

Sir(s),

My name is Andrew Webber and I am a resident of Wolverley, having resided and raised my children here since 1999.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to present my very real concerns to this public inquiry, having expressed similar concerns in person at the first inquiry.

Before I give my evidence, it is important to clarify that I give this to you today as a concerned local resident. My evidence will rely on my experience and qualifications as a serving Police Sergeant in West Midlands Police, where I have spent the majority of my 29-year career specialising in the investigation of road traffic collisions.

My opinions and evidence are my own and do not represent the views of West Midlands Police or Policing UK.

I feel it's important to give the enquiry some greater detail on my relevant qualifications and experience to enable whatever level of gravitas the inquiry wishes to place on my concerns.

I joined the police service in March of 1995 and as such have been attending and dealing with road traffic collisions of various degrees of severity for the best part of three decades.

I became an advanced grade police driver in 1999 and joined the traffic department later the same year. This decision to specialise in traffic meant that I was responsible for investigating and handling the more serious, potentially fatal and fatal collisions; having previously only attended and handled minor injury and damage only collisions. As such road safety is very important to me. My role required me to become qualified in many aspects of road death investigation and as such I acquired an advanced qualification in vehicle examination, to assist with post collision investigations.

I am trained and have subsequently been extensively deployed as a L 91ced L 91ce2EMC i10xto

or another approximately a thousand Killed or Seriously Injured collision's (KSI's), including attending several hundred fatal collision scenes.

For relevance to this inquiry, and to my main concerns regarding the transportation plan, I have attended and investigated a significant number of fatal collisions involving HGV's including 3 and 4 axle load carrying vehicles, similar to those proposed for use

considered when the objection surrounding the impact of transportation was removed. 0.002 Tw 1 -1.23

Most of the documentation I have read regarding the transport impacts are about impact on traffic numbers, impact on road maintenance and very little on road safety. Yet the report contains a rearward view of looking at historical collision data without an evidenced based assessment of future collision risks.

Having read the transport plan I have not seen anything within it that discusses the increased risks associated with the excess mud and material that inevitably gets carried out by the HGV's as they leave the site. You only have to drive past any quarry, large construction site, land fill, or anywhere where HGV's drive on muddy sites and tracks to see how much of that mud is carried out by the large tyres. This mud is deposited onto the road surface, more so within the first few hundred metres of the site entrance. Whilst much of this additional mud is then cleared up by road sweepers as contracted by the site, this is never 100% cleaned up and the mere process of cleaning the road surface with sweeper's (and cleaning the vehicles before they leave the site) leaves the road surfaces wet and slippery.

To evidence this here are three photographs I took on a dry autumn day, 3 days ago, at a local, medium sized Construction site at Habberley lane which most of the audience will be aware of. I can present these to the enquiry as AJW-1/2&3. This new housing development has on-site cleaning facilities for exiting HGV's as well as an on-site road sweeper to clean the road outside the site.

Picture 1 shows wet mud at the main site exit, facing east towards Wolverley, Picture 2 is an expanded view of the first showing the wet and muddy road surface extending a significant distance down the road. The final picture is taken facing back towards the site and shows how far the wet road surface extends and how a road sweeper can leave a formerly dry road surface now wet and slippery.

This site and construction traffic is temporary as opposed to the decade long proposal, has significantly less HGV movements than the quarry proposal and has vehicle cleaning mitigation in place and yet still the road surface suffers a significant change in condition in terms of grip available to vehicles, something I will expand on shortly.

Mud and wet road surfaces are two of the most common phenomena which impact the coefficient of friction of a road surface. Anything which negatively effects a road surface's friction increases the stopping distances of vehicles.

My teams have included Police motorcyclists in many areas including routine traffic patrols, working alongside motorcycle escort teams as a VIP trained driver and more recently my team of police motorcycle instructors. Although I am not a trained motorcyclist, I am aware that they are especially vulnerable to adverse riding conditions. This includes keeping a careful watch for diesel spills which can occur more regularly where there is HGV movement. They are also more susceptible to mud on the roads, especially under braking, or accelerating. The most recent data of motorcycle use combined with the prospect of wet and muddy road surface on a downhill road approaching traffic lights should concern all those using the road,

especially two-wheel road users.

Another significant factor which increases the stopping distances of vehicles is the sheer size. A 30 tonne HGV has a greater stopping distance than a family car, as much as 50% more when fully laden. As all exiting HGVs are expected to be fully laden, this is an important factor.

Finally another significant factor for increasing stopping distances is the gradient of the road surface. An incline will utilise the force of gravity to shorten the stopping distance. The proposals suggest that all the vehicles leaving the site turn left and drive down a significant decline towards the A449 traffic lights. I don't have the ability to measure the extent of the decline, but page 45 of the first transportation document suggests that there is a 20-metre elevation drop from the proposed exit to the A449 traffic lights, only 2-300 metres from the proposed exits. This is a significant hill with substantial impact on stopping distances, especially when considering at the bottom of the hill is set of traffic lights which will mean motorists having to brake to a halt when the lights change to red.

My fear is that the proposed plan will mean in excess of 60 lorries leaving the site a day, depositing wet, muddy water from cleaning onto a significant descent leading to a set of traffic lights. Despite any cleaning regimes put in place, HGV's leaving that site will still have a substantial amount of mud lodged in their tyres which will reduce their ability to brake, just as they drive down a significant descent into the rear of braking traffic.

the footpath and therefore not sharing space with HGV traffic beyond the access crossing....' I wish I could tell the enquiry that I have not dealt with fatal accidents involving pedestrians on footpaths, but I can't. The Wolverley community will know that in 2023 one of our children received a serious injury when struck by a large vehicle (a bus) when crossing this very road, less than a ¼ mile away.

I thank you for the opportunity to speak before the enquiry.

Andrew Webber







