


Decision Record – TUCKEY’S BRIDGE, CATHIRON LANE, HARBOROUGH MAGNA PROPOSED 10 TONNE WEIGHT LIMIT

Cabinet Portfolio Holder taking the decision	Cllr Jeff Clarke Transport and Environment
Date of Decision (not before 16 March 2018)	16/3/2018
	

Decision Taken

That the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Environment approves that the Warwickshire County Council (Tuckey’s Canal Bridge, Cathiron Lane, Harborough Magna) (10 Tonnes Weight Restriction) Order be made as advertised.

Reasons for Decisions

Where traffic proposals have received objections it is necessary to obtain the approval of the Portfolio Holder.

Background Information

A weight limit assessment was carried out on Tuckey’s Bridge, Cathiron Lane, Harborough Magna by the Canal and Rivers Trust. The Canal and River Trust (CRT) contacted Warwickshire County Council (WCC) to inform WCC that they had assessed the load bearing capacity of this bridge based on its current condition as being 10 tonnes. As a result, and in the interest of public safety, a reduced statutory weight limit is proposed on the bridge.

CRT owns the structure of the bridge. CRT is obliged under the Transport Act 1968 to maintain their highway structures to a standard such that they are capable of carrying the weight of traffic which would ordinarily use the highway carried by the bridge on the day the Act came into force.

The standards at the time the Transport Act 1968 was enacted required masonry arches to be capable of carrying vehicles with a maximum single axle load of 11 tons or tandem 9 ton axles. This roughly equates to an 18 tonne gross vehicle weight restriction when assessed to modern standards but this is dependent on the size of the structure and it is not possible to make a direct comparison between the new and old standards. CRT is still permitted to assess and maintain their highway structures to these outdated standards and these loads are lower than the maximum permissible axle loads of modern vehicles. As a result older canal bridges are often subject to weight restrictions.

WCC’s assessment of the load bearing capacity of Tuckey’s Bridge in its current condition is that a 10 tonne maximum gross weight is suitable to prevent further damage to the bridge and to protect public safety.

WCC has responsibility for the safety of the public using the public highway, which, in this case, includes Cathiron Lane where it crosses Tuckey’s Bridge.

On 7 April 2016, WCC issued a notice imposing a temporary 10 tonne weight restriction on Tuckey’s Bridge for a period of 21 days. This was followed by a second temporary notice on 29 April 2016 for a further period of 21 days. On 21 May 2016, WCC made a temporary traffic order continuing the temporary 10 tonne weight restriction on Tuckey’s Bridge for a period of 18 months. This temporary order then expired.

As a result of the temporary weight restriction order expiring, in the interests of public safety owing to the condition of the bridge, on 15 December 2017 WCC issued a further notice imposing a temporary 10 tonne weight restriction on Tuckey’s Bridge for a period of 21 days (being the maximum permissible length of time for a temporary notice). On the expiry of this notice on 5 January 2018 WCC issued another notice imposing a temporary 10 tonne weight restriction on Tuckey’s Bridge for a

further period of 21 days in the interests of public safety. This temporary weight restriction was subsequently extended by a second temporary traffic order which expires on 14 June 2018.

With regard to the longer term, CRT has informed WCC that it does not intend to apportion any funds to pay for works to strengthen Tuckey's Bridge. WCC does not receive any funding for the maintenance of the bridge structure and does not have any resources to commit to maintaining structures owned by third parties.

In notifying WCC, CRT suggested the following options to deal with this weak bridge:

- Enact a weight limit by Traffic Regulation Order and erect appropriate signage;
- Fund intrusive investigation works and further analysis in an attempt to demonstrate adequate load capacity; or
- Fund strengthening works to the bridge. (In which case WCC would prefer ownership of the bridge to be transferred from CRT to the Highway Authority to avoid having split liability for future maintenance.)

WCC does not receive any funding for the maintenance of canal bridges and does not have the resources to strengthen structures owned by others. Further investigation and analysis is not expected to result in any significant increase in load bearing capacity therefore the preferred option is to enact a weight limit. Works to strengthen a similar weak masonry arch bridge to raise its load bearing capacity to 18 tonnes have been estimated to cost £90,000. Strengthening the bridge to carry full, unrestricted highway loading is likely require a replacement structure and would cost considerably more.

WCC will now make a Traffic Regulation Order imposing a weight limit of 10 tonnes maximum gross weight on Tuckey's Bridge to protect the structure of the bridge and to avoid danger to persons or traffic using the road which crosses the bridge or to prevent the likelihood of any such danger arising.

Financial Implications

As set out in the report.

Report Author	Phil Salter
Head of Service	Mark Ryder
Joint Managing Director	Monica Fogarty
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jeff Clarke

Checklist

Urgent matter?	No
Confidential or Exempt?(State the category of exempt information)	No
Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?	No

List of Reports considered

Link to published proposed decision report:

<https://democratic.warwickshire.gov.uk/cmis5/CalendarofMeetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/645/Meeting/4114/Committee/587/Default.aspx>

List of Background Papers

Letters and email objections received.

Members and officers consulted or informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Jeff Clarke

Corporate Board

Legal – Ian Marriott, Peter Endall

Finance – Liz Firmstone, Virginia Rennie

Equality – Polly Sharma

Democratic Services – Paul Williams

Local Member(s): Councillor Adrian Warwick

Other members: Councillors Horner, Shilton, Singh Birdi, Clarke and Chattaway