

13 March 2019



Media Release

For Immediate Release

Council to seek HGV ban on Kingshill Road to tackle air pollution

Removing Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) from Kingshill Road is just one of the things the Council is proposing to help reduce levels of pollution.

On Wednesday, 20 April, a report will be brought to Cabinet that outlines possible ways of addressing the problems with air quality at the top of Kingshill Road.

Cabinet Members will be asked to approve a plan which sets out various measures which include seeking a ban on HGVs using the road, which will reduce Nitrogen Oxide (NO₂) emissions by one third of what is required.

It is estimated that around 250 HGVs will be affected but these vehicles can be safely accommodated on alternative and better suited routes.

If approved, the Council will seek to put in place a Traffic Regulation Order to restrict HGVs on the road as quickly as possible.

Councillor Cathy Martyn, Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety, said: "We are required to reduce Nitrogen Dioxide emissions generated on Kingshill Road by 30 per cent and the proposal to remove HGVs from the road is a significant step towards achieving that.

"The most far reaching solution with the biggest impact would be for those people who currently drive up and down Kingshill to use alternative modes of transport such as walking or cycling, which would also have other health benefits for people.

"We realise that this isn't practical for everyone but if you can walk, cycle, car share or take the bus, then please do that whenever you can. Every journey makes a difference."

Installing a congestion charge zone on Kingshill Road was also considered but as congestion is not an issue on that particular stretch of road, this was deemed unnecessary.

Cabinet approved the declaration of an Air Quality Management Area for the top of Kingshill Road in February 2018.

The high numbers of vehicles using the road, the closeness of the houses to the road, the fact houses are sheltered from prevailing winds and the topography of the road means the nitrogen dioxide can't disperse and gets trapped. This in turn causes the nitrogen dioxide in the air to exceed maximum levels.

The Council has been liaising with local residents in a bid to find the best possible way to reduce emissions.

No direct effect on the health of people in Swindon has been observed as a result of poor air quality but the Council nevertheless remains committed to reducing pollution levels.

As well as removing HGVs from the road, the Council will look to facilitate a shift to more sustainable modes of travel, put forward proposals to the Licensing Committee to improve the emissions of the town's taxi and hackney carriage fleet and support local bus companies to identify and obtain funding to improve the emissions of their fleets.

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