects of blockages by HGVs on a very busy Principal Road
3. Continual damage to the property of local residents, and potential risk to their safety.

HGVs are frequently passing through the village of Sutton under Whitestonecliffe, with its narrow sections of road and pavements, before struggling to ascend Sutton Bank.

Appendix 1, a document jointly produced by North Yorkshire Police, Freight Transport Association and North Yorkshire County Council, succinctly describes the hazards in relation to HGVs and Sutton Bank. Extracts include:

“The bank has **3 sections of steep 1:4 (25%)** inclines along its length. Just over half way up is a left hand hairpin bend. Near the top there is a final short steep section before the main road bends sharply right”.

“On average, **2 goods vehicles per day** experience up to **4 hour delays** ascending the bank. On average, **over 120 goods vehicles per year** fail to make the ascent and require police assistance to proceed”.

HGVs have shed their loads, jack-knifed but more frequently have had to reverse up to **1.8 miles** to turn around having failed to ascend the Bank. These incidents create dangerous situations for other road users whilst passing the blockage (*Appendices 2, 3 and 4*).

Reversing trucks often damage walls, hedges, verges, fences and road furniture when turning around.

Emergency services are frequently speeding through the village of Sutton under Whitestonecliffe to attend these incidents (when reported) and this must entail substantial cost to the tax payer and / or stretch limited resources. Furthermore, there are larger indirect costs to the economy through the delays experienced by other road users during these incidents.

In respect of HGVs travelling on Sutton Bank, the Parish Council considers that the road is not fit for purpose.

It should be noted that there is already a TRO in operation for Caravans on Sutton Bank. This change has improved matters significantly (*Appendix 5*).

To understand the situation clearly the Parish Council (PC) gives below a brief description of Sutton Bank (*Appendix 6*), and then several examples of the above problems. The PC also covers the investigations/reviews which have been undertaken but not completed and the PC gives EU directives on turning circles and attach as appendices a series of letters which local residents have written bringing to our attention problems and concerns (*Appendices 7 – 15*).

DESCRIPTION of ROUTE:

The A170 is a main arterial road from Thirsk to Scarborough. It has a recorded traffic flow in excess of 5,000 vehicles per day using this route travelling through the village of Sutton under Whitestonecliffe. The village entrance has a Grade 2 listed bridge only suitable for **one HGV at a time** as it narrows; this is followed by a second narrowing of the road within 42 metres of the bridge which again is only suitable for one HGV at a time (*Appendix 16*). The road then continues towards Sutton Bank which has **3 sections of steep 1:4 (25%)** inclines along its length. Just over half way up is a left hand hairpin bend. Near the top there is a final short steep section before the main road bends sharply right (*Appendices 17 and 18*). The limited width of the road, and the length of the gradient, results in frequent incidents involving HGVs failing to ascend/descend the bank and blocking the route. The Parish Council acknowledges that the left hand hairpin bend meets the legislation.

DANGEROUS ROUTE:

If the Police are informed that a vehicle has got stuck, they will give assistance. In this event the traffic has to be halted. Depending on the size of the vehicle, they are either turned around in the emergency lay-by (*Appendix 19*) or use a junction located some **1.8 miles** from Sutton Bank (*Appendix 20*). However it is more often the scenario that the Police are not informed. Therefore, these vehicles are frequently reversing the 1.8 miles unassisted. This has often resulted in the HGVs attempting to reverse in private driveways or at the small junction (*Appendix 20*). Also, there have been several HGVs jack-knifing and incidents where loads have been shed (*Appendix 2*).

HISTORY of the ROUTE:

1983 (May)

The Easingwold and Fringe of Hambleton Hills District Plan: A draft of the plan had been received for the Parish Council's consideration with a detailed map of Sutton included. It was noted that sums of money had been set aside for a school, a playing field and a bypass to be constructed within ten years.

1983 (June)

The Highways and Transportation Dept. of the North Yorkshire County Council were looking into the possibility of a coach, caravan and lorry ban on Sutton Bank, with two alternative routes being provided and had notified the Parish Council of this. A discussion followed the reading of the letter during which Cllr. Dyson pointed out the difficulty of providing signage for such a ban. It was felt however that at this early stage the road signs should not be the concern, the North Yorkshire County Council were more interested in whether or not the Parish Council favoured the ban. It was eventually decided to notify the North Yorkshire County Council to the effect that the Parish Council approved the ban in principle but would stipulate that access must be allowed and that vehicles under three tons unladen should be permitted.

1983 (July)

There had been no reply to the Parish Council's comments on the proposed vehicle limits on Sutton Bank.

1984 (May)

Sutton Bank is the only primary route in the UK that has prohibited its use by caravans since the 25 May 1984 (*Appendix 5*).

2003

North Yorkshire County Council purchased land to alter the hair pin bend and the camber of the road.

2004 (October)

The Parish Council (PC) have identified that in 2004 North Yorkshire County Council undertook a review of Sutton Bank which involved creating a Freight Quality Partnership which consisted of North Yorkshire County Council, the Freight Transport Association, the Road Haulage Association and North Yorkshire Police. A study was carried out by Faber Maunsell Consulting Engineers on behalf of the Freight Quality Partnership which included trials on 20 September 2004 with lorries and different road surfaces to evaluate their effectiveness. The Faber Maunsell report was to be fed into the overall study.

The report recommended the following preferred solutions:

- Lorry specific signing strategic and local
- Lay-bys with information points giving advice to drivers about the ascent
- Better turnaround points so that drivers can manoeuvre safely if they do not wish to complete the ascent
- Variable Message Signing to give information on weather conditions, and appropriate advice to the drivers
- Show 1 in 4 gradient on maps in order to make known the severity of the hill to transport operators and drivers
- Redesign of the hairpin, so that the vehicles can make the climb more easily and without going onto the opposite side of the road

These have not been implemented

See attached:

- Sutton Bank Trial Day Final Report by Faber Maunsell (*Appendix 21*)
- Extract from North Yorkshire News re Sutton Bank Trial September 2004 (*Appendix 22*)
- The minutes of a meeting entitled 'Heavy Goods Vehicles – Sutton Bank' (*Appendix 23*)
- A communication on the same topic issued by North Yorkshire County Council Communications Unit entitled 'Safety Study for Sutton Bank' (*Appendix 24*)

2007 (January)

In 2007 there was a National campaign to advise hauliers and their drivers by promoting awareness of the severity of the ascent (*Appendices 1 and 25*). Despite this campaign and subsequent road surface improvements Sutton Bank remains afflicted by HGVs blocking the A170 almost every other day.

Annual

Every year for one week Sutton Bank is closed on a temporary TRO by Highways in order to carry out any necessary repairs and for structural surveys to maintain the integrity of the surrounding land (*Appendix 26*).

FAILURE to meet EU DIRECTIVE on HGV TURNING CIRCLES:

There is a requirement by Highways to provide a turning circle for vehicles that cannot navigate the road as per the EU directive 96/53/EC (*Appendix 27*). In a report issued by North Yorkshire County Council entitled Investigation of Traffic Issues in Sutton-under-Whitstonecliffe dated 28 June 2013 and an email from the Improvement Manager, North Yorkshire County Council Highways dated 22 January 2014 they state that "given the current funding situation, there are simply not the funds available to introduce such a scheme".

RECORDED EVENTS of HGVs STUCK on SUTTON BANK:

Residents have been recording incidents that they have witnessed and these are attached (*Appendix 28*). North Yorkshire Police also record any notified incidents. Neither record is complete and the inference is that there are more stoppages and incidents that are not recorded.

APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1 North Yorkshire County Council Sutton Bank HGV Information Sheet
- Appendix 2 Photographs of shedding load
- Appendix 3 Extract from local paper regarding lorry load of girders falling on cars at Sutton Bank
- Appendix 4 Extract from local paper regarding jack-knifed lorry on Sutton Bank
- Appendix 5 The Council of the County of North Yorkshire (prohibition of caravans) (Sutton Bank) order 1984 dated 22 May 1984
- Appendix 6 Historic Importance of Site
- Appendix 7 Sutton Bank HGV complaint from Gormire Farm
- Appendix 8 Sutton Bank HGV complaint from High Cleaves Farm
- Appendix 9 Sutton Bank HGV complaint from Sutton Bank Farm
- Appendix 10 Letter from Sutton Bank Farm to North Yorkshire County Council Highways
- Appendix 11 Sutton Bank HGV complaint from Cragg House
- Appendix 12 Sutton Bank HGV complaint from Rose Cottage Farm
- Appendix 13 Email of complaint from Mr Waller
- Appendix 14 Letter of complaint from Hambleton View Farm to North Yorkshire County Council Highways
- Appendix 15 Letter of complaint from Hambleton View Farm to Parish Council
- Appendix 16 Photographs of bridge and road narrowing
- Appendix 17 Web Cams & Videos of Sutton Bank
- Appendix 18 Map of Sutton Bank
- Appendix 19 Photographs of emergency lay-by used by HGVs for turning around
- Appendix 20 Photographs of junction used by HGVs for turning
- Appendix 21 Sutton Bank Trial Day Final Report by Faber Maunsell

- Appendix 22 Extract from North Yorkshire News re Sutton Bank Trial September 2004
- Appendix 23 North Yorkshire County Council report on Heavy Goods Vehicles - Sutton Bank
- Appendix 24 North Yorkshire County Council announcement regarding a Safety Study for Sutton Bank in 2004
- Appendix 25 Extract from local newspaper regarding Sutton Bank Safety Study
- Appendix 26 Extract from York Press regarding Sutton Bank closure
- Appendix 27 EU Directive on Turning Circle
- Appendix 28 Data collection of incidents on Sutton Bank by residents of Sutton under Whitestonecliffe
- Appendix 29 Sutton under Whitestonecliffe Parish Council correspondence address