

## **The Essex County Council (Sparks Lane, Ridgewell) (Braintree) (7.5 tonne Environmental Weight Restriction) Order 202\***

### **STATEMENT OF REASONS:**

Sparks Lane is a narrow lane with a few residential properties along its length. It is located in the Braintree district of Essex. Sparks Lane is designated as local rural road within the ECC road network hierarchy, linking Drury Lane (classified as local road) to A1017 Ridgewell Road (classified as Priority 1 Road), and it is subject to a National Speed Limit. Local roads typically serve residential areas, local businesses access and suburban streets with low traffic volume and providing access to properties. Meanwhile Priority 1 roads represent major routes with high traffic volume and main bus routes.

A 7.5t environmental weight limit proposal was requested by the Braintree Local Highway Panel further to concerns received by the Ridgewell Parish Council regarding the size of vehicular traffic using this road particularly when the A1017 Ridgewell Road/Mill Road experiences congestion. When congestion occurs, it has been reported that Sparks Lane is used as a cut through road causing significant problems when vehicles want to pass each other and/or to allow heavy goods vehicles to use the lane.

As a result, the edges of the lane are also frequently overrun leading to damaged carriageway/verge and mud being spread onto the carriageway. The 7.5t environmental weight limit is proposed to deter large vehicles in excess of 7.5t from using Sparks Lane and encourage them to stay on A1017 Ridgewell Road/Mill Road, in turn this will reduce issues with respect to vehicles requiring to pass each other and also improve the edges of the carriageway.

The scheme is being funded through the Braintree Local Highway Panel and is supported by its members. Further information about the Highways Panel and the way they operate can be found here:

<https://www.essexhighways.org/Transport-and-Roads/Highway-Schemes-and-Developments/Local-Highway-Panels.aspx>