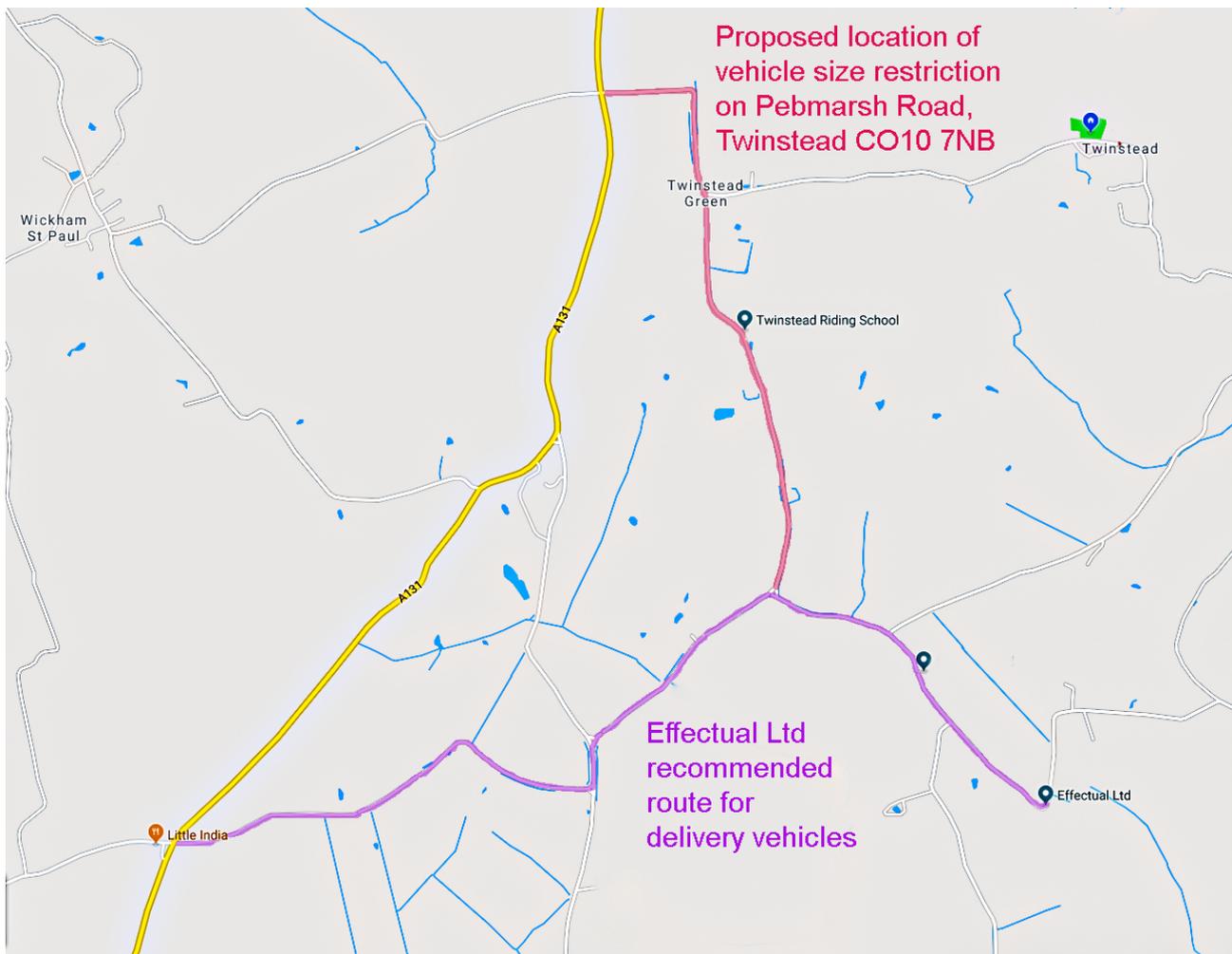


Hennys, Middleton and Twinstead Parish Council

CASE FOR VEHICLE SIZE RESTRICTION ON PEBMARSH ROAD, TWINSTEAD CO10 7NB

This document provides Hennys, Middleton and Twinstead Parish Council's (HMTPC) road safety based case for a vehicle size restriction along the length of Pebmarsh Road, Twinstead.

HMTPC request that a vehicle size restriction with appropriate signage is implemented along the length of Pebmarsh Road, Twinstead as indicated on the accompanying map.



The Problem

Recent increases in the usage of narrow rural lanes in Twinstead by large vehicles are posing a significant safety risk for residents, domestic road users, horses and riders.

For clarity, we are proposing a vehicle size restriction on the road marked above in RED and have identified the route recommended to delivery partners by one of the local commercial businesses who's activities precipitate the large vehicle movements in PURPLE.

Outline of Objectives

The proposal if implemented will deliver significant resident, rider and driver safety improvements by separating large vehicle movements serving commercial locations in Bishops Lane, Alphamstone from pedestrians, horse riders and domestic traffic serving the village of Twinstead and Twinstead Green in particular. This it would achieve without any detriment to the commercial activities including the largest, Effectual Ltd. on Bishops Lane and is in accord with the routing this company recommends to its delivery partners.

The benefits of implementing this proposal therefore significantly outweigh the detriments for all involved and the cost of implementation would be affordable and well justified.

Background

Residents of Twinstead located in the north of Braintree District have for some time been reporting increasing numbers of very large delivery vehicles along the narrow lanes of Twinstead and neighbouring parishes.

The lanes involved are very narrow and often single way with very limited passing places, soft verges and with hedges close to the road edge. Heavy and large vehicles struggle to manoeuvre in any way other than forward movement due to these constraints. Domestic vehicles meeting large vehicles are forced to reverse over significant distances to allow the large vehicles to proceed on their way.

Rural Highways Usage

Within Twinstead, the vehicles are traversing the highly constrained Pebmarsh Road past both residential properties and the long standing Twinstead Riding School with its many horses and riders.

Horse riders are particularly at risk due to the restricted stepping off facilities and the danger posed by large vehicles passing and scaring horses. Recreational horse riding at Twinstead has a long and valued history and HMTPC wish to support and encourage its safe continuation in the interests of its rural economic, amenity and wellbeing benefits to the community.

Commercial Activity

Kings Farm, on Bishops Lane, Alphamstone (sometimes identified as Pebmarsh in planning documents) is host to at least two commercial enterprises that these lorries deliver to and collect from.

The Kings Farm site has a history of planning consent for agricultural use but with no consent for other commercial usage. Within what was Kings Farm is the former grain store now used by Effectual Ltd and this site has been renamed Kings Park by its current owners, Effectual Ltd.

The vehicles that create a significant safety issue are either container lorries or else other large or medium sized logistics / delivery vehicles.

The largest company located on Bishops Lane is identified on the map as Effectual Ltd. Their contact details are Phone: 01787 269051 and Email: dh@effectualgroup.com. Details of their activities are to be found at: <http://www.effectualstorage.co.uk>.

Planning Background

The planning background to the usage of this site has been called into question and extensive research into this has been conducted by HMTPC through contact with both Braintree DC planners and planning enforcement. We have searched both the on line and microfiche record. The evidence we have shows that in 2007, a planning enforcement officer confirmed class B8 consent for the site and yet we have been unable to find any relevant planning application or planning consent record from the LPA to support this confirmation.

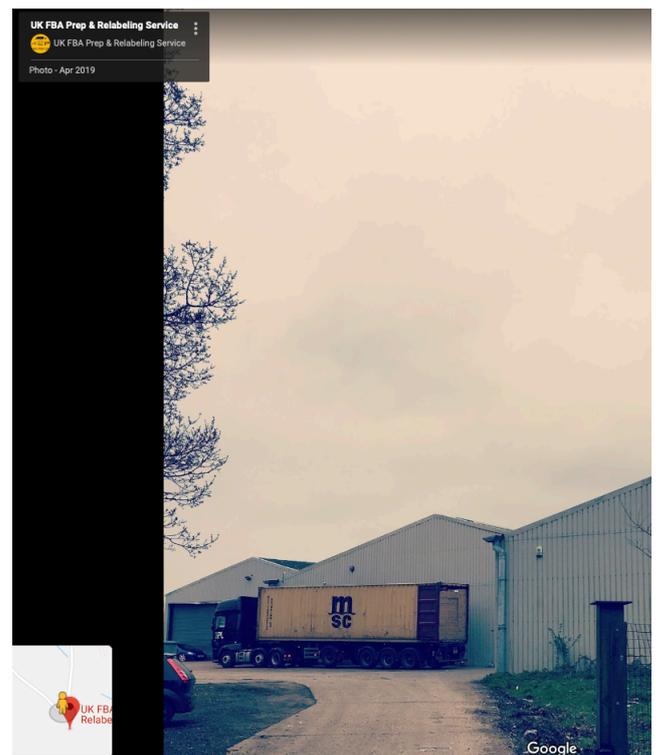


An indication of the nature of vehicles visiting the Kings Park site can be gained from photographs posted on web by Effectual Ltd.



IMPORTANT NOTE

HMTPC do not contest the legitimacy of Effectual Ltd to use the site as they do, seeing its contribution to the rural economy as beneficial.



The lack of any formal planning application and determination process leading to the current commercial B8 usage of the site suggests that no assessment of the suitability of the roads serving this site in the context of B8 usage is likely to have been made by ECC Highways.

Effectual Ltd is not the only company who's activity at or near Kings Farm leads to large vehicle movements on Bishops Lane and Pebmarsh Road and therefore a solution to the problem of inappropriate usage of Pebmarsh Road Twinstead by very large commercial vehicles requires a solution that is not simply single site specific.

The parishes affected by this issue are fundamentally agricultural in nature being small residential areas within a farm landscape. Historically, ECC Highways upgraded parts of the roadway and a small bridge on the route lately recommended to delivery companies by Effectual Ltd. This upgrade was done to facilitate access by heavy grain lorries to agricultural sites.

The proposed vehicle size restriction leaves two junctions by which large vehicles can access the route advocated by Effectual Ltd and these are the "Little India" junction in Little Maplestead and the junction at Catley Cross. We consider the Little India junction indicated on the accompanying map to be the preferred junction for large vehicle access to Bishops Lane as the vision splays are better and because a busy Veterinary facility adjoins the Catley Cross junction located on what is a narrow lane.

Key objective:

Separating horses, riders and residential traffic from large commercial vehicles.

The included map clearly indicates that the following proposal separates the area known as Twinstead Green with its significant riding school, horses and riders from the commercial vehicle movements and entities located on Bishops Lane.

Accordingly our proposal focusses on restricting large vehicles to an established route that has been upgraded to support heavy goods vehicles at no detriment to these commercial entities whilst delivering significant safety benefits for Twinstead residents, pedestrians, horse riders and other road users.

The Proposal

HMTPC propose that ECC Highways institute a vehicle size restriction along the entire length of Pebmarsh, Twinstead, CO10 7NB from its junction with the A131 where it meets Old Road, to the other end of Pebmarsh Road where it meets Oak Road and Bishops Lane at a three way junction.

We propose that appropriate signage be placed on both of the junctions identified above.

Clearly, funding will be needed to support the implementation of signage and HMTPC should funding not be available through the Authority we would welcome guidance as to appropriate funding sources to possibly include Locality Budgets.