

Letter to the Editor



Dear Sir,

I would like to share my observations on the destructive impact that the proposed Inland Border Facility will have on the roads and businesses around Dover.

This new customs post is being clamped onto a massive logistical operation. The Port of Dover receives over 2.1 million heavy freight vehicles every year.

Informal counting of HGVs suggests that peak flows are quite regularly around 16 per minute. An educated and informed recent analysis suggests that currently around half of all heavy freight vehicles are now using the A2/M2 route. That's half a million HGVs travelling each way along the A2.

The proposed 'Inland Border Facility' is the only one on the Department for Transport web site linked to the A2, so it is reasonable to assume that it is the primary check point for all A2 traffic.

Unfortunately there is a bottleneck on the A2 London bound carriageway, just short of the turn off to the Facility. This bottleneck, almost a mile long, is a single carriageway, in each direction, to allow the road to pass under a bridge.

The distance from the end of the bottleneck to the entrance gate to the proposed 'Border Facility' is just over half a mile (960m) long. Since an articulated HGV is about 16.5m long, that length of road translates to a queue of less than 60 lorries before the A2 to London stops moving.

A single P&O ferry can carry 180 HGVs. Add to that the HGVs from DFDS ferries and then add all the lorries heading towards the port which will be directed to the Facility over the bridge (and will have priority over the lorries coming up the slip road).

With HGVs arriving at a rate of 16 per minute, it could take less than 4 minutes to reach the critical mass of 60 standing lorries needed to stop up the London bound A2. The rapidly building queue behind it will quickly reach the Dover / Deal roundabout and just keep on growing.

The clear potential for this problem to occur as a regular feature of A2 traffic makes a nonsense of all other arguments in favour of this location for the Inland Border Facility. This facility has to be built elsewhere, not here.

One option amongst others would be to take the traffic off the A2 at the Lydden lights where the Husk facility already exists.

I strongly object to what is being proposed on the grounds of its massive and negative impact on our road infrastructure and demand that a new site be found immediately.

Yours sincerely

Charles A, Lynch RIBA.

Member of the Dover Society