

To: the chairman and members of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee

Agenda Item B1 Lorry Park network (Phase 1) 17 September 2014

It is understandable that the County Council should seek ways to mitigate the effects of Operation Stack and deal with the nuisance of overnight lorry parking. However, the proposals before you seem unlikely to deliver this.

My Elham Valley division suffers from the nuisance of overnight lorry parking as much as anywhere in Kent. It also bears the brunt of diverted motorway traffic when Operation Stack is in place. Elham Valley also contains the villages of Sellindge, Westenhanger and Lympe all of which feature in your report.

The proposal for a 2,057 space lorry park in Aldington parish and on the border of Sellindge village was first made in 2008. It is very welcome that this blight on the village has been lifted but the arguments that were advanced to support the large lorry park are very similar to those now made for the smaller network and similarly flawed.

The example of Stop 24, the 82 place lorry park at Junction 11 of the M20 shows what happens when lorry parking is provided. When the application for this site (also in my division) went through the planning process in 2010, it was claimed that this lorry park would resolve overnight lorry parking problems both in the immediate area and in Folkestone. The result has been quite the opposite as it attracts lorries to its outskirts whether there are spaces available at Stop 24 or not.

It is claimed that HGVs cannot be forced to move from where they are a nuisance unless there are sufficient places available for them at lorry parks. Provision of 300 places will clearly not be sufficient to meet this demand so will not remove the present nuisance. The extra places will be taken by reputable HGV companies and the operators who don't want to pay for parking will continue to park where they will.

Are the Police expected to enforce parking restrictions on HGVs or will KCC employ wardens? Where are the details of how the system of enforcement will work?

KCC risks raising expectations which it cannot meet of resolving overnight lorry parking and Operation Stack. We need to keep the lorries on the motorways, off our local roads and encourage transit rather than stopping in Kent.

There are many site specific objections to the Westenhanger proposal which will emerge if a planning application comes forward but I hope this committee will reject the whole idea of KCC itself providing lorry parking.

Susan Carey, Member, Elham Valley