

The Barnard Castle HGV Action Group would like to challenge National Highways claim that traffic flow across County Bridge and Abbey Bridge and through Barnard Castle will be reduced following the A66 upgrade. The only evidence they have given for this is that the improved A66 will attract more longer distance east west traffic from the A67. This seems to misunderstand how our local road network is used. Traffic comes through Barnard Castle because it is has two of the few river crossings west of Darlington, and the A67 across County Bridge is the only A-class road. Our major north-south road – the A1(M) – veers to the east in County Durham, so is not used as much for connectivity for many north-south journeys. It seems that National Highways have used a very simplistic and general model to generate their figures – at the recent hearing, they were not able to say that they had taken any local aspects into account, and only considered east-west traffic flow. We think it important that much more detail on traffic flow is produced – specifically the assumptions made for the data input into the model; the change in traffic numbers anticipated in each travel direction along the roads; and also the numbers of HGVs / other vehicles separated out in the figures.