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By Michael Barker

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Kent parking row deepens haulage gloom



New rules on lorry drivers parking in Kent laybys puts further pressure on driver welfare, according to Logistics UK

Kent County Council's ban on lorry parking in laybys across several areas of Kent contravenes the working rights of logistics workers, according to industry body Logistics UK.

In a letter to MP Rachel Maclean, parliamentary under secretary of state at the Department for Transport (DfT), the business group expressed strong objections to the plan, which prevents lorry parking for more than 45 minutes at a time in laybys across several areas of Kent.

"Lorry drivers were deemed 'essential' workers during the pandemic, but it seems that this has been forgotten in this latest directive," said Heidi Skinner, Logistics UK's policy manager for south. "Logistics UK is urging the DfT to consider the welfare of these drivers – who work tirelessly to transport the goods and services the nation

needs – and withdraw support for KCC's order banning HGV parking in laybys across several of Kent's boroughs and districts.

"Lorry drivers need access to parking spaces to rest – for both their welfare and to meet legally mandated rest periods from driving – but with a shortage of between 1,000 and 1,200 HGV parking spaces in Kent, it is unacceptable to prohibit the use of laybys for drivers without providing facilities elsewhere."

The row comes at a sensitive time for the logistics industry, with the food haulage sector **already struggling with a shortage of drivers**.

"The ban was a temporary measure principally to ensure that HGVs were not parking in laybys while awaiting the correct paperwork to enter the EU," Skinner continued.

"Now, following the removal of the Kent Access Permit (KAP) – which was successful in deterring hauliers entering Kent without the correct paperwork – there is no reason to keep the ban in place. Following the removal of the KAP and taking into consideration the lack of lorry parking facilities in Kent, it is unacceptable for KCC and DfT to continue this traffic order."

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