

The Essex County Council (Various Roads, Old Harlow) (7.5 tonne Environmental Weight Restriction) Order 202*

Statement Of Reasons

The proposed 7.5-tonne (7.5T) weight restriction applies to the Old Harlow area, which is accessed via four principal entry and exit points:

- Station Road, on the eastern arm of the Harlow Mill Roundabout;
- London Road, forming the northern arm of the London Road Roundabout;
- Mulberry Green, at its junction with Gilden Way; and
- Old Road, at its junction with Hart Road and Wheatfields, north of the railway line.

This restriction is intended to complement the existing 7.5T weight limit at the Churchgate Street end of Harlow. The three principal access points to the exiting restricted area are:

- Churchgate Street, on the southern arm of the Churchgate Street Roundabout;
- Moor Hall Road; and
- Hobbs Cross Road.

The 7.5T weight restriction is required to mitigate the area-wide environmental and traffic impacts associated with the opening of M11 Junction 7a, which was delivered through Essex Highways' Major Projects programme with support from National Highways. The junction opened to the public on 10th June 2022.

The scheme included:

- A new junction on the M11 motorway;
- A dual carriageway link to the Champions Roundabout; and
- Upgrades to the B183 Gilden Way, now designated as the A1025.

The primary objectives of this scheme focused on:

- Improving accessibility to and from Harlow;
- Ensuring the proposed infrastructure is appropriately scaled to accommodate future traffic growth;
- Supporting future housing developments around Harlow and employment growth to the east of the town; and
- Reducing congestion, particularly along the A414 corridor through Harlow.

Improvements to the A1025 included the addition of a new lane, providing two lanes southbound and one lane northbound, a combined footway and cycleway along

Gilden Way, and a shared surface for cyclists and pedestrians within the Campions residential area.

The 7.5T weight restriction supports these objectives by:

- **Protecting Residential Areas:** Prevents heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) from using narrow, residential streets in the Harlow Old Town and Churchgate Street, reducing noise, vibration, and air pollution.
- **Preserving Historic Character:** Old Harlow contains conservation areas and heritage assets that could be vulnerable to damage from frequent HGV movements.
- **Enhancing Road Safety:** Reduces the risk of accidents involving large vehicles in areas with schools, pedestrian crossings, and limited visibility.
- **Supporting Sustainable Transport:** Encourages use of designated freight routes and protects newly implemented pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along the A1025.
- **Managing Traffic Flow:** Helps direct HGVs to more suitable strategic routes, reducing congestion and improving journey reliability for local traffic.
- **Mitigating Post-Opening Impacts:** Addresses the unintended consequence of increased HGV traffic through Old Harlow following the opening of Junction 7a.
- **Support for Future Growth:** Ensuring capacity to accommodate increased traffic from new housing developments, including Mayfield Farm, Gilden Park, East Harlow and employment areas including the relocation of the Princess Alexandra Hospital.
- **Encouraging Compliance with Strategic Planning:** Aligns with Essex Highways' long-term transport strategy and supports planned growth without compromising local amenity.

The scheme has been subject to a comprehensive Road Safety Audit, which provided positive feedback and confirmed the safety and suitability of the measures introduced.