

Re: National Highways plans to reopen M48 Severn Bridge to heavy traffic (Case Ref: CY17727) clerk < clerk@austparishcouncil.gov.uk >

Claire Young MP < claire.young.mp@parliament.uk >

Wed, 24 Jun 2026 8:24:29 AM +0100

To "clerk"<clerk@austparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Dear Emma,

I am writing to update you on the response I have from National Highways to correspondence I sent on behalf of Aust Parish Council. Sean Walsh, Route Manager for the West of England at National Highways, writes:

"You are aware of the issues with the M48 Severn bridge and the temporary measures we have in place while we introduce a more robust interim solution towards the end of the year.

This solution will identify when there are 10 HGVs on the bridge in one direction and briefly hold all traffic on the slip road to stop the cables being overloaded. It's worth noting circa 3k heavy vehicles were using the M48 Severn Bridge prior to restrictions in a day, this impact is then split between the junctions at either end of the bridge. The instances of there being this many heavy vehicles on the bridge are very low but we need to have the technology in place to ensure that we can stop this from happening. On that basis, we believe the impact on existing conditions is likely to be well within daily traffic variance and unlikely to have a material impact in environmental terms.

I note the parish have referenced current filtering operations associated with high winds as causing congestion in the locality. The plan here is dissimilar in that it involves only heavy vehicles leaving and being held at Aust and, in most scenarios, regular traffic will proceed unimpeded across the bridge.

Modelling is currently underway and we have committed to sharing it with the community when available. Currently this is planned for completion in July and we will of course reach out as soon as we are able.

In terms of alternatives considered, proposals to queue traffic on the motorway or in the plaza area were mentioned at a recent informal meeting with the parish councillors and clerk. These were discounted early on by the project as unsafe. The plaza was designed at a time when traffic volumes and geometric standards were very different to those of today. A comparator example on the approaches to the port of Felixstowe was highlighted by a councillor where they believed traffic is held however this is not motorway or part of the strategic road network where governance and safety standard are very different. [...]

Currently it is planned for delivery towards the end of the year".

Sean has confirmed that National Highways modelling will be shared with Aust Parish Council as soon as possible and potentially by July. This should hopefully allow members of the parish council sufficient time to review the modelling and continue their engagement with National Highways in advance of these measures coming into effect later this year.

Best regards,

Claire Young MP

Member of Parliament for Thornbury & Yate

House of Commons | Westminster | London | SW1A 0AA

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From: Claire Young MP <claire.young.mp@parliament.uk>

Sent: 18 June 2026 15:45

To: clerk@austparishcouncil.gov.uk

Subject: Re: National Highways plans to reopen M48 Severn Bridge to heavy traffic (Case Ref: CY17727)

Dear Emma,

Thank you for contacting me regarding Aust Parish Council's understandable concerns about the impact of National Highway's proposals to monitor and control the number of HGVs that can use the M48 Severn Bridge from October. I regret being unable to reply to you sooner.

This is just a brief email to confirm that I have written to Sean Walsh, the Route Manager for National Highways, to directly pass on the parish council's concerns and requests. I have asked Sean to confirm that National Highways will, as per their prior commitment, share their modelling with the parish council and that they will do so with sufficient time for councillors to discuss that data. I have also reminded Sean that most parish councils do not, in ordinary circumstances, meet during the month of August.

I will write to you again as soon as I have received a response from National Highways.

Best regards,

Claire Young MP

Member of Parliament for Thornbury & Yate

House of Commons | Westminster | London | SW1A 0AA

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From: Parish Clerk <clerk@austparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: 05 January 2026 11:21

To: YOUNG, claire.young.mp@parliament.uk

Subject: National Highways plans to reopen M48 Severn Bridge to heavy traffic

Please find attached a letter outlining Aust Parish Council's concerns about the proposal by National Highways to reopen the M48 Severn Bridge to heavy goods vehicles.

Kind regards,

Emma Pattullo

Clerk/RFO

Aust Parish Council

I have a new email address: clerk@austparishcouncil.gov.uk. Please update your records if required.
Please note that my hours are part time and flexible. I will respond to messages as soon as possible.

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