

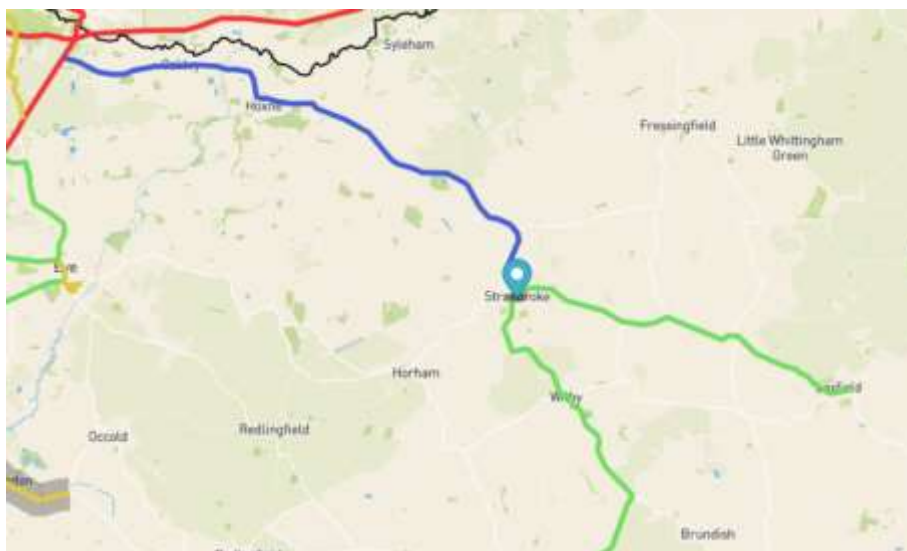
11th September 2023

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Stradbroke Parish Council has great sympathy with the residents of Eye. However, Eye is a market town and, by its nature, all roads lead to it. The Parish Council submits that redirecting large vehicles that would have travelled through Eye, both with the existing TRO and the experimental TRO, just moves the problems experienced in Eye further afield and exacerbates the problems that those areas were already experiencing.
- 1.2. The Parish Council has for some time been working with Suffolk Highways to identify ways to improve highway safety in the parish and does not expect the safety of Stradbroke residents and visitors to be put at further risk to help solve a problem in Eye. As you will see from the appendices, the Parish Council is being encouraged by residents to consider a weight limit on Queens Street as this would immediately resolve a number of issues, however the Council also understands that this is a solution that would just push the problem to another parish and this is not something the Parish Council is willing to do.
- 1.3. The Parish Council recommends that the ETRO is ended immediately and that before any further TROs are permanently introduced, a thorough review is undertaken on the effectiveness of the existing TRO in Eye including evaluating whether this has caused other problems by its implementation. It is possible that the problems of buildings being hit could be alleviated with the existing TRO being revisited and redesigned.
- 1.4. The Parish Council submits the following comments and evidence to support its objection.

2. Lorry Route

- 2.1. The Suffolk lorry route map, shows that the roads in Stradbroke are either:
Blue - zone distribution lorry routes - roads within a zone serving as a route to a local access route.
Green - local access routes - roads or parts of roads serving as access to a specific location.
- 2.2. Extract of map:



- 2.3. The Parish Council notes that the newly installed blue signs on the A140 advising that “for Stradbroke use B1118” do not include the words “access only”. “Access only” is necessary to make it clear that the B1118 and B1117 are not recommended through routes onto Laxfield and beyond.
- 2.4. The Parish Council responded to the original consultation on the proposal for an ETRO and the Lorry Route consultation (copies attached as appendices). The Parish Council pointed out that B1118 narrows in Stradbroke, and causes a pinch point immediately outside the primary school. This pinch point regularly results in traffic issues, including large vehicles mounting the only pavement available to pass each other.
- 2.5. The photos below and on the following pages demonstrate the issues experienced in Stradbroke:



White HGV is travelling towards the primary school. Red HGV is mounting the only pavement to enable the vehicles to pass.

Yellow road markings show this is immediately outside the school. The HGV is very close to the pavement with the back wheel on the kerb.





Both of these photos are taken outside the school and show how narrow the road is for large vehicles.





These photos demonstrate the traffic issues already experienced on Queens Street. The photo above was taken when 2 large vehicles were unable to pass each other further along the road and there was nowhere for other vehicles to go. The one below shows a bus which has been stationary for 20 mins due to vehicles unable to pass each other further ahead.



Both of these photos are taken where the pinch point on Queens Street starts. The Courthouse and Library is indicated. These photos demonstrate that HGVs are unable to use pass each other and have to use the same carriage way on the road.

Stradbroke Courthouse and Library building



3. Signage

- 3.1. The new, much larger, road sign recently installed on Church Street is immediately adjacent to the conservation area and is not appropriate for a village in rural Mid Suffolk.



●●●● boundary of conservation area

- 3.2. The Parish Council also notes that the sign on Wilby Road has not been updated to reflect the ETRO, but does not expect a large sign similar to the one noted above to be installed, as this site also is immediately adjacent to the conservation area:



4. Highways modelling

- 4.1. The Parish Council notes that modelling for the emerging BMSDC Joint Local Plan demonstrates that there are issues noted with areas adjacent to the two junctions which will be most impacted by the ETRO. These junctions are the B1118 / A140 and the A1120 / A140 (see evidence below).

Evidence for BMSDC Joint Local Plan

WSP Modelling January 2020

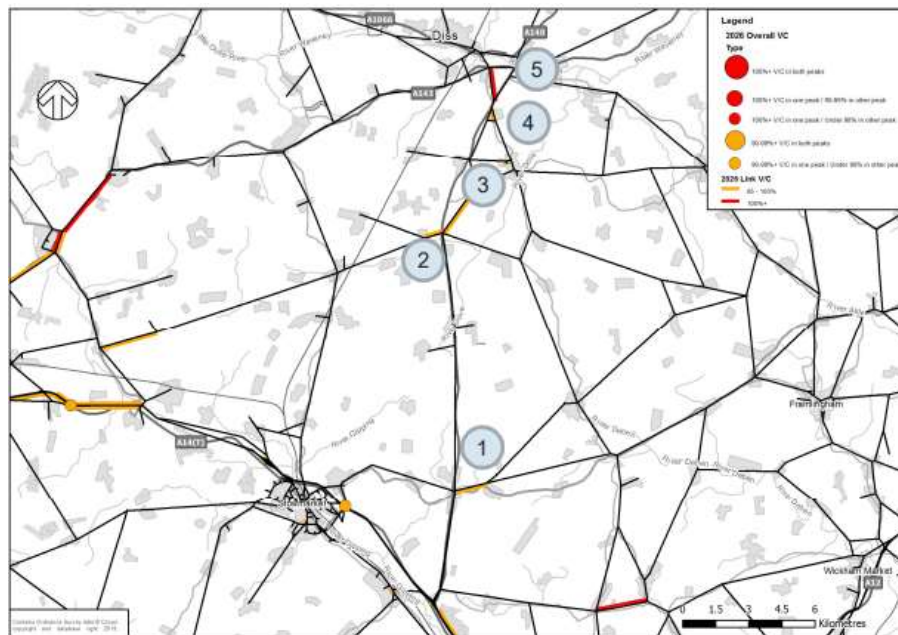
Ipswich Strategic Planning Area Local Plan Modelling Project No: 70044944/ Ref No: ISPA 7.1 Suffolk County Council

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3.11 MID SUFFOLK RESULTS SUMMARY A140 CORRIDOR

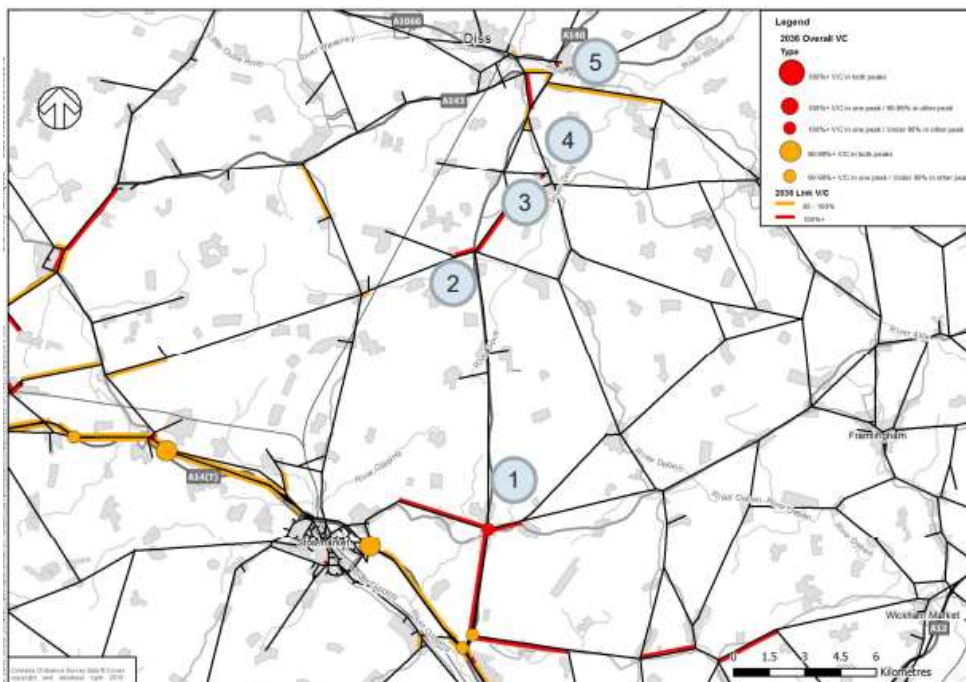
- 3.11.1. The A140/A1120 Junction is over capacity in the AM and PM peaks periods in 2026/36 (Location 1 in Figure 23/Figure 24).
- 3.11.2. The A140 / Workhouse Road / Stoke Road north and west approaches are nearing capacity in 2026 AM/PM peaks, and over capacity in 2036 AM/PM peaks (Location 2 in Figure 23/Figure 24).
- 3.11.3. Several approach roads to the A140 between Workhouse Road and the Scole Bridge are nearing or over capacity in the AM/PM peak in 2026/36 (Location 3 and 4 in Figure 23/Figure 24). The A140 at the Scole Bridge is nearing capacity in 2026 AM peak, and over capacity in 2036 AM Peak (Location 5 in Figure 23/Figure 24).
- 3.11.4. Figure 23 shows the V/C performance along the A140 corridor in 2026.

Figure 23 – A140 Corridor – 2026 Links and Junctions with V/C 85%+ - With Adjustment



3.11.5. Figure 24 shows the V/C performance along the A140 corridor in 2036.

Figure 24 – A140 Corridor – 2036 Links and Junctions with V/C 85%+ - With Adjustment



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4.6 MID SUFFOLK MODELLING RESULTS

- 4.6.1. The A140 corridor is shown to have capacity issues at multiple locations including the A140 / A1120 staggered crossroads and A140 / Workhouse Road / Stoke Road junction.
- 4.6.2. Stowmarket is shown to generally operate within capacity in both forecast years, though isolated link approaches to Gipping Way and Ipswich Road are shown to have capacity issues in both forecast years.

- 4.2. The Parish Council notes that this modelling was undertaken before the experimental TRO in Eye was proposed or introduced. Therefore, the modelling should be rerun with the ETRO factored in to properly reflect the impact any further permanent weight restriction in Eye will have.

5. Public comments noted

- 5.1. The Parish Council received the following email, the Councillors feel that this email highlights the main concerns with the ETRO:

Hello,

I write to you with my comments about the recently-introduced 7.5t vehicle weight limit now in place in Eye.

I live in Ash Plough (Stradbroke) in the first house directly fronting on to Queens Street. As such, I am well placed to comment with reasonably accurate knowledge and observations.

In general terms, I think it fair to assume that the number of +7.5t vehicles using this part of mid-Suffolk has remained fairly constant. The majority of these probably have good reason for being here since they are related to the carriage of arable crops or livestock.

Hitherto, these vehicles had two main access routes: either via Eye and Horham on the B1117 passing through Stradbroke, or from the direction of Diss via Oakley and Hoxne on the B1118.

Let's assume (for the sake of argument), that the two routes each carry 50% of the total traffic under consideration.

However, under the new Eye weight restriction rules, theoretically, the B1117 now has zero use, while the B1118 gets 100%. The total traffic volume remains the same, but its routing distribution is skewed.

I accept that each of the two routes has problem areas for large vehicles: in Eye it is the junction of Castle St/Yaxley Road (and the tight bend by the Parish Church), together with the bend in Horham.

The other route has problems, a) the T-junction by All Saints Church and, b) much of Queens St, and c) the tight bend in Hoxne. (Not to mention regular complaints from residents about speeding heavy traffic through Oakley)

Thus, in terms of problematic areas, the two routes are probably equal, and equally hazardous to other road users. So, where is the sense in loading all of the problem onto one of the two options to the respite of the other?

There is a second vehicle problem that the planners seem to have overlooked. While concentrating on the +7.5t lorries, we are forgetting about agricultural traffic – tractors, trailers, crop sprayers, combines, balers etc.

I use both routes in more or less equal measure, and I am absolutely certain that the B1118 (from Hoxne to Stradbroke) carries far more agricultural traffic than the B1117 Eye to Stradbroke section.

These vehicles are also of significant size and weight, so Queens St now has a double-whammy! Extra HGVs plus farm traffic.

We are all aware of the significant 'pinch-point' in Queens St, roughly from the old Courthouse to the School. This section is barely wide enough for two large vehicles to pass, without one or the other having to stop and pull right in to the side of the road (only the west side of the road has a footpath).

Pedestrians

As stated, there is only one footpath for most of the length of Queens St. The amount of 'air-suction' created by passing lorries is quite frightening – these vehicles are only a couple of feet away and driving right up against the kerb. On wet days, the amount of water spray thrown up by these is horrendous – the drivers appear not to be in the least bit concerned (see Rule 227 of the Highway Code)

School children

We know that Stradbroke CE Primary School is immediately adjacent to Queens St. and poses an especial risk to children and parents due to heavy traffic flows. My study is on the first floor of our house and I have a clear view down Queens St from Ash Plough to Skinner's factory. There are lots of children (plus parents) who live in the Westhall area and who have to cross the road to get to school and having to avoid much heavy traffic as they do so. This is an accident waiting to happen.

Parking

I have read complaints that some people park vehicles on or near the pinch point, and especially near the School at dropping-off and picking-up times. There are also delivery vans, tradesmen vehicles etc doing similarly – they have a perfect right to do this. Parking is unrestricted and people may park as they feel appropriate, even if it's on the main road.

The Parish Council has been discussing the use of double-yellow lines at the T-junction for several years – but nothing ever happens. This junction is bad enough for general usage since it's often impossible to see oncoming traffic (from Queens St onto Church St/New St) without pulling out into the junction opposite the Spar Shop.

Now, this problem is exacerbated by large trucks trying to turn into or out of a tight junction with limited visibility and manoeuvrability.

Speed

This is probably my greatest area of concern. The whole area is limited to 30mph with an advisory limit of 20mph near the School. This is generally ignored by a majority of motorists and motor-cyclists (and many a tractor drivers!).

I sit at home watching vehicles heading north from about Skinner's factory to the White House farm (all within the 30mph area), and the speed is staggering! Vehicles regularly pass the front of our house at well over double that – 60mph plus. As soon as they pass the bend by Skinners, they see a bit of straight road and 'floor it'.

Yet, in our years of living here, we've never once seen a Police speed camera in this area.....

In wet weather, trucks throw up huge amounts of spray (as do tractors etc). It really makes life quite unpleasant on these days.

I recall that, some years ago, the Parish Council asked for residents' opinions about 30 mph speed roundels to be painted on the road surface etc, but, predictably, nothing has happened!

Conclusion

The whole of this Eye traffic management scheme is ill-conceived, extremely parochial, and without thought or regard to the wider mid-Suffolk community.

All it has done is to move a problem seven miles to the east.

It needs to be re-thought and having due regard to communities other than Eye.

5.2. The following comments have been noted from signatories to an online petition that is underway in relation to the ETRO:

- It's wrong
- It's important to the people that live there
- It seems ridiculous that this was even considered a suitable option.
- Its INSANITY to try and implement this!!!
- I worked in Eye for several years. Residents & local industry were accepting of each other then, why not now?
- Lets get this right, this Lorry Ban is an Environmentally Stupid decision.
For those that don't know, the average Artic does around 8-9mpg, rigid lorries are around 11-12mpg, now throw in the detour that a truck has to do from one of the many Transport Depots by the airfield to get (Safely) to Aspalls (19 miles vs 9 miles) or even the Occold research centre (23 miles vs 7 Miles) That's just 2 of the places I can think of that have vehicles over 7 1/2 ton needing to deliver/collect. if even 10 lorries from the companies have to detour each day (there's more than that having to detour, but my maths is poor) That's an extra 450-500 litres of fuel Each Day.
No lorries should be diverting through Thorndon as there is a pre-existing weight restriction in place. Stradbroke has Pre-existing traffic issues at the queen street junction that have been exacerbated with the increased through traffic.
I would like to ask all the wonderful supporters of this lorry ban to petition the local haulage companies to take them out on these other so-called suitable roads that can be used.
- I feel it is not only dangerous to send huge lorries past the primary school, but as I live in Queen Street where the huge juggernauts are sent, nothing is ever done to slow them down . Nothing is ever done to make the road safer. Great bottle necks have now started to happen when two lorries try to pass the parked cars. There are lots of other ways you can send juggernauts. They are ruining our village. Keep them on the main roads not through villages. We have had enough of this. The fumes, the hazards with parents pushing prams. Children walking to the primary school. The disgraceful pot holes and drain covers constantly becoming loose. You need to look at speed restrictions on Queen Street before you put a huge sign up telling lorries to go down our road instead of towards Eye . Totally disgraceful.
- Heavy vehicles should not be diverted through small villages on minor roads. It is dangerous, damaging to infrastructure and is polluting.
- I used to live in Stradbroke, and not just was Queen Street dangerous but all the main roads. The existing road infrastructure cannot safely cope with HGVs.
- It's causing problems in surrounding villages
- Two lorries are unable to pass each other in Stradbroke or its approach. The lorries pose a genuine hazard to all and increase journey times substantially as there is constant stoppage. How has it even been permitted and by whom?

- I have no issues with lorries having to go through villages to get to their destinations because we all need these goods transported BUT appropriate infrastructure must be put in place to support that. Diverting these lorries past a school which already does not have appropriate infrastructure in place to support the children that attend there is NOT it. The T junction at the end of that road is also quite difficult for everyone who has to go through there adding more lorries is just going to make this road unusable.
- Lorries should never be rerouted through quiet villages, with narrow, unsuitable roads. Dangerous for cyclists, pedestrians and local traffic. The solution should be looked for in road improvements and bypasses.
- Queen Street in Stradbroke is already dangerous and was never built to support this many lorries. Whilst I understand the need for them in the village, a problem shared is a problem halved. Now there is a noticeable increase and when walking my dog this week had to avoid a lorry mounting the path to try and pass one coming in the opposite direction. Not alot of consideration as to who was on the path at the time.
- It's making it far too dangerous for school children and families in Stradbroke to cross the road and drive. The lorries mount the kerb regularly by the primary school almost hitting pedestrians, they cause traffic jams as they are just too big. With Stradbroke being their only route it's causing far too much traffic of heavy vehicles. It's becoming increasingly dangerous to all.

6. Conclusion

Stradbroke Parish Council OBJECTS to the ETRO currently underway in Eye, due to the impact it will have on surrounding areas, including Stradbroke, and recommends that it is not taken forward and ended immediately.

Submitted by:

Odile Wladon (Clerk)

On behalf of Stradbroke Parish Council

2 x appendices attached.

Appendices:

A. Response to consultation on ETRO



Mill Hill House, Church Lane, Wickham Skeith IP23 8NA

Email: Stradbrokepc@outlook.com

Phone: 07555 066147

8th April 2021

Re: Consultation on proposed weight restrictions in Eye.

Stradbroke Parish Council was advised that a review of the Suffolk Lorry Route was underway and that this is what the council hoped it would be consulted on. However, the Parish Council note that this particular consultation refers only to the proposed weight restrictions in Eye.

To be able to fully comment on the proposal to adopt additional weight restrictions in Eye and the impact this would have on the Parish of Stradbroke, the Parish Council would need the following information: where would the vehicles that would be diverted from the area be travelling to and from? The Council will be in a position to comment more fully when this information is received.

What is clear to Stradbroke Parish Council is that the vehicles that currently travel through Eye won't just disappear off the roads, they will be diverted elsewhere – therefore pushing the problem away from Eye and further afield. Looking at maps of the area the only other possible routes to access the A140 would be via Stradbroke or Debenham depending on the starting point and final destination of the vehicles. Both of the parishes already experience issues with volume of traffic on roads that contain significant pinch points. Stradbroke Parish Council is very keen that the vehicles diverted from Eye are not by default (or google maps/satnav) pushed towards Queens Street, where there is a very narrow pinch point at a very busy section of the B1118.

The Parish Council has recently approached a company to assist Stradbroke in preparing a report on how to deal with speeding and the high volume of HGVs and large tractor/trailers that residents are reporting on all roads in Stradbroke and in particular, Queens Street in the centre of the village. Queens Street forms part of the B1118 and is on the Suffolk Lorry Route as a "service route" (blue) to Laxfield Road via Church Street part of the B1117 and an "access" route (green). The company has advised that any traffic monitoring should wait until the current COVID restrictions are lifted to enable a true picture to be reflected.

The Parish Council is already consulting residents on a 20mph limit within the conservation area of Stradbroke which includes Queens Street. The Council is also being encouraged by residents to apply for a weight restriction to prevent Stradbroke being used as a cut through to East Suffolk and beyond and to enable a lorry watch to be formally established to monitor and report the vehicles using Stradbroke as a through route rather than a service/access route.

What the Parish Council can point to is the following:

1. Suffolk County Council regularly collects data from a permanent vehicle counter located under the highway near the cemetery on Laxfield Road (B1117) – data to show vehicle movements and speed is available on a quarterly basis.
2. There is a "pinch point" on Queens Street, near the primary school. This is noted in the made Stradbroke Neighbourhood Plan. There is only one pavement on this route and the road is not wide enough for large vehicles to pass each other without one mounting the only pavement, the other side of the road is a verge and an overgrown hedge (see photo below).



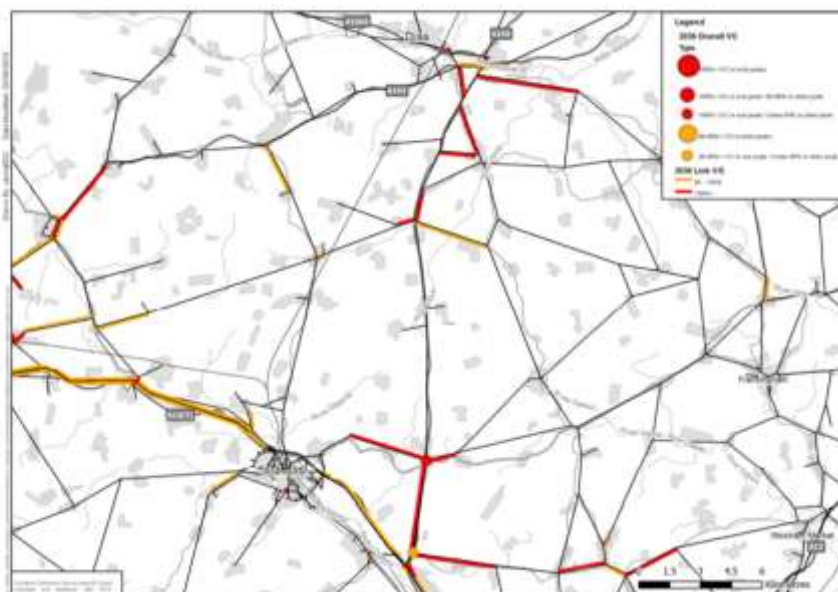
3. An independent transport assessment undertaken for a proposed development off Queens Street is available to view on Mid Suffolk's planning portal under reference DC/20/05126. This assessment shows that there were over 11,000 weekly vehicle movements both northbound and southbound on the section of the Queens Street at the time of the monitoring.
4. In 2019, Suffolk Highways produced a report highlighting safety issues on the Chickering Road, this is part of the B1118 and leads to Queens Street.

- When the original weight restriction was imposed in Eye, there was a noticeable rise in complaints to the Council from residents regarding an increase in HGV and large tractor & trailer traffic movements on Queens Street. This was due, in part, as vehicles that would have travelled along Victoria Hill and then through Horham to access the anaerobic digester on the Laxfield Road via New Street and Church Street, are now travelling onto the A140 and accessing Stradbroke via the B1118 (Queens Street).

Note: The anaerobic digester was granted retrospective planning permission in 2016 by Suffolk County Council. At the time the Parish Council objected to this retrospective grant of planning as Councillors noted that the vehicle movements submitted with the planning statement had been underestimated and subsequent requests for information has shown this to be the case.

- Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils are currently awaiting inspection on their proposed Joint Local Plan. Part of the evidence used in the preparation of the proposed Plan was a highways forecasting report produced by WSP and commissioned by Suffolk County Council. This report shows that the junction of the A140/B1118 will be at capacity within the lifetime of the plan, the modelling for this did not include traffic beyond the junction. As part of the consultation for the Joint Local Plan, Stradbroke Parish Council has commented that the modelling should have been extended to include the junction of the B1118 and B1117 at Queens Street/Church Street in Stradbroke. This is because the most likely route for vehicles turning at the A140/B1118 junction is Stradbroke and beyond via Queens Street and then Laxfield Road or Wilby Road.

3.10.5. Figure 22 shows the V/C performance along the A140 corridor in 2036.



Odile Wladon
Clerk – Stradbroke Parish Council

B. Supplemental response to Lorry Route review



Mill Hill House, Church Lane, Wickham Skeith,
Suffolk IP23 8NA

13th December 2021

SUPPLEMENTAL RESPONSE TO LORRY ROUTE REVIEW

The Parish Council has previously represented to oppose a requested further weight restriction on roads in nearby Eye, unless it could be demonstrated that the proposed ban would not just move the problem elsewhere, as happened when the original weight restriction was implemented a number of years ago. At that time Stradbroke Parish Council experienced a significant increase in complaints about the number of HGVs travelling up Queen Street (B1118) to access Church Street/Laxfield Road (B1117). The Parish Council is awaiting a response to the questions raised in its submission regarding the proposed further weight restrictions in Eye.

The Parish Council has been undertaking an online survey of residents to gather views on how the highway/traffic problems that are experienced within the village can be alleviated.

Residents were asked to comment on proposals the Council are considering introducing in the parish to slow traffic and more importantly, reduce the number of HGVs apparently using the village not just for access but as a through route.

The current results of the survey show the following proposals have significant support:

- 20mph zone within the centre of the village (B1118/B1117 included) **73%**
- Double yellow lines at the junction of Queen St (B1118) and Church St (B1117) **65%**
- Speed indicator roundels on the highway **64%**
- Establishment of a lorry watch **63%**

A weight restriction on Queen St (B1118) would allow the establishment of a formal lorry watch scheme, in conjunction with Suffolk Trading Standards, which would result in formal monitoring of HGVs on the village roads to ensure that only vehicles needing ACCESS are using the routes. This monitoring in conjunction with the use of lorry exemption permits for those vehicles evidencing they need access through the village will enable much more sustainable use of the narrow village roads.

It is the Parish Council's intention to pursue improvements to the highway network in the village, to encourage more walking and cycling by providing a much safer highway network, with HGVs only using the village roads for access and all vehicles travelling at safer speeds.