

Moveable barrier to keep Kent's road network moving

- government and Highways England develop long-term solution to handle traffic disruption in Kent
- new moveable barrier could be deployed using a specialist vehicle within hours
- less disruption than Operation Brock which required a month of overnight closures or Operation Stack closing the M20
- this new permanent contingency arrangement will be in place from December 2020

A concrete barrier that can be set up within hours to keep Kent's roads moving at times of cross-channel disruption will be available and on standby from later this year, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps announced today (17 February 2020).

Once a specialist vehicle is in place, Highways England will be able to deploy [the moveable barrier](#) on the M20 swiftly and safely to ensure minimal disruption to motorists.

This will be a marked improvement in comparison to Operation Brock which required a month of overnight closures to deploy the metal barrier required for the contraflow system previously used.

The technology will be designed to ensure that the M20 is kept open at times of disruption, whilst also allowing the motorway to retain 3 lanes, a hard shoulder and 70 mph speed limits in both directions during normal traffic conditions.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

After listening to frustrated residents and businesses affected by Operations Brock and Stack, we've invested in a new solution to boost Kent's resilience and keep its vital road network moving, even at times of disruption.

This state-of-the-art technology can be deployed quickly, simply and safely, ensuring motorists across the county can get to where they need to be with minimum fuss, whatever the circumstances.

Moveable barriers are already used in cities around the world, including Auckland, Sydney, San Francisco and Vancouver.

The technology has been chosen by the Department for Transport and Highways England as a long-term solution to Operation Brock and Stack and will ensure Kent is prepared for any disruption on the short strait, such as from

industrial action or bad weather.

The new solution also means that Highways England's work on an 'off road' replacement for Operation Stack has been stopped. As part of this, previous Highways England plans for a new large lorry holding area in Kent are no longer being pursued.