

Dear Colleagues

Largest truck stop in Europe opens in Ashford

Colleagues may have seen that Baroness Vere of Norbiton, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the Department for Transport was joined by Ashford MP Damian Green to officially open the Ashford International Truckstop on Friday.

GSE Building & Civil Engineering Ltd has constructed the new Ashford International Truckstop on the Waterbrook Park estate in Sevington, creating enough space for up to 650 HGVs. Ashford Borough Council were instrumental in working with the owners to ensure this facility significantly increased the capacity of spaces available.

The new lorry park, which features a gym, coffee station and shop, has been designed following consultation with drivers to find out exactly what they need. It also includes a bar, lounge, games room, kitchen, laundry facilities, and bedrooms for drivers.

The Truckstop was a finalist in two categories at this years' Kent Business Awards (for the Innovation Award and Customer Service Award) and was awarded Truckstop of the Year 2021 at the SME News Southern Enterprise Awards 2021.

Kent suffers from major issues because of HGVs parking in unsuitable locations. This causes danger, distress to residents and results in environmental waste in many locations. In 2017 a clamping trial was set up as a joint initiative between KCC, ABC and the Department for Transport (DfT).

The overnight clamping trial was part of a zonal parking ban which operated between 8pm and 7am and covered the A20 between Charing and Ashford and four industrial estates in the borough.

The clamping trial was introduced on 30 October 2017 and expired on 30 April 2019. The experimental HGV clamping trial was successful in reducing the number of HGVs parking in inappropriate locations in the Ashford District. During the trial 2,754 HGV was clamped of which 1,449 were on the A20.

In 2019 ABC was given permission to make the trial permanent. The Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) went live with enforcement commencing 16 September 2019.

It continues to be a success and increased the uptake of parking into the local truck stop, which has now expanded. To 31 March 2020, 535 HGVs had been clamped for parking in the prohibited zones.

Gerry Clarkson CBE, QFSM, BA (Hons)

Executive Leader - Ashford Borough Council

Distribution: All Members of the Parish or Town Council, and representatives of the Community Forums (Please do not circulate beyond the above recipients).