CONFIDENTIAL

✓ A Duguid

Thank you

MBPM

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB

My ref: H/PSO/19451/81

Your ref:

25 November 1981

Dear David

DRAFT WHITE PAPER: LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

In writing to the Prime Minister on 19 November you sought the agreement of colleagues to publication of the White Paper on 1 December, preceded by an announcement by PQ on 25 November. I am happy with these arrangements. I share your concern about the sort of reaction we can expect and I wonder whether the Government might find it has to debate the subject sooner than the timing you suggest (as happened the last time on Armitage).

I too see lorry weights as part of the wider problem of the lorry in the environment. I wholeheartedly support what you say about that. Because of public expenditure constraints the environmental package offered in the White Paper is not as robust as we all would have liked. But the presentation is as positive as possible. No doubt during the eventual Debate the Government will place maximum emphasis on the environmental gains from fewer lorries, on the noise objectives being proposed and on progress being made with the Roads Programme. These are pluses for the environment, and strengthen the argument that the environmental and social implications of heavy and heavier lorries have been fully assessed, as well as the economic considerations. I suspect that the handling of the package in public debate will be a crucial factor.

I am copying this letter, plus a note of amendments we should like to see made to the draft, to the recipients of yours.

Yours ever

Michael

MICHAEL HESELTINE

The Rt Hon David Howell MP

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DRAFT WHITE PAPER: LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DOE AMENDMENTS (23 11 81)

Paragraph 13, first sentence should read:

"Controls over the routes lorries may use are a useful means of protecting residential and other areas from traffic."

Paragraph 15, final sentence:

delete "in a variety of urban and rural situations"

Paragraph 20 after third sentence (ending "decibels") delete "But that is not enough" and insert:

"These requirements would of course apply equally to foreign vehicles using our roads. But these noise limits are not enough."

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE 1 VICTORIA STREET LONDON SW1H 0ET Telephone 01 215 7877

cc. A. Duguid

From the Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

The Rt Hon David Howell MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department of Transport
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 3EB

24 November 1981

Dear David,

DRAFT WHITE PAPER: LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

I have seen a copy of your minute of 19 November to the Prime Minister, and the draft White Paper.

I am generally content with what you propose. Though it is clear in the draft amending regulations, to be published simultaneously with the White Paper, that we intend to raise the gross weight of four axle lorries to 34 tonnes in line with the Armitage recommendation, it would be preferable to spell this out in the White Paper itself. This is, as you probably know, a matter of some importance to the container operators - who would like us to go even further than Armitage. The container operators may well also have some difficulty with the height limits proposed. I can see the presentational problem in going further than the Armitage proposal in the White Paper; but a very small increase in the limit could probably accommodate the operators. I hope therefore that you will be prepared to respond sympathetically to any reasonable representations they may make.

Notwithstanding these reservations, I would expect the container operators, through the General Council of British Shipping, to do their best to support the general case for heavier lorries over the crucial next few months.

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From the Secretary of State

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I am sending copies of this letter to E Committee colleagues, the Iord President, the Chief Whip, the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Wales, and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours

John Biffen

JOHN BIFFEN

CONFIDENTIAL

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3 pp.

cc A Duguid

NBPM

WELSH OFFICE
GWYDYR HOUSE
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Tel. 01-233 3000 (Switchboard)
01-233 8545 (Direct Line)

FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WALES

CONFIDENTIAL

24th November 1981

Dear Anthony

DRAFT WHITE PAPER: LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

This is to confirm a telephone call to your office yesterday evening.

My Secretary of State is content with the draft White Paper on the understanding that paragraph 32 is redrafted on the basis agreed by officials as follows:

".... it will be necessary to examine these structures individually to see what may need to be done. This work is already in hand for the Severn Bridge and the Government will ensure that it can be used safely by lorries up to 40 tonnes; work will also be undertaken on the other long structures on trunk roads to ensure that the same applies to the whole trunk road system. Other bridge owners ....".

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Prime Minister, members of E Committee, the Chief Whip, the Secretary of State for Scotland and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever

J F Craig

J F CRAIG
Private Secretary

R A J Mayer Esq
Private Secretary to
The Rt Hon David Howell MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department of Transport
2 Marsham Street
LONDON

Ec. A. Duguid

NBPM

PRIME MINISTER

ARMITAGE REPORT ON HEAVY LORRIES: DRAFT WHITE PAPER

The Secretary of State for Transport sent me a copy of his minute to you of 19 November on this subject.

2. I understand that the by-pass schemes which are referred to in the draft White Paper can be accommodated within the reduced provision for roads recently agreed in MISC 62, and on that basis I am content with the draft and that an announcement should be made on 1 December.

3. I am sending copies of this minute to the recipients of yours.

L.B

LEON BRITTAN

CONFIDENTIAL

Transport

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

23 November 1981

LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 19 November, to which was attached a draft White Paper announcing the Government's intentions on lorry weights and the package of environmental measures.

The Prime Minister agrees to the publication of the White Paper as proposed by your Secretary of State. She has, however, suggested a couple of drafting points, which I have set out in the attachment to this letter.

I am sending copies of this letter, and its attachment, to Private Secretaries to members of E Committee, including the Lord President and the Chief Whip, and to the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Wales and Sir Robert Armstrong.

M. C. SCHOLAR

Anthony Mayer, Esq.,
Department of Transport.

DRAFT WHITE PAPER:
LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS

Paragraph 16 of the draft White paper would, perhaps, be improved by a couple of sentences somewhere after the first sentence which explain why it is not practicable for a much greater volume of transport to go by rail.

The final paragraph might be redrafted as follows:

"The measures outlined in this White Paper have a clear purpose, though the problems themselves are complex and intractable. It is to ensure a more civilised development of freight transport, which means a better environment as well as a healthier and more competitive economy. These objectives cannot be achieved overnight: road improvements take time and the lorry fleet can only be changed as vehicles are replaced. But further delay would handicap our industry and postpone environmental gains. It is by acting now that we can achieve over the years ahead the improvements we are seeking."

cc AD

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD
WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON SW1A 2HH

From the Minister

The Rt Hon David Howell MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department of Transport
2 Marsham Street
LONDON SW1

23 November 1981

Dear David

DRAFT WHITE PAPER ON LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Thank you for copying to me your minute of 19 November to the Prime Minister. TPM

I have no objection to your proposal to make an oral statement on 1 December announcing publication of this White Paper and draft amending regulations, or to giving prior notice of that fact in your reply to a Parliamentary Question on 25 November.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister and other members of E Committee, the Lord President, the Chief Whip, the Secretaries of State for Scotland and Wales, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever

PETER WALKER

MCS

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY
ASHDOWN HOUSE
123 VICTORIA STREET
LONDON SW1E 6RB
TELEPHONE DIRECT LINE 01-212 3301
SWITCHBOARD 01-212 7676

Secretary of State for Industry

23 November 1981

The Rt Hon David Howell MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department of Transport
2 Marsham Street
London SW1

Dear David,

Thank you for copying to me your minute of 19 November to the Prime Minister about the Armitage Report.

I am in general content both with the draft and with the timetable you propose. One point strikes me, however. There is no express acknowledgement of the problems facing urban communities where (as in my own constituency) heavy lorries have to use the urban network to reach the docks, container depots etc. A specific paragraph reassuring them that heavier axle loads will mean fewer lorries with negligible impact on the environment ought perhaps to be considered. But I would not want this to hold up publication which is urgently needed.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

Yours ever

Patrick

cc AD

CONFIDENTIAL

QUEEN ANNE'S GATE
LONDON SWIH 9AT

22 November 1981

Dear David

DRAFT WHITE PAPER: LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

I have seen your minute of 19th December to the Prime Minister, and the draft White Paper it covers. The Home Office interest in this is confined to the police enforcement aspect. The draft is entirely acceptable from this view point, and I would therefore see no objection to publication on 1st December as you propose.

I am copying this to recipients of your minute.

Yours ever
Willie

The Rt. Hon. David Howell, M.P.

CONFIDENTIAL

Yes MS

Prime Minister

Agree to the publication of the White Paper* attached to Mr Howell's minute at flag A, subject to the points at X and Y?

MCS 20/11

*on Dec 1st

(1)

MR. SCHOLAR

LORRIES, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

It will never be convenient to publish this report because of the predictable outcry from the rail and environmental lobbies. But the issue has been delayed for many years, imposing a real handicap on our industries. E Committee recognised the strength of the economic case and there seems to us to be everything to be said for getting on with publication.

When David Howell makes his statement it will be important to orchestrate a constructive response from the CBI and others. I imagine that there will also be a potted summary of the main arguments issued as a press notice.

Looking through the draft, I feel the opening paragraphs explain the problem clearly. The opening sentence of paragraph 16 says, in effect, "it would be nice if all transport could go by rail". The paragraph seems to me to need a couple of sentences to explain why that is not at all practicable.

X

At paragraph 30, the draft has a difficult task in reconciling the claim that lorries will be no bigger with the slight increase on the legal limit on articulated vehicle length. But I think it deals with this problem as well as it can.

Finally, the conclusion seems to me to lack conviction. I think the following redraft is a slight improvement:

Y

"The measures outlined in this White Paper have a clear purpose, though the problems themselves are complex and intractable. It is to ensure a more civilised development of freight transport, which means a better environment as well as a healthier and more competitive economy. These objectives cannot be achieved overnight: road improvements take time and the lorry fleet can only be changed as vehicles are replaced. But further delay would handicap our industry and postpone

environmental gains. It is by acting now that we can achieve over the years ahead the improvements we are seeking."

ANDREW DUGUID
20 November 1981