Northamptonshire County Council
Highways, Transport and Infrastructure

Network Management Plan
2013
12.3 Speed Limits and Speed Limit Extensions .............................................................. 98
12.4 One Way Streets ..................................................................................................... 99
12.5 Parking on Verges .................................................................................................. 100
12.6 Access Only Orders ............................................................................................... 103
12.7 Quiet Lanes ........................................................................................................... 104
12.8 Parking Enforcement ............................................................................................. 106
13.0 Accommodating Essential Service Traffic (Lorries etc) ...................................... 108
13.1 Amenity Weight Restrictions .................................................................................. 108
13.2 Lorry Routes .......................................................................................................... 109
13.2.1 Lorry Parking .................................................................................................... 111
13.3 Routing of Abnormal Loads .................................................................................. 112
13.4 Bus Routes ............................................................................................................. 114
13.4.1 Bus Priority ...................................................................................................... 116
14.0 Traffic Signs, Bollards, Road Markings ................................................................. 118
14.1.1 Road Markings .................................................................................................. 118
14.1.2 Road Studs ....................................................................................................... 120
14.2.1 Traffic Signs and Bollards (General) .................................................................. 121
14.2.2 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Roundabout Signing) .............................................. 123
14.2.3 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Boundary and Community Signing) .................... 124
14.2.4 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Unauthorised Signing) ........................................... 125
14.2.5 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Temporary Signing) ............................................... 126
14.2.6 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Incorporating Community Safety Signs) ............... 127
14.2.7 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Roundabout Sponsorship) ...................................... 129
14.2.9 Traffic Signs and Bollards (District Council Boundary Signs) .......................... 130
14.2.10 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Traditional Guideposts and Milestones) ............... 132
14.2.11 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Traffic Mirrors) .................................................... 133
14.2.12 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Tourist Signing) ................................................... 135
15.0 Regular Reviews of the Network ............................................................................ 139
15.1 Inspections of the Highway .................................................................................... 139
15.2 Structural Surveys .................................................................................................................. 140
16.0 Consultation and Engagement with Stakeholders ..................................................................... 142
16.1 Public Consultation .................................................................................................................. 142
17.0 Provision of Travel Information to Road Users and the Community .......................................... 143
17.1 Road Works Report ................................................................................................................. 143
18.0 Network Management - General ............................................................................................ 144
18.1 Traffic Signals .......................................................................................................................... 144
18.2.1 Safety .................................................................................................................................. 145
18.2.2 Safety Fences and Barriers ................................................................................................. 146
18.2.3 Street Lighting .................................................................................................................... 147
18.2.4 Traffic Calming .................................................................................................................... 148
18.2.5 Speed Management ............................................................................................................ 149
18.2.6 Vehicle Activated Signs ....................................................................................................... 150
18.3.1 Townscape .......................................................................................................................... 152
18.3.2 Streetscape .......................................................................................................................... 154
18.4.1 Cycle Tracks & Lanes .......................................................................................................... 156
18.4.2 Rights of Way ....................................................................................................................... 157
18.5.1 Vehicular Crossings ............................................................................................................. 158
18.5.2 Designing for Maintenance ................................................................................................. 161
18.5.3 Designing for Sustainability Checklist ................................................................................. 164
18.5.4 Drainage Responsibilities .................................................................................................... 165
18.6.1 Highway Adoption .............................................................................................................. 168
18.6.2 Section 278 Agreements ..................................................................................................... 170
18.7.1 Managing Pedestrian Traffic – General .............................................................................. 172
18.7.2 Controlled Pedestrian Crossings ......................................................................................... 173
18.7.3 Dropped Kerbs ..................................................................................................................... 174
18.7.4 Bus Stops ............................................................................................................................ 175
18.7.5 Subways ............................................................................................................................. 178
Updates Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Amendment</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.0 Introduction

I am pleased to present Northamptonshire County Council's Network Management Plan which brings together all the objectives, policies and standards required to effectively deliver services and manage the counties highway network. With the current pressures being placed on Local Authority budgets the need to be effectively and efficiently managing the highway network has never been greater.

Northamptonshire is a growing county. There are new developments being constructed which create more dwellings, increase demand on utility services and put ever increasing numbers of vehicles on the road. These changes to the county require us to take a proactive approach in the way the highway network is managed. The Network Management Plan recognises that Northamptonshire County Council can be taking on several roles when managing the network, whether it is as the Traffic Authority, Highway Authority or Street Authority. One example of the proactive approach Northamptonshire is taking to manage and coordinate works on the highway is the introduction of the permits scheme for highway works undertaken on strategic and traffic sensitive roads.

The Network Management Plan is supplemented by other key documents including the Highway Asset Management Plan and Northamptonshire Transport Plan. Furthermore the Network Management Plan supports Northamptonshire County Council’s corporate objectives for ‘a cleaner, greener and more prosperous county’ as well ‘as active, safe and sustainable communities.’

Cllr Andre Gonzalez de Savage
Cabinet Member for Protective Services, Highways, Transport and Infrastructure
2.0 The Traffic Management Act 2004

The Traffic Management Act received Royal assent on 22 July 2004. It is intended to provide the basis for better conditions for all road users through the proactive management of the national and local road network. The Act empowers the Secretary of State for Transport and the Highways Agency to carry out various functions on the motorway and trunk road network. The Act also places a network management duty on local authorities to keep traffic flowing; take account of their duties and responsibilities and to co-operate with other authorities to the same end.

While not replacing the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, the Traffic Management Act 2004 sets out to tighten the existing regulatory framework within which the utility companies are permitted to dig up roads on the local network. As a consequence, authorities are given more powers to co-ordinate works effectively with the aim of minimising disruption to vehicular and pedestrian traffic. It also provides for additional duties on highway authorities so that all works on the local road network are better managed and co-ordinated.

Over recent years a good relationship has developed between Northamptonshire County Council and the utility companies which has allowed a robust system to be created to control and manage their work. The new powers and duties which the Traffic Management Act 2004 brings will add to the authority’s ability to control work and make all work and activities on the highway, including that carried out on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council, operate within the same procedures.
3.0 The Network Management Duty

Part 2 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 places a network management duty on local transport authorities to manage their road network with a view to achieving, as far as may be reasonably practicable, the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority’s road network and road networks for which other authorities are responsible, even where these are outside of the authority’s administrative boundaries. The Act specifically states that the term “traffic” includes pedestrians and therefore the authority is required to consider the movement of all road users when performing this duty. The undertaking of this duty is not, however, to be at the expense of other issues which the authority has to consider, for instance, its road safety and casualty reduction objectives and its value for money in delivering services.

As stated above, the local transport authority has to take account of the needs of all road users, including utilities, when carrying out its network management duty. It has to manage the road space for everyone and make decisions about trade-offs between competing demands according to its policies and the particular circumstances of the part of the network being considered. It has to take action to minimise, prevent or deal with problems and consider the implications of decisions for both its own network and that of others. To meet this duty, the authority is required to appoint a Traffic Manager whose role is to deliver a co-ordinated, planned and effective response to the needs of the Act across the whole organisation and to ensure that the agreed actions are implemented.

The local transport authority is also required to identify both current and future causes of congestion and disruption and to plan and take action accordingly.

4.0 Northamptonshire Transport Plan

Northamptonshire County Council is the local transport authority for the whole of Northamptonshire and is responsible for all of the adopted roads in the County except for motorways and trunk roads which are the responsibility of the Highways Agency.

The local transport authority for an area is required to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP that has been adopted by Northamptonshire County Council is called the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan. It is a strategic plan for transport in the county.

The County Council published its first LTP in July 2000 and this covered the period 2001/2 – 2005/6. Its second LTP (LTP2) was published in March 2006 and was replaced by an interim third Local Transport Plan in March 2011. This has subsequently been succeeded by the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan.

Since the publication of LTP2 the Department for Transport published ‘Guidance on Local Transport Plans’ which gave local authorities greater flexibility in how the plan could be produced and the form it could take. Given this new flexibility the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan is being developed as a suite of documents (of which this Network Management Plan will eventually be a part) that can be updated as and when required. The over-arching Northamptonshire Transportation Plan document was adopted in March 2012. The accompanying daughter documents will be adopted in due course and will include strategies for:

- Air Quality
- Bus
- Cycling
- Development Management Policies
- Highway Asset Management
- Highway Improvement
- Highway Network Management
- Parking
- Rail
- Road Freight
- Road Safety
- Smarter Travel Choices
Walking

Town strategies will be developed for the growth towns of:

- Brackley
- Corby
- Daventry
- East Northants
- Kettering
- Northampton
- Towcester
- Wellingborough

The Northamptonshire Transportation Plan aligns with statutory West and North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategies and has regard for non-statutory strategies including the Northamptonshire Arc Prosperity Plan for Northamptonshire.
### 5.0 Northamptonshire Footway and Road Hierarchy

#### 5.1 The Road Hierarchy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROAD GROUP</th>
<th>ROAD HIERARCHY</th>
<th>MAINTENANCE HIERARCHY</th>
<th>TYPE OF ROAD (GENERAL DESCRIPTION)</th>
<th>DETAILED DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motorway and Trunk Roads</td>
<td>Motorway /Trunk Road Network</td>
<td>Motorway</td>
<td>Limited access, motorway regulations apply</td>
<td>Routes for fast moving long distance traffic. Fully grade separated with restrictions on use. Maintained by or on behalf of the Highways Agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trunk Road</td>
<td>As for Major Strategic and Strategic Routes below but maintained by or on behalf of the Highways Agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal A Class Roads</td>
<td>Strategic/ Traffic Sensitive Road Network</td>
<td>Major Strategic and Strategic Route</td>
<td>Some Principal A class roads between primary destinations</td>
<td>Routes for fast moving long distance traffic with little frontage access or pedestrian traffic. Speed limits are usually in excess of 40mph and there are few junctions. Pedestrian crossings are either segregated or controlled and parked vehicles are generally prohibited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local Road Network</td>
<td>Main Distributor</td>
<td>Major urban network and inter-Primary links. Short/ medium distance traffic.</td>
<td>Routes between Strategic Routes and linking urban centres to the Strategic Network with limited frontage access. In urban areas, speed limits are usually 40mph or less, parking is restricted at peak times and there are positive measures for pedestrian safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified non-Principal Roads</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary Distributor Road, Classified road (B&amp;C class), and unclassified urban bus routes, carrying local traffic with frontage access and frequent junctions</td>
<td>In rural areas these roads link the larger villages and HGV generators to the Strategic/Main Distributor Network. In built up areas these roads have 30mph speed limits and high levels of pedestrian activity with some crossing facilities e.g. Zebra Crossings. On-street parking is generally unrestricted except for safety reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class B and C but including some</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Local Access Road, Link Road, Roads linking between the Main/Secondary network with frontage access and frequent junctions</td>
<td>In rural areas these roads link smaller villages to the Distributor Roads. They are of varying width and not always capable of carrying two-way traffic. In urban areas they are residential or industrial inter-connecting roads with 30mph speed limits, random pedestrian movements and uncontrolled parking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unclassified urban routes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Local Access Road, Roads serving limited numbers of properties carrying only access traffic</td>
<td>In rural areas these roads link small settlements and provide access to individual properties and land. They are often only single lane width and are unsuitable for HGV’s. In urban areas they are often residential loop roads or cul-de-sacs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 5.2 The Footway Hierarchy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Footway Category (CoP)</th>
<th>MAINTENANCE HEIRARCHY</th>
<th>DETAILED DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Primary Walking Route</td>
<td>Busy urban shopping and business areas and main pedestrian routes linking interchanges between different modes of transport, such as railways and bus stops etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Secondary Walking Route</td>
<td>Medium usage routes through local areas feeding into primary routes, local shopping centres, large schools, health facilities and industrial centres etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Link Footway</td>
<td>Linking local access footways through urban areas and busy rural footways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Local Access Footway</td>
<td>Footways associated with low usage, short estate roads to the main routes and cul-de-sacs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycleway</td>
<td>Part of Carriageway</td>
<td>Cycle lane forming part of the carriageway, commonly 1.5 metre strip adjacent to the nearside kerb. Cycle gaps at road closure point (no entries allowing cycle access).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycleway</td>
<td>Remote from Carriageway</td>
<td>Cycle track, a highway route for cyclists not contiguous with the public footway or carriageway. Shared cycle/pedestrian paths, either segregated by a white line or other physical segregation, or un-segregated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycleway</td>
<td>Cycle Trails</td>
<td>Cycle trails, leisure routes through open spaces. These are not necessarily the responsibility of the highway authority, but may be maintained by an authority under other powers or duties.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.0 Monitoring and Managing the Road Network

6.1 NetCom

Under the Traffic Management Act 2004, Northamptonshire County Council has a duty to ensure the efficient day to day operation of the highway network. This duty could be considered to fall into two general responsibilities:-

- To manage and operate the highway network, maximising capacity and minimising delays where required in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s strategic objectives.
- To coordinate and manage works on the highway, including works carried out on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council and those on behalf of the utilities.

Northamptonshire County Council and its highways Service Provider have developed an operation known as NetCom which is generally responsible for the day to day management of the first of these two duties.

Road traffic is increasingly being managed using new electronic systems known collectively as Intelligent Transport Systems, (ITS). These systems range from the direct control of traffic (e.g. operation of traffic signals), the provision of information, the maintenance and repair of equipment and feedback on the current use of the network. The operation, co-ordination and management of these systems are the responsibility of NetCom.

The NetCom service provides comprehensive traffic and travel information through a wide range of channels including:-

- integrating all available transport network control systems for optimum performance,
- monitoring the integrated transport network,
- responding to incidents to minimise their impact on traffic
- working with other network operators to deliver a first class service to the travelling public across Northamptonshire.

Further developments will enable other County Council departments to gain benefits from the system.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will explore the use of new technology with the aim of reducing congestion and delays on the highway network.

- Systems will be developed to enable contingency plans to be implemented in the event of unplanned incidents or events occurring on the network.

- Real time passenger information will be provided at bus stops, on the internet and via mobile telephones.

- Variable message signage (VMS) will be used to keep drivers informed of road conditions ahead of them.
Northamptonshire County Council will develop a Journey Time Monitoring Strategy utilising systems including automatic number plate recognition.

CCTV systems will be combined to give maximum coverage within the County
Fault monitoring systems will be developed to enable automatic reporting to multiple contractors to minimise the time for repair.

Plans will be developed and systems programmed to deal with incidents on the network.

Officer/Service Provider Guidance

Northamptonshire County Council and the Service Provider will develop a clear and well defined strategy for the NetCom service.

All systems introduced or developed are to have the ability to communicate with one another and with existing systems.

New systems are to be capable of adaptation to meet future advances in technology.

The Service Provider will work closely with Northamptonshire County Council in the future development of NetCom.

Close working relationships are to be developed with local media and other local government authorities to ensure the prompt and free circulation of up to date traffic reports and other information.

Northamptonshire County Council and the Service Provider will work with other authorities to ensure significant CCTV coverage by linking systems to give common access.

New technological advances are to be fully investigated to determine the benefits that may be available for Northamptonshire County Council’s systems.

Standards

- Northamptonshire Transport Plan
- The Traffic Management Act 2004
- Code of Practice for the Management of Electronic Traffic Equipment

6.1.1 Urban Traffic Control

Urban Traffic Control (UTC) systems are designed to monitor and control the operation of traffic signals and are most effective when co-ordinating the operation of traffic signals in urban areas. The central system, which is located in NetCom, is connected to traffic signals in Northampton, Kettering, Rushden and Wellingborough.
The current UTC system enabled the introduction of a technique known as SCOOT which stands for Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique. This system measures traffic flows across a network and then calculates traffic signal timings to minimise delays at each junction and across the network as a whole. Where appropriate the operation of the system can be overridden by the NetCom operator in response to abnormal faults or incidents.

Traffic signal installations which are not in urban areas are connected to a Remote Monitoring System (RMS) which, like the UTC system, allows the signal controllers to automatically report faults and enables the NetCom operators to initiate timing changes. The Remote Monitoring system only needs to communicate with the traffic signal controllers at infrequent intervals and thus is cheaper to operate than the UTC system.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council and its highways Service Provider will continue to explore technological advances to bring about a more efficient and economical operation of systems.
- Systems are to be introduced and operated to ensure the efficient and effective use of the network and to avoid it being overwhelmed by traffic growth.
- SCOOT to be introduced at all appropriate sites to improve free flow traffic conditions and reduce congestion and delays.
- All traffic signal sites to be connected to either UTC or RMS to provide automatic fault reporting and the ability to optimise timings.

Officer/Service Provider Guidance

- Implement a life cycle modernisation programme for traffic signal installations.
- Local radio stations are to be kept fully informed of the situation regarding traffic flows and signal operations.

Standards

- Northamptonshire Transport Plan
- The Traffic Management Act 2004
- Code of Practice for the Management of Electronic Traffic Equipment.

6.1.2 Real Time Passenger Information

To meet Government and County Council objectives to reduce the demand on the road network there is a need to encourage motorists to leave their cars and use public transport. This cannot be achieved if public transport gives no improvement to travel time and there is insufficient information available to potential passengers for them to plan their journey.
The provision of a Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system enables “up to the minute” travel information to be available to passengers and potential passengers from a variety of sources. These sources include the telephone (request the information via text), the internet, signs at bus stops, railway stations and on the buses themselves. The access to this information will encourage the use of public transport and will also mean that passengers will no longer have to wait at a bus stop wondering when the next bus is due.

To enable the information on the arrival of buses to be accurate, the buses using this technology are equipped with satellite tracking systems and automatic communications to the central RTPI system which is located at NetCom. The location of each bus is compared with its schedule to enable early or late arrivals to be accurately predicted.

Locating both the RTPI and traffic control systems at NetCom enables information to be passed between them, thus enabling late running buses to be given priority through traffic signal controlled junctions. This not only reduces journey times compared other traffic but should also reduce the variation in bus journey times.

Northamptonshire County Council is part of the CBBPLN consortium.

**Policy**

- To encourage the use of public transport by providing accurate and current information regarding bus scheduling.
- Real time passenger information will be provided at bus stops, on the internet and via mobile telephones.

**Officer/Service Provider Guidance**

- The availability of bus schedules and times expected at bus stops via telephone and the internet is to be promoted regularly by means of County Council publications and the local media.
- Work in partnership with bus operators to improve fleet management and ensure that reliable journey times are achieved across the network.
- Work in partnership with bus operators, district councils and developers to secure funding to allow further development of RTPI and other electronic information technology.

**Standards**

- Northamptonshire Transport Plan
- The Traffic Management Act 2004
- Code of Practice for the Management of Electronic Traffic Equipment
6.1.3 Variable Message Signing

The capacity of the highway network is reduced if drivers are delayed by congestion. Therefore there are network benefits in providing drivers with information to enable them to plan their journeys to avoid congestion and minimise their journey times. One way of keeping motorists informed of traffic conditions is via local radio, however traffic news is not broadcast continuously and the timing of the broadcast may not allow the motorist adequate time to choose the optimum route.

Variable Message Signs (VMS) have become familiar on motorways as a means of providing advanced warning of congestion, diversions and delays and they are located so that they are seen by a driver at an appropriate time to react to the information. Similarly the use of this type of signage on a more local basis can inform drivers entering a town of congestion, road works etc so that they can consider alternative routes to their destination. Although such signs do not help the primary cause of the problem (i.e. of the congestion) they do help prevent it being exacerbated. VMS, together with signals, provide the capability to display a wide range of warnings, massages and other traffic information to:

- Effectively manage incidents
- Reduce congestion
- Improve network performance
- Enhance the safety of drivers
- Keep drivers informed

Northamptonshire County Council has therefore installed several VMS’s on selected roads on the approaches to Northampton and Kettering, giving drivers travelling towards those towns up to date information of the network condition ahead of them.

The signs are connected to a central base station located in NetCom thus allowing the operators to change the message displays as appropriate to indicate:

- Congestion
- Road works
- Road / lane closures
- Traffic diversions
- Traffic incident
- Severe weather
- Travel time messages
- Special events affecting the network
- Campaigns

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will maximise the capacity of the highway network by the use of VMS’s.
- Northamptonshire County Council with the Highways Service Provider will develop and expand the VMS system to give users of the highway network full, real time information of the road ahead to enable them to plan their journey.
Officer/Service Provider Guidance

- The system and network condition shall be monitored to ensure accuracy of message information.
- Scenarios shall be developed of potential incidents or events on selected routes to enable travel advice to be displayed on the VMS system as soon as problems are identified.
- Consideration to be given to the presence of road and street works on possible alternative routes so that appropriate information can be given to drivers.
- Displaying the same legend too many times can result in drivers ignoring legends due to familiarity and/or information overload. Therefore do not display continuous ongoing Campaign messages. Specific Campaign messages may be displayed when used in conjunction with a third parties campaign; such as displaying the legend “Don’t Drink and Drive” during a police enforcement campaign at Christmas and New Year.
- VMS may be used to warn drivers of special events if that event is likely to cause delays to traffic on the network. VMS’s shall not be used for advertising, therefore no commercial name shall be part of the message.

Standards

- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
- Northamptonshire Transport Plan
- The Traffic Management Act 2004
- DfT Traffic Advisory Leaflets
- Code of Practice for the Management of Electronic Traffic Equipment

6.1.4 CCTV System

Northamptonshire County Council’s closed circuit television (CCTV) system enables the operators at the Urban Traffic Control (UTC) Centre to visually monitor the traffic conditions at key junctions and to react to them by amending the timings of the traffic signals. The CCTV system also provides the operators with traffic information to pass on to the various local radio stations for their traffic reports.

The use of the Northampton Borough Council’s cameras provides the NetCom operators with a greatly enhanced coverage of Northampton’s road network.

More recently Northamptonshire County Council has been allowed access view and control the Highways Agency (HA) network of CCTV cameras. This has given Northamptonshire County Council the ability to view traffic conditions on and around the trunk road network.
Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will use CCTV systems as part of its management of the highway network.

- Northamptonshire County Council’s CCTV system is linked to Northampton Borough Council’s CCTV system to give maximum coverage within the County.

- Northamptonshire County Council’s CCTV system will be designed to enable expansion and development to take place to meet the growing demands on the highway network of Northamptonshire.

Officer/Service Provider Guidance

- CCTV systems are to be monitored by NetCom.

- The system is to be developed to allow for enhancements to be introduced including incident detection.

Standards


- Northamptonshire Transport Plan

- Traffic Management Act 2004

- Code of Practice for the Management of Electronic Traffic Equipment

6.1.5 Fault Management System

Technologically advanced traffic management systems are only viable when they function correctly and it is therefore essential that when faults, or damage, occur they are repaired without undue delay. The management of faults is a NetCom function and comprises the following:

- Setting up maintenance arrangements with specialist contractors

- Obtaining knowledge of the existence of the fault

- Reporting the fault to the appropriate specialist maintainer

- Ensuring that the specialist maintainer responds to the report in accordance with the agreed arrangements

- Receiving and accepting the fault clearance from the specialist maintainer

- Maintaining and analysing the fault records to identify trends and to recommend the replacement of equipment where appropriate
Although the equipment is subject to annual maintenance checks most faults occur randomly at other times. Automatic fault identification and communications equipment has been installed so that faults are reported to NetCom.

At NetCom all faults are entered on to a computer based Fault Management System (FMS) which maintains a record of all outstanding faults, the specialist maintainer’s performance, and also a full historical record of all faults.

Policy

- Fault monitoring and communication systems will be incorporated to enable automatic detection and reporting of faults to NetCom.

- Arrangements and systems will be developed between Northamptonshire County Council, the Service Provider and the supply chain to define and manage the appropriate response when fault occur.

- Regular maintenance will be undertaken to minimise the occurrence of faults

Officer/Service Provider Guidance

- The response time of the supply chain contractor to fault reports and the time taken to remedy the fault will be monitored.

- Fault occurrence should be analysed to inform a replacement / renewal policy

Standards


- Northamptonshire Transport Plan

- The Traffic Management Act 2004

- Code of Practice for the Management of Electronic Traffic Equipment.
Identifying Locations Where Regular Congestion Occurs

The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a statutory obligation on highway authorities to manage the traffic on their networks and reduce the effects of congestion.

There are many definitions of congestion but essentially it is the hindrance to the free flow of traffic as a result of one or more factors acting on the part of the network in question resulting in capacity being exceeded by demand. These factors include inadequate network capacity, the temporary reduction of the network's capacity due to a road traffic accident, road works, obstructions, weather conditions or other events taking place on the highway. Congestion can also be the result of events that occur away from the highway authority's network such as traffic diverted from the Highways Agency's network or that of an adjoining highway authority as a result of road works, road closures or accidents. Some parts of the network are subject to daily congestion as a result of inadequate capacity at morning and evening peak times while at other locations the network capacity can be constrained as a result of the road layout and traffic control measures.

Congestion can be monitored by measuring speed, the flow of traffic or occupancy but to do this requires a comprehensive network of vehicle detection stations at selected junctions and routes throughout the county. Data can also be obtained from external sources. Northamptonshire County Council already has equipment in place which can provide data to enable monitoring of congestion to take place. This includes queuing detectors, Automatic Number Plate Recognition, (ANPR), Real Time Passenger Information, (RTPI), and other sources.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will continually monitor its highway network to see how it is performing by installing monitoring equipment to identify the level of congestion.
- Sites will be identified where there is a lack of data and these will be considered for the future installation of monitoring equipment.
- From the data obtained by the monitoring equipment and other sources it will identify where there are recurring problems with congestion.
- Where recurring congestion problems are identified traffic management measures that could alleviate these problems will be determined.
- The performance in terms of reducing congestion following the installation of traffic management measures at identified sites will be measured.

Officer Guidance

- Congestion can be monitored by measuring speed, flow or occupancy to indicate deviation from free-flow traffic conditions and therefore incidence and degree of congestion.
- Data can be obtained from UTC queue detectors indicating congestion and potential blocking at signal controlled junctions.
• Journey times obtained from RTPI bus tracking system and ANPR system can be compared with normal journey times to identify congestion routes.

• Access link congestion information from UTC’s Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique, (SCOOT).

• Locations on the strategic and traffic sensitive network where additional congestion data collection stations are required to collect data or improve the level/quality of data that is currently being collected need to be identified.

Standards

• Traffic Management Act 2004

• Northamptonshire Transport Plan
8.0 Co-ordination and Direction of Works

8.1 Co-ordination of Street Works and Works for Road Purposes

With the ever increasing demand placed on the public highway and also for the supply of power, water and communication systems, it is inevitable that streets will from time to time be occupied by the highway authority or statutory undertakers carrying out maintenance, renewal works or the installation of new equipment. On heavily trafficked routes, particularly in urban areas, the consequences of this will be disruption and delay for road users. While these works may be unavoidable, it is the responsibility of the street authority to balance the statutory rights of highway authorities and statutory undertakers to carry out works with the right of road users to expect the minimum of disruption from the works.

Section 59 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 places a general duty on a street authority to co-ordinate works as follows –

“A street authority shall use their best endeavours to co-ordinate the execution of works of all kinds, (including works for road purposes), in the streets for which they are responsible –

(a) in the interests of safety

(b) to minimise the inconvenience to persons using the street, (having regards, in particular, to the needs of people with a disability), and

(c) to protect the structure of the street and the integrity of apparatus in it”

This duty also extends to co-ordination with other street authorities where works in a street for which one authority is responsible affects streets for which other street authorities are responsible, e.g. adjoining counties where works are close to another street authority’s boundary.

It will be noted that this duty of co-ordination also applies to works for road purposes, (such as a street authority’s own works), as it is a principle of the Network Management Duty for the authority to demonstrate parity between its own works and those of undertakers.

Section 60 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 places a corresponding general duty on statutory undertakers to co-operate with the co-ordination process.

To assist the street authority in meeting this duty, the noticing and Permit Scheme systems provide information in respect of proposed works and time scales and then legislation gives the street authority the powers to co-ordinate works by directing the timing date and location of the works as well as restricting further works following substantial road or street works, such as a resurfacing scheme or major sewer works. This power is discharged effectively by the street authority by liaising closely with authorities and statutory undertakers and convening regular co-ordination meetings at a local level as well as being represented at regional level.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will endeavour to co-ordinate the execution of works of all kinds, (including works for road purposes and the carrying out of relevant activities), in streets for which it is responsible.

- Northamptonshire County Council will demonstrate parity between works undertaken by its service provider and those carried out by statutory undertakers.
Northamptonshire County Council will convene and chair meetings of the local Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee, (HAUC), at least on a quarterly basis to carry out the direct co-ordination of individual schemes and disseminate information.

Northamptonshire County Council will liaise with the Highways Agency and adjacent street authorities where it is considered that works are likely to affect trunk roads or traffic flows across boundaries.

Northamptonshire County Council will provide information regarding works to the Police, fire, ambulance and other emergency services and where appropriate, relevant planning and environmental health officers together with other organisations likely to have an interest such as those representing people with disabilities, pedestrians motorists and cyclists.

**Officer Guidance**


- The objective of co-ordination is to resolve differences between those competing for space or time in a street in a positive and constructive way taking into account the needs of all road users with particular regard to those with disabilities.

- Due to the potential “knock-on effect” of small works close to or in the vicinity of traffic sensitive streets, account must be taken of proposals of all scale and duration and the disruptive effect of one proposal should not be considered in isolation.

- Northamptonshire County Council’s service provider and those statutory undertakers working within Northamptonshire should be encouraged to liaise closely with the street Works Team and, wherever possible, give notice periods beyond the statutory minimum, particularly for Major Works.

- Positive consideration will be given to requests from promoters to commence works before the end of the prescribed notice period where there are no objections from other interested parties or it is deemed to be advantageous.

- Where appropriate, and it is considered advantageous to do so, promoters should be asked to consult with frontagers and other interested parties and, if necessary, modify the proposals.

- In some cases it will be possible for the street authority and a promoter to co-ordinate works on a one-to-one basis but most co-ordination will take place through local and regional HAUC co-ordination meetings.

- The terms of reference for co-ordination meetings are:
  1. To share information and consultation between interested parties at the earliest opportunity.
  2. The attendance of relevant representatives of promoters and authorities, who are empowered to make decisions, to provide input to the co-ordination process.
3. To allow works promoters and authorities to share business and development plans and replacement programmes for apparatus and highway assets with the co-ordinating authority.

4. To communicate decisions at the earliest opportunity so that promoters’ plans can be adapted if necessary.

5. To carry out cross-boundary co-ordination between the Highways Agency, neighbouring authorities, utilities and others especially for all planned works and planned maintenance on strategic routes.

- Northamptonshire County Council will be represented at Regional HAUC meetings by staff who will be empowered to make decisions at this level.

- Local HAUC co-ordination meetings will be convened and chaired by the Northamptonshire County Council at least quarterly and will involve promoters working in Northamptonshire, the Police, and the Highways Agency and other authorities as necessary.

- The following bodies should be provided with relevant information and/or invited to the local HAUC co-ordination meetings:
  
  1. Police, fire, ambulance and other emergency services.
  
  2. Public transport operators.
  
  3. Other appropriate concerns such as organisations representing people with disabilities, pedestrians, motorists and cyclists.
  
  4. Planning and environmental health officers.

- The day to day co-ordination of standard, minor and immediate works will be by use of a GIS map based notice management system.

- Aspects that should be considered when co-ordinating works include:
  
  1. The road network capacity
  
  2. The scope for collaborative working arrangements, including trench and duct sharing, between undertakers and the street authority.
  
  3. The optimum timing of works from all aspects.
  
  4. The effect on traffic, in particular the need for temporary traffic restrictions or prohibitions.

  5. Appropriate techniques and arrangements, particularly at difficult road junctions and pinch points.

  6. The working arrangements required in protected and traffic sensitive streets and streets with special engineering difficulties.

  7. The effect of skip and scaffold licences, any known special events and other licences or consents issued in respect of affected streets under the Highways Act 1980 and other Acts.
8. Developments for which planning permission has been granted on streets affected by the works.

- Any potential difficulties or conflicts over the proposed works must be discussed with the promoter at the earliest opportunity with a view to agreeing a mutually acceptable way forward. However, safety concerns, urgency or the lack of co-operation on the part of the undertaker, may make it necessary for Northamptonshire County Council to use its powers of direction.

- All works promoters will be encouraged to provide details of their long term programmes, including annual operating programmes and three or five year rolling programmes, as early as possible to enable opportunities for joint working to be identified and planned for by the respective promoters.

- Information relating to large scale or potentially very disruptive works and activities should be recorded with as much detail as possible in the street works register at the earliest opportunity for inclusion in the co-ordination process.

- Every opportunity should be taken to encourage mutual co-operation between promoters to look at collaborative working to minimise traffic disruption and delay.

- While every effort will be made to try and resolve disputes without having to refer them to a formal appeals procedure, there may be situations where this is not possible.

**Standards**

- The Street Works Register (Registration Fees) Regulation 1999.
- The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works.

**8.2 Road Works**

It is inevitable that where road works have to be carried out there is likely to be some disruption and delay to traffic movements. It is Northamptonshire County Council’s policy to keep such
disruption and delay to an absolute minimum while at the same time ensuring that operatives working in the environment of active highways are given the maximum protection.

To achieve these aims Northamptonshire County Council will, where possible, carry out works on busy roads during periods of reduced traffic flow, e.g. during school holidays and avoiding peak traffic times. Extensive and comprehensive publicity and, in the case of road closures or advisory routes, clear diversion signing, will be employed with regular updates to the local media and motoring organisations of any changes during the course of the works.

Regular and frequent Road Works Reports will be sent to the local media, emergency services, travel services and public transport operators giving details of all road works to enable road users to plan the route and timing of their journey to avoid possible delays and make a more efficient use of the highway network.

This policy applies to Northamptonshire County Council’s contractors and agents; statutory undertakers and their contractors and any other contractor or organisation undertaking works on the highway.

Policy

- All road works will be carried out in accordance with both Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual and Safety at Street Works and Road Works a Code of Practice.

- Where existing footways are interrupted by the works, temporary facilities will be provided to ensure the safe and convenient passage of pedestrians and those with disabilities.

- All works on the highway will be carried out as quickly as possible to reduce inconvenience, delay and danger to users of both roads and footways.

- All materials, plant, equipment, etc., that it is necessary to store on the highway during the course of the works shall be adequately protected and signed.

- Whenever temporary traffic signals are employed, Northamptonshire County Council, as the Highway Authority, must be notified. In addition, Northamptonshire County Council’s written approval must be obtained prior to the signals being installed if a junction occurs within the controlled section.

Officer Guidance

- All traffic management equipment shall be provided and maintained in a clean and as new condition.

- The presence of scaffolding or any other temporary structures, barriers, etc., will be made clear to partially sighted people.

- Where a temporary footway is provided, its surface shall be of an adequate standard for the safe and ease of use by the elderly and people with disabilities.

- Temporary footways will, at all times, be kept clear of mud and other loose material.

- Pedestrian access to all properties will be maintained throughout the course of the works.
• Where the normal pedestrian route is severely interrupted, pedestrian direction signs will be provided.

• Working out of hours will be necessary in appropriate situations with proper safeguards and approvals.

• If traffic control is required where a side road or major accesses enter the controlled section, a method statement will be prepared stating how the side road traffic will be managed and submitted to Northamptonshire County Council for approval before the works commence.

• If traffic control is necessary adjacent to permanent traffic signals, consideration should be given to replacing the permanent installation with the temporary signals during the course of the works or the use of a stop/go board in conjunction with the permanent signals. Any proposals must be submitted to Northamptonshire County Council for approval before the works commence.

• On strategic and main distributor roads, two sets of temporary traffic signals must not be used within 1 kilometre of each other without the written approval of Northamptonshire County Council.

• Where works are undertaken on a non-traffic sensitive street but within 100 metres of a junction with a traffic sensitive street, any back up of traffic from the works shall not be allowed to affect the major road,

**Standards**

• New Roads and Street Works Act 1991

• Traffic Management Act 2004

• Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual

• Safety at Street Works and Road Works – A Code of Practice

• The Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Street Works and Works for Road Purposes and Related Matters.

**8.3 Traffic Sensitive Streets**

Under its Traffic Management Duty, Northamptonshire County Council will manage activities on the highway to ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum. To achieve this, a number of strategic and major roads have been designated as being “Traffic Sensitive” and on these roads, works will not be permitted during peak hours when traffic flows are at their heaviest. Exceptions to this rule are where the works are of such a nature that it is not possible to close them down and reopen the road for the peak period, for instance, where major road reconstruction work is being carried out.
**Policy**

- Northamptonshire County Council will identify and maintain a schedule of traffic sensitive roads for which it is responsible.

- Additions and amendments to the schedule of traffic sensitive roads will be made in agreement with the majority of the local statutory undertakers and notified to the regional HAUC group.

- Northamptonshire County Council will undertake periodic reviews of the schedule of traffic sensitive streets.

- “Peak Hours” will be applied as set out in The Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Street Works and Works for Road Purposes and Related Matters, Third Edition.

- The restrictions on traffic sensitive roads will apply to all works within the highway including works for road purposes undertaken for and on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council.

- Streets that can be designated as traffic sensitive are where there is the risk of road works causing serious congestion.

- Streets to be included are main inter-urban and main radial routes and other commuter routes which carry heavy peak traffic flows.

**Officer Guidance**

- The designation can apply to carriageway only or footway/pedestrian area only as well as the whole street.

- The designation can apply to the whole or part of the street, specific days or times of the year.

- Care must be taken to ensure that only those streets where extra controls are fully justified are included so that the objectives of the designation are respected.

- Northamptonshire County Council will consider a street as traffic sensitive based on criteria that would justify the designation.

- Before making a designation, Northamptonshire County Council will serve a notice.

- The schedule of Traffic Sensitive Streets is to be reviewed periodically.

- Additions and amendments to the schedule of traffic sensitive streets will be discussed and agreed at the local HAUC meetings and the details forwarded to the regional HAUC group when agreed.

- Streets designated as traffic sensitive are to be recorded as Additional Street Data on the National Street Gazetteer.

- Any additions or deletions from the list of Traffic Sensitive Streets will be notified to the NSG Concessionaire as soon as possible.
Standards

Section 64 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991

Traffic Management Act 2004


8.4 Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders

To enable road works to be carried out safely and to ensure that there is adequate protection for the operatives from moving traffic, it is often necessary to introduce temporary traffic regulation orders, (TTROs), for the duration of the works. These include road closures, speed restrictions, amenity weight restrictions and prohibition of turning movements.

Before introducing any TTRO, the proposal will be considered in detail to ensure that the disruption to the public and commercial operators is kept to a minimum. Where possible, measures that are less inconvenient will be substituted.

Policy

- All proposals and requests for TTROs at any site will be considered to ensure that disruption to the public is minimised.
- TTROs will be made where appropriate to maintain traffic flow where otherwise delays may be caused.
- Where a temporary road closure is proposed or requested, the proposal will be considered to see if it is justified or if alternative measures can be employed.
- Road closures or temporary one-way orders on principal roads will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Officer Guidance

- Orders for agreed TTROs will be advertised within 21 days of the request being made.
- Environmental considerations, e.g. noise in residential areas, may outweigh other factors in making decisions on allowable methods of working.
- All requests for road closures to be considered to ensure that it is justified. Wherever possible, alternative measures to be substituted.
- For principal roads, there is a presumption against 24 hour closures or one-way orders and every effort will be made to arrange a method of working to avoid the need for a closure.
- The cost of carrying out the works will not be accepted as a factor in determining the need for a closure or other TTRO if other factors prevail and any additional costs will have to be met by the promoter.
• The emergency services will be consulted over all TTROs.

• Where any road closure is proposed, any businesses directly affected by the order will be consulted.

• Orders for agreed TTROs will be advertised within 21 days of the request being made.

**Standards**

• Road Traffic Act 1984 section 14

**8.5 Section 58 and 58A New Roads and Street Works Act 1991**

Wherever possible, Northamptonshire County Council will avoid a road being dug up repeatedly by different organisations in order to mitigate disruption and inconvenience to road users and residents. The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, (NRSWA), includes a provision for the serving of notices to restrict the carrying out of further works following the completion of substantial road works. There are exemptions to these restrictions such as in the case of emergencies, also permission for new customer connections should not reasonably be withheld.

Northamptonshire County Council has adopted the extended scope of the original NRSWA contained in the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) which gives Northamptonshire County Council additional powers to authorise restrictions to prevent future road or street works being carried out following substantial street works.

**Policy**

• Northamptonshire County Council will impose restrictions on the undertaking of further road or street works on all categories of road following substantial road or street works in accordance with Sections 58 and 58A of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

• Northamptonshire County Council elects to impose the maximum permitted durations of restrictions for all works type, subject to the exemptions set out in The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) (England) Regulations 2007.

• Northamptonshire County Council will take formal action against any statutory undertaker or other party undertaking unauthorised works in contravention to a notice issued under Section 58 or 58A of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

**Officer/Service Provider Guidance**

• Durations of restrictions are given in the Street Works Regulations.

• Certain works may still be carried out on a road subject to a restriction notice and are as detailed in The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) (England) Regulations 2007.

• A notice under Section 58(1) relating to a proposed restriction following substantial road works shall be issued by the Service Provider 3 months in advance of the proposed start date of the works and in accordance with The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) (England) Regulations 2007.
Where a restriction is to be imposed following substantial street works, the authority shall publish a notice in accordance with The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) (England) Regulations 2007.

Where the road works referred to in the Section 58 notice are not commenced within six months of the date given in the notice then the notice will cease to be effective.

Where unauthorised works are carried out in a street subject to a Section 58 or 58A notice, the authority will carry out investigations to determine if an offence has been committed and if formal action should be taken.

Standards

- New Roads and Street Works 1991
- Traffic Management Act 2004
- The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) (England) Regulations 2007
- Technical Specification for the Electronic Transfer of Notices (EToN)

8.6 Section 74 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991

It is acknowledged that street works have to be undertaken to meet the growing needs for the supply of essential services, and that these works may cause delay and disruption to the road network, Northamptonshire County Council will encourage their speedy completion to minimise the occupation of the highway. Section 74 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, (NRSWA), as amended by the Transport Act 2000 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 gives street authorities the power to charge statutory authorities if their works are unreasonably prolonged.

The regulations, The Street Works (Charges for Unreasonably Prolonged Occupation of the Highway)(England) 2009 apply to every publicly maintainable highway, except;

- A footpath or bridleway
- A highway with a pedestrian planning order in force; and
- A highway where vehicular traffic is prohibited-unless that prohibition is restricted to particular times.

Northamptonshire County Council will use section 74 to incentivise works promoters to complete the works on time, and not leave unattended trenches open, to avoid charges. Where unforeseen problems arise during the work and these are likely to result in the work not being completed on time, the promoter of the works can give the street authority notice in writing giving a revised estimate of the duration of the works.

To prevent a promoter of works giving unreasonably long durations to ensure that their works are completed within the time set down, the street authority can challenge the estimated duration periods and set its own time periods.
Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council applies section 74 overrun charges on all categories of road and for both works carried out under the Permit Scheme or NRSWA noticing procedures.

- Northamptonshire County Council will endeavour to agree duration times with promoters without the need to refer to the disputes procedure or arbitration.

- Where works begin to attract overrun charges, Northamptonshire County Council will send an informal warning to the promoter.

- Northamptonshire County Council will deduct from the charges received under this scheme the reasonable costs of operating the scheme and will apply the net proceeds for the development and promotion of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities and services to, from and within the county.

Officer Guidance

- Section 74 charges do not apply to works carried out by an activity promoter on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council as the highway authority or by Northamptonshire County Council’s highway service provider. To demonstrate equal treatment between promoters, the equivalent information on the performance for highway activities, in particular the equivalent of durations, revised durations and start, closed and clear dates should be collected.

- Section 74 charges can be applied to every maintainable highway other than a footpath, bridleway, a highway in which a pedestrian planning order is in force and a highway whose use by vehicular traffic is prohibited by a traffic order unless that prohibition is only at particular times.

- The following activities are exempt from section 74 charging as long as the activity does not involve breaking up, tunnelling or boring under the street:
  - Works in non traffic-sensitive streets
  - Works in the footway of traffic sensitive streets, at traffic sensitive times
  - Works in traffic sensitive streets at non-traffic sensitive times
  - Pole testing
  - Any small diameter holes of less than 30mm diameter created for investigatory purposes, e.g. bar holes.
  - Works carried out by, or on behalf of, a highway authority.

- The Prescribed Period is the period during which no overrun charges can be levied. It has been set by the secretary of State as two days starting on the day on which the works begin.

- A works promoter will give notice to Northamptonshire County Council if the works will exceed the prescribed period. The agreed duration will become the Reasonable Period.
This will be agreed within two days from receipt of a minor or immediate works notice or five days for major or standard works.


- Under the Permit Scheme, the Reasonable Period is the period set by the Permit Authority as reasonable for the activity in question. In most cases this will be the duration set down by the promoter in its permit application and the agreement of the period will be part of the process of giving a permit.

- If no agreement can be reached on the reasonable period, then the authority's estimated duration of the works will apply until such time as the matter is resolved by agreement or arbitration in accordance with the dispute procedure. In the case of activities covered by a permit, the authority will issue the permit with its own decision on duration as a condition to the permit and the dispute resolution procedure set down should then be followed.

- If the promoter believes that the estimated duration of the works will be exceeded, a notice in writing giving a revised estimate can be submitted to the street authority and will be subject to the same procedures with regard to objections as the original notice. In the case of works subject to a permit, the promoter should seek a variation to the permit.

- For section 74 purposes, the estimated duration of works is measured from the start date to the end date given in the notice of actual start. The actual duration used to assess if works have overrun is measured from the notice of Actual Start to the completion of all activities in that phase of the works, including any necessary reinstatement. Interim and permanent reinstatements must be treated as separate phases.

- Where a works clear or works closed notice has not been received after the end date of the works start notice, a non-statutory Informal Overrun Warning notice, included in the Technical Specification for EToN will be generated.

- Separate notices or permits will be required where interim and permanent reinstatements are accepted as separate phases. The period between these cannot be considered as an overrun provided the site has been completely cleared with all spoil, excess materials, stores and signing, lighting and guarding removed from the site.

- Although the permit start date is also the proposed start for the activity, the actual start date may differ. In such cases a Notice of Actual Start of an activity must be given by 10:00am the next working day. This will not apply for immediate activities where the permit application will be taken as the actual start date. Works may not start before the start date given on the permit unless otherwise agreed with the authority.

- Following interim reinstatement, a Works Clear Notice must be given no later than the end of the working day following the one on which the activity was cleared and can only be issued once all spoil, excess materials, stores and signing, lighting and guarding have been removed from the site.

- Following permanent reinstatement, a Works Closed Notice must be given by the end of the working day and will be subject to site clearance as above. Where temporary markings
have been used, then the activity is not complete until the permanent markings are applied and the activity duration should cover this period.

- Charges vary according to the type of activity, the road category and whether the street is traffic sensitive. The road category as given in the Additional Street data will be treated as definitive. Where no road category has been given, the street will be treated as category 4.

- Where the activity affects two categories of street, such as at a junction, the charging application will be made against the street with the highest street category.

- Northamptonshire County Council has the power to use its discretion to either reduce or waive the charge in such circumstances as it deems appropriate but must notify the promoter of the charge payable within three months of receipt of a works clear or works closed notice.

- Where a street is traffic sensitive on certain days, over-running works will be charged at the non-traffic sensitive rate when the street is not traffic sensitive and at traffic sensitive rates when it is. Where a street is traffic sensitive at specific times of the day, over-running works will be charged at the traffic sensitive rate.

- Care must be taken when proposing charges to ensure that the facts are accurate along with the works type and category of road. Where there is evidence that the dates given in notices were incorrect, the charges should be based on the evidence.

- If it is found that incorrect information has been given in a notice, and the street authority considers that an offence has been committed, a Fixed Penalty Notice, (FPN), may be issued.

- Once the prescribed or reasonable period has ended and the reinstatement, either interim or permanent, has been completed and noticed, the failure of the undertaker to clear the site of all materials, spoil, stores, plant and equipment, signs, lighting or guarding and fully return the highway to public use will attract overrun charges. However, if it is found that the undertaker has endeavoured to clear the site but in error has left a single sign or item of lighting or guarding then the undertaker will be informed of the location of the item and be given to the end of the next working day to remove it from the site. A one-off nominal charge will be made providing that the free movement of traffic has been possible throughout this period.

- Inspections in respect of section 74 overruns should be carried out in accordance with The Code of Practice for Inspections.

- The following examples show what does and does not constitute a failure in section 74 terms are as follows:

  (i) Works which are inspected and shown to have been completed shall be recorded as a passed inspection.

  (ii) If the inspection reveals that the works were not completed, despite the notice claiming that they were, then this shall be recorded as a failed inspection. The incorrect notice means that both section 74 overrun charging and legal proceedings may be activated.
(iii) If a Works Clear or Works Closed notice is not received, this shall be recorded as a failed inspection. Failure to submit a correct notice on time is an offence.

(iv) If works overrun and no closure notice is sent, despite the proposed end date having passed, then this shall be recorded as a failed inspection and section 74 overrun charges will apply.

(v) Where works are cancelled using the permit cancellation procedure set down in the Code of Practice for Permits, the authority may inspect the site to assure itself that this cancellation has happened and that no work is proceeding, or has proceeded at the site. If this is the case it shall be recorded as a passed inspection. If not it shall be recorded as a failed inspection. This would be an offence and may also be subject to overrun charges.

- Where remedial works are required these shall be dealt with as a new activity with their own duration estimate. Any overrun on remedial works will be charged at the rate appropriate to the original activity.

- Section 74 overrun charges must be kept separate from permit fees.

Standards

- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- The Street Works (Charges for Unreasonably Prolonged Occupation of the Highway) (England) Regulations 2009
- Traffic Management Act 2004
- Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Street Works and Works for Road Purposes and Related matters 3rd Edition Revised 2009
- Code of Practice for Permits
- Code of Practice for Inspections
- Technical Specification for EToN

8.7 Recording of Underground Apparatus In Streets

Before works involving excavation are undertaken in a street it is vital that the location of existing buried apparatus is known. Although statutory undertakers hold records in map form, the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, (NRSWA), made it a requirement under section 79 of that Act for all owners of underground apparatus in streets to make and maintain records of their apparatus and to have these available for inspection by interested parties. This section of the Act was implemented by the coming into force of The Street Works (Records) (England) Regulations 2002, (“the Regulations”), on 1 May 2003.
The Act and the Regulations are primarily directed towards the statutory undertakers but Northamptonshire County Council, as the highway authority, has a responsibility to maintain records of some of its own apparatus and those of section 50 licensees.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will refer to apparatus not covered by the requirements of the Regulations, (by virtue of being service pipes and lines), in the associated Street Works Data, (ASD), on the National Street Gazetteer, (NSG).
- Northamptonshire County Council will maintain records of section 50 licensees’ apparatus and will make these records available for inspection by interested parties on request.

Officer/Service Provider Guidance

- Section 79(1)(c) and section 80 of the NRSWA, namely the duty to inform undertakers of the location of apparatus, are not implemented under the Regulations.
- Section 79 of the NRSWA requires the owners of underground apparatus to provide and keep up to date and make available for inspection records of every item of apparatus belonging to them as soon as possible after placing it in the street, altering its position or locating it in the course of executing other works.
- Records may be kept on paper, electronically or a combination of both and shall be prepared in the form of a location or route map recorded on a map background which is related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The records should be to an accuracy at least equivalent to the scale of the Ordnance Survey map which is nearest to the scale of the map background. Alternatively, a statement of National Grid co-ordinates derived from a geographical information system may be used.
- The location of apparatus must be measured to an accuracy of +/- 300 mm on the ground and recorded to an accuracy of +/- 500 mm.
- Records should be made or amended as soon as reasonably practicable after completion of installation; altering the position of apparatus or locating apparatus.
- Electronic records must be capable of being reproduced in a sufficiently legible form to comply with the duty to make records available for inspection.
- The Regulations identify apparatus that are exempt as well as highway apparatus that are not covered as not covered as being classed as service pipes and lines.
- Section 50 licences should include a condition requiring the licensee to follow the Code of Practice for Recording Underground Apparatus in Streets as far as standards and the creation of records are concerned either themselves or by the highway authority on the behalf of the licensee.
- A list of highway apparatus that are not covered as being classed as service pipes and lines is included in Appendix XX however, they should be referred to under Associated Street Works Data, (ASD), on the National Street Gazetteer, (NSG):
Northamptonshire County Council will make clear to anyone exercising their right to inspect the records that they are only to be used as part of a full on-site exploration by the person intending to carry out the works.

All records should carry an indemnification in respect of their accuracy.

This policy does not alter the common law responsibility of persons proposing to excavate in the street to take reasonable care before commencing excavation by using their best endeavours to obtain the records of all apparatus installed in a street and thereafter in locating and avoiding damage to the apparatus.

Standards

- The Street Works (Records) (England) Regulations 2002
- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- The Water Services Act 1991
- The National Joint Utilities Group publications NJUG 4, The Identification of Small Buried Mains and Services, and NJUG 7 Recommended Positioning of Utilities Apparatus for New Works on New Developments and Existing Streets.

8.8 Issuing Fixed Penalty notices in Accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004

The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, (NRSWA) made it a criminal offence to fail to comply with certain sections of that Act concerning the notification to the street authority of proposed works. Where Northamptonshire County Council considered that an offence had been committed by a statutory undertaker in failing to serve the necessary notices required by the Act, it had to decide whether to take formal action by means of a prosecution against the offending undertaker.

To facilitate the expeditious movement of traffic on the road network Northamptonshire County Council holds complete and accurate information about what is happening and what is proposed on its road network to be able to co-ordinate works effectively. The compliance by statutory undertakers with the requirements of the NRSWA with regard to noticing is therefore even more important if Northamptonshire County Council is to fulfil its legal requirement under the TMA.

The introduction of the TMA also included the decriminalisation of some offences included in the earlier Act and enabled Northamptonshire County Council to issue Fixed Penalty Notices, (FPN), to statutory undertakers who fail to meet the noticing requirements of the act. This eliminates all legal costs and allows the street authority to deduct from the penalties received from the FPNs the reasonable costs of operating the scheme with the net proceeds being used for the development and implementation of policies to promote and encourage the safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities and services to, from and within their area.
Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will issue Fixed Penalty Notices to statutory undertakers when it believes that an offence has been committed by the statutory undertaker which impedes the ability of Northamptonshire County Council to fulfil its duties under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991; the Traffic management Act 2004 and its ability to co-ordinate works and activities on the highway.

- Northamptonshire County Council will record failures by the highways service provider to meet the requirements of the New Roads and Street Works Act and the Traffic Management Act 2004 where they impede the ability of Northamptonshire County Council to fulfil its duties under those acts and its ability to co-ordinate works and activities on the highway.

- In the event of the non-payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice, Northamptonshire County Council shall bring proceedings to a Magistrates' Court.

Officer Guidance

- Current noticing offences that can be dealt with by FPNs are appended in the appropriate regulations.

- In addition to the above, and where a permit scheme is in operation, FPNs can be issued where an undertaker commits an offence under regulation 19(1) or 20(1) of The Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) Regulations 2007, namely undertaking specifies street works on a specified street without a permit.

- The same level of evidence must be collected for an FPN as would be required if proceedings were to be brought to a Magistrates' Court.

- The payment of a penalty discharges an undertaker's liability to conviction for the offence in question.

- Northamptonshire County Council retains the power to take an offender to Magistrates' Court as an alternative to a FPN.

- FPNs apply to noticing failures only and do not exempt the offender for other prosecutions or charges for offences under NRSWA.

- Only one FPN can be given per notice regardless of the number of errors.

- As each set of works require several notices, it is possible for more than one FPN to be given for each set of works.

- FPNs must be served not later than 91 calendar days after the offence was committed starting with the day of the offence.

- If the undertaker pays either the full penalty or the discounted amount within the required period, no further proceedings can be taken for that offence.

- Once an FPN has been given, proceedings for that offence cannot commence until the end of the payment period.
If the undertaker does not pay the penalty within the required period, Northamptonshire County Council shall bring proceedings to a Magistrates’ Court.

In the event that it is considered that an FPN should not have been given, a notice can be given withdrawing the FPN. Any payments made by the undertaker should be refunded and any proceedings cancelled.

The undertaker has the right to make representations against the issue of an FPN to the officer issuing the notice, the department or the authority. Efforts should be made to resolve such matters informally.

A nominated officer should consider representations to ensure a fair and open system.

While representations are being considered, the payment period may be extended. The discounted payment period cannot be extended.

Records of income and expenditure should be maintained so that an audit trail exists.

Although FPNs cannot be issued for works carried out for road purposes, failures by the highways service provider to meet the requirements of the NRSWA and TMA are required to be recorded.

**Standards**

- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- Traffic Management Act 2004
- The Street Works (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) Regulations 2007
- Code of Practice for Permits
- Magistrates’ Courts Act 1980

**8.9 Inspections of Street Works**

The New Roads and Street Works Act makes statutory undertakers wholly responsible for the management of their street works. This responsibility covers the signing, lighting and guarding of the works and the proper reinstatement of the street upon completion of the works. However, the undertaker may elect to carry out an interim reinstatement having completed the works; for example, if the original surface of the street involved special materials the unit carrying out the street works may not have the necessary skills required to relay the surface.

Under the same Act, a street authority is wholly responsible for monitoring the performance of the statutory undertakers and is empowered to charge for inspections carried out on a sample basis; where there is a defect or it is believed that the undertaker has not complied with the requirements
of the Act. In addition, the street authority may carry out investigations into reports of defective work and/or non-compliance from its own highway inspectors, the Police or members of the public. Where a defect is identified as a result of these inspections, a charge can be made by the street authority against the undertaker.

The street authority also has powers to take action as necessary to remove any dangers to users of the street.

The street authority is only empowered to monitor the undertaker’s work, not to undertake its supervision.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will undertake all necessary inspections of statutory undertakers’ work in accordance with the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and relevant codes of practice.

- Northamptonshire County Council will investigate reports of defects and/or non-compliance drawn to its attention.

- Inspection fees will be charged against the statutory undertakers in accordance with The Street Works (Inspection Fees) (England) Regulations 2002 and subsequent amendments.

- Where an undertaker’s performance does not meet the required levels, Northamptonshire County Council, as the street authority, will issue an improvement notice and agree and monitor an improvement plan devised by the undertaker, taking further action as necessary if there is subsequently no practical improvement in the undertaker’s performance.

Officer/Service Provider Guidance

- Inspections will be carried out in accordance with The Street Works (Inspection Fees) (England) Regulations 2002, and subsequent amendments, and the Code of Practice for Inspections.

- Arrangements must be in place between the street authority, the highways service provider and all undertakers to issue and receive reports, initiate action and report on the results of this action at all times both during and outside working hours.

- Defect inspections are to be undertaken when a reinstatement does not comply with the Specification and will involve an initial joint inspection with the undertaker followed by a second inspection while the remedial works are in progress and a third when they have been completed.

- Where an identified defect is a danger to users of the highway, the street authority may make the site safe by signing, lighting and guarding or other measures that may be agreed with undertakers.

- An investigatory inspection will be carried out to verify an alleged defective reinstatement or inadequacy in signing lighting or guarding reported by the Police or a member of the public. A fee will be payable when the report is confirmed.

- Northamptonshire County Council has powers to undertake investigatory works, (such as coring, measurement of texture depth, material sampling, etc.), to determine that the
undertaker has complied with his duties in respect of reinstatement works. Where a defect is identified, the authority may recover its reasonable costs of the investigatory works. If no defect is found the authority must bear the cost.

- The performance of an undertaker is determined by the success or failure recorded during the sample inspection together with any failures following investigatory inspections.

- Quarterly reports on performance are to be sent to each undertaker.

- An annual summary report of performance of each undertaker is to be prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice for Inspections and copied to the East Midlands Regional HAUC.

- Where an undertaker’s performance falls below the required levels, the authority will issue an improvement notice in accordance with the code of Practice for Inspections with copies to HAUC and the East Midlands Regional HAUC.

- Within 10 days of an undertaker receiving an improvement notice, a meeting will be convened with the authority to agree and finalise an improvement plan.

- An improvement plan will be in accordance with the Code of Practice for Inspections and must be for a minimum period of three months and involve monthly progress meetings between the undertaker and the authority.

- If after three months, no improvement is being achieved, other measures shall be considered in line with the Code of Practice for Inspections

**Standards**

- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- The Street Works (Inspection Fees) (England) Regulations 2002
- The Street Works (Inspection Fees) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008
- The Code of Practice for Inspections 2nd Edition

### 8.10 Permit Scheme

Under the New Roads and Street Works Act of 1991, (NRSWA), statutory undertakers are required to give notice to the street authority of their proposed works. The length of notice varies according to the nature of the works and ranges from three months to three days with a requirement that emergency or urgent works are notified within two hours of starting. Although the street authority, through its powers to co-ordinate works, can dictate when major works are undertaken and can also challenge the estimated duration of works given on the undertakers’ notice, the latter can generally carry out works to suit their own arrangements.

The Traffic Management Act 2004, (TMA), introduced permit schemes as a new way in which activities in the public highway could be managed and thereby improve a street authority’s ability to minimise disruption from street and road works.
Under a permit scheme, an undertaker has to book time on the highway by obtaining a permit from the street authority. This applies to all works, excluding emergency or urgent works, and applies also to works for road purposes undertaken by the authority itself, its partners or agents. Undertakers proposing to carry out major works are required to apply for a Provisional Advance Authorisation at least three months in advance of the commencement of the works to allow the street authority to co-ordinate the works.

A street authority can decide whether it wants to operate a permit scheme and, if it does, to which streets the scheme will apply, for example, all streets for which it is responsible or just the strategic and traffic sensitive streets. A fee is charged for the issue of a Provisional Advance Authorisation; a permit and when there is a variation of the permit or its conditions and this is used by the street authority to cover the costs of operating the scheme. Although a street authority’s own works are treated no differently from those of a statutory undertaker under a permit scheme, a fee is not charged as to do so would only result in the unnecessary movement of money within the authority.

The Secretary of State allowed Northamptonshire County Council to operate a permit scheme from January 2010.

**Policy**

- Northamptonshire County Council operates a permit scheme for works on strategic and traffic sensitive roads only and this is to be known as the Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works.
- The scheme will apply to the whole of the county but will exclude motorways and trunk roads which are the responsibility of the Highways Agency.
- Northamptonshire County Council will work closely with the promoters of works on the streets included in the permit scheme to ensure the needs of all parties are met and, where a dispute does arise, it is dealt with and resolved as informally as possible.
- The cost of operating the permit scheme will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the fees charged match the operating costs.
- In the event of a works promoter failing to obtain a permit, or fails to comply with the conditions issued with the permit, Northamptonshire County Council, as the street authority, may either issue a fixed penalty notice or commence legal proceedings against the promoter.
- Northamptonshire County Council will monitor and evaluate the permit scheme by means of a series of Key Performance Indicators.

**Officer Guidance**

- Officers are directed to the procedures appended to this policy for guidance.
- Detailed guidance for the Permit Scheme is given in The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works including:
  - Activities requiring permits
  - Exempt activities
- Optional permits
- Staged works and works over more than one street.
- Permit types covered by the scheme
- Permit validity
- Circumstances in which the Permit Authority will review, vary or revoke permits on its own initiative.
- Employment of sanctions

- The permit scheme will be operated in accordance with the Code of Practice for Permits and applies to all strategic and traffic sensitive streets for which Northamptonshire County Council is responsible.

- Works for road purposes will be treated exactly the same as for street works but no fee will be charged.

- A works promoter must obtain a permit before carrying out works on a street covered by the permit scheme.

- To ensure consistency with the NRSWA noticing arrangements, the same or equivalent definitions or requirements are to be used for both the permit scheme and the NRSWA noticing system.

- It is an offence for works to be commenced on a street subject to the permit scheme without a permit. Where this occurs, a fixed penalty notice will be served and the promoter will be required to remove the works and restore the street to full use.

- The application and response times for Provisional Advanced Authorisations and permits are given in The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works.

- Applications for permits must contain all of the information required in The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works.

- Conditions may be attached to permits in accordance with The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works.

- Permits may be reviewed, varied or revoked on the initiative of either the permit authority or the promoter. No fee will be charged where the permit is varied by the permit authority.

- Where a promoter wishes to cancel a permit or withdraw an application, it should do so using a cancellation notice bearing the relevant permit number. No fee will be charged for such action.

- Fees are charged for:
  
  (i) An application for a Provisional Advance Authorisation in respect of major activities.

  (ii) The issue of a permit.
(iii) Each occasion where there is a variation of a permit or the conditions attached.

- The level of fees charged for permits will be those currently approved by the Secretary of State for The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works.

- It is an offence for a promoter or a person contracted by a promoter to undertake works on a street subject to the permit scheme without a permit.

- It is an offence for a promoter or a person contracted by a promoter to breach a permit condition.

- Where an offence is committed as above, the authority can take one or more of the courses of action detailed below.

- The Key Performance Indicators, (KPIs), used to monitor and evaluate the permit scheme will be discussed at the quarterly co-ordination meetings with the promoters.

- KPIs adopted for the permit scheme are included in The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works document. Further KPIs may be developed and added as experience of operating the Permit Scheme is acquired.

**Standards**

- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- Traffic Management Act 2004
- The Code of Practice for Permits
- Statutory Guidance for Permits
- The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works

### 8.11 Protected Streets

While there is a need to accommodate statutory undertakers’ apparatus within the highway, there is also a need to minimise delay and inconvenience to road users whilst protecting the integrity of the street and any apparatus in it. Northamptonshire County Council achieves this through provisions in the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 which provides for Protected Streets.

All special roads, as defined in the Highways Act 1980, (i.e. motorways), are designated as protected streets. In addition, a street authority may designate other protected streets that meet the criteria set down in the regulations. In this respect, streets may only be designated as protected if they serve, or will serve, a specific strategic need, with high and constant traffic flows, and there is a reasonable alternative route in which statutory undertakers can place their apparatus.
Once a street has been designated as protected, the activities of statutory undertakers and the highway authority will be severely restricted and for this reason, streets will only be designated as protected when it is essential to do so. Other than for renewal, a statutory undertaker will require the consent of the street authority to place apparatus in the street although normally lateral crossings should be allowed. Where consent is given by the street authority a fee may be charged in respect of the legal and other expenses incurred in granting the consent together with an annual fee for administering the consent.

Conditions can be imposed by the street authority when granting consent but the street authority may contribute to the statutory undertaker’s expenses in complying with those conditions.

Statutory undertakers' works in verges and central reservations which do not impinge of the carriageway are normally acceptable. Road maintenance or repairs will in general be carried at night, weekends or other times where the impact on traffic will be minimal.

**Policy**

- In view of the potential financial and practical implications for both the highway authority and statutory undertakers, designation will only be contemplated when it is absolutely essential.

- Prior to taking the decision to designate a street, Northamptonshire County Council will consult fully with all statutory undertakers who from time to time operate within Northamptonshire; its Highway Service Provider and any other interested party, and will have explored all other possible means of reducing delay and inconvenience on the street under consideration.

- Northamptonshire County Council will take account of the needs of statutory undertakers to supply and maintain services to frontagers and to use such streets for existing trunk supplies.

- Where it is considered essential for any existing apparatus in the street to be removed, altered or relocated, Northamptonshire County Council will reimburse the statutory undertaker any reasonable expenses incurred subject to allowances for betterment, deferment of renewal and the value of recovered apparatus.

- When requested and reasonably practicable, Northamptonshire County Council will, at the statutory undertaker’s expense, make provision in its design of a new street that will be subject to a protected street designation areas or strips for carrying services alongside carriageways and for duct or service crossings.

- Northamptonshire County Council will justify the need to designate a street as a protected street at its local and regional HAUC meetings.

**Officer Guidance**

- Streets will only be designated as protected when it is considered to be absolutely essential and that:
  
  (i) the street fulfils a specific, strategic traffic need,
(ii) the street is subject to such high and constant traffic needs that designation as a traffic-sensitive street would not be sufficient to avoid serious disruption to traffic caused by street works, and

(iii) there exists a reasonable alternative for placing undertakers’ apparatus which could lawfully be placed in the street.

- All other possible means of reducing delay, inconvenience and congestion must be fully explored before considering the designation.

- Where existing streets are to be considered for designation as protected the needs of undertakers to supply and maintain services to frontagers and to use such streets for existing trunk supplies shall be taken into account.

- If it is considered necessary to remove or alter apparatus in an existing street being considered for designation then the street authority shall reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by the undertaker subject to allowances for betterment, deferment of renewal and the value of recovered materials.

- Where requested, and it is reasonably practicable, the highway authority will make provision at the undertaker’s expense for necessary areas or strips for carrying services alongside carriageways and for duct and service crossings.

- The process for designating a protected street shall be in accordance with The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) Regulations 2007.

- When a designation for a protected street has been made, the NSG Concessionaire shall be notified.

- Details of the date of designation, particulars of the street to enable it to be readily identified and particulars of all consents to the placing of apparatus in the street shall be added to the Additional Street Data.

- Once designated as protected, undertaker’s apparatus may only be placed in the street, (except by way of renewal), with the street authority’s consent, although lateral crossings will normally be allowed. Where consent is granted subject to conditions, then the street authority may contribute to the undertaker’s expenses in complying with those conditions.

- Where consent is given by the street authority a fee may be charged in respect of the legal and other expenses incurred in granting the consent together with an annual fee for administering the consent.

- Highway maintenance and repairs will generally be carried out at night, weekends or other times when there will be less impact on traffic.

**Standards**

- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991

- Traffic Management Act 2004

- The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) Regulations 2007

8.12 Streets with Special Engineering Difficulty

Once a street has been designated with “special engineering difficulties” (SED) in accordance with the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, the activities of statutory undertakers and the highway authority must be carefully planned and executed to avoid damage to or failure of the street or the associated structure. Promoters of street works in a street designated with SED must have plans and sections of the proposed works approved by each authority with an interest in the structure concerned.

A street will be designated with SED where there are concerns over bridges and other structures, cuttings and embankments, pipelines, etc. In respect of cellars that may in part be under the highway, it is the responsibility of the owner of the cellar to notify the street authority which in turn will notify promoters before work commences. However, in view of the extra requirements that are placed on promoters of street works, streets will only be designated with SED where it is absolutely necessary and reviews of designations will be undertaken periodically so that any that are considered to be unnecessary can be withdrawn.

Policy

• Northamptonshire County Council is responsible for designating sections of streets with SED, maintaining a list of such designations and creating the appropriate additional street data, (ASD), record.

• In view of the potential financial and practical implications for both Northamptonshire County Council and statutory undertakers, designation will only be contemplated when it is absolutely essential.

• Where Northamptonshire County Council considers it necessary to designate a street with SED, or it is requested to do so by an undertaker or the owner of a structure, it will consult fully with undertakers, bridge authorities and owners of relevant structures on the SED designation or withdrawal of an existing SED designation.

• Northamptonshire County Council will carefully consider all arguments for and against proposals or requests for SED designation.

• The presence of a bridge or structure that is likely to be effected by street works will not automatically lead to the street being designated with SED and other safeguards covered by the NRSWA should be considered as an alternative.

• Periodic reviews of SEDs will be undertaken to establish that they are still required. SED designations that are no longer required will be withdrawn.

Officer Guidance

• The term SED relates to streets that may have structures in or adjacent to them or that may be of extraordinary construction. The street authority is responsible for designating streets with SED and creating the appropriate record.
A street will only be designated with SED where it is strictly necessary and cannot be safeguarded by provisions contained in the NRSA such as section 69 (other apparatus in the street), sections 88 and 89 (bridges and sewers) and section 93 (level crossings and tramways). Designations should not be made routinely wherever there is a bridge or structure likely to be affected by street works.

A full consultation will be carried out with undertakers, bridge authorities and owners of relevant structures where an SED designation is proposed or is being considered.

Where the concern is for individual structures or localised areas of cuttings and embankments, it will only be necessary to designate the adjacent area as opposed to the whole of the street.

Requests for streets to be designated with SED may be received from transport authorities or undertakers. All such requests will be carefully considered along with arguments for and against before a decision is reached as to make or not make a designation. In the event of a request to designate being declined, the transport authority or undertaker making the request may appeal to the Secretary of State.

As it is not practicable for the street authority to identify all cellars under the highway it is the responsibility of the cellar owner to notify the highway authority under section 180 of the Highways Act 1980 if they wish to carry out works. The highway authority will then notify undertakers with apparatus in the street accordingly.

In the event of the street authority or an undertaker wishing to carry out works in areas where it is known, or it might be reasonably expected to be known, that there are cellars under the highway, then notification should be given to the cellar owners or frontagers of the intention to carry out excavations that are close to, or which are likely to impinge upon, cellars.

To ensure that SED designations are appropriate, periodic reviews will be carried out to see that the designations are still required and, where the circumstances have changed and the designation is no longer necessary, arrangements will be made, in consultation with all interested parties, to withdraw the designation.

Standards

- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- Traffic Management Act 2004
- The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) Regulations 2007
- Highways Act 1980
8.13 Sections 56, 56A & 66 NRSWA 1991 – Directions

For all other streets not covered by the permit scheme, the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, (NRSWA), provides powers whereby the street authority can give directions over the timing of proposed works and also give directions for works that are in progress and serious traffic disruption has arisen as a consequence of the works.

Under the NRSWA powers are also in place that enable the street authority to direct a works promoter not to place apparatus in a street if it is considered that the apparatus and its maintenance would cause serious traffic disruption. This power does not extend to existing apparatus.

A final power enables a street authority, if it believes that a works promoter is causing an obstruction by occupying more of the street or taking longer to complete the works than is reasonably necessary, to issue a notice to direct a promoter to reduce the obstruction or remove it altogether.

Northamptonshire County Council will at all times work closely with works promoters on these issues.

Policy

- Where Northamptonshire County Council considers that proposed street works would be likely to cause serious traffic disruption that would be avoided if the works were carried out at other specified times, it may issue a direction to the promoter of the works under section 56 of the NRSWA setting out the dates and times during which the proposed works may be carried out.

- In the event of serious traffic disruption occurring once works have started, Northamptonshire County Council may issue a direction to the promoter if such disruption would be avoided or reduced if the works were carried out at other specific times.

- A direction may be issued for immediate works only if does not result in danger to life or property.

- Northamptonshire County Council will not issue any direction for a promoter to undertake works outside of normal working hours where it may cause the promoter to breach noise legislation. Where directions are given to undertake works outside of normal working hours, Northamptonshire County Council will be responsible for reaching agreement with the environmental health officer for the area over noise issues.

- In the event that Northamptonshire County Council considers that the placing of apparatus in a street will cause serious traffic disruption, it may give directions to the promoter under section 56A not to place that apparatus in the street.

- Where Northamptonshire County Council considers that a promoter is causing an obstruction by occupying more of the street, or taking longer to complete the works, than is reasonable, it may issue a notice under section 66 to direct the promoter either to reduce the obstruction or remove it altogether within 24 hours or any longer period specified in the notice.
Northamptonshire County Council will work closely with all promoters and endeavour to resolve issues and avoid any disputes.

Officer Guidance

Where it is considered that major, standard or minor works proposed via a section 54 or 55 notice will cause serious traffic disruption, a section 56 direction may be issued before the works start setting out the dates and times during which the works may be carried out.

Once major, standard or minor works have started and it is considered that circumstances causing serious traffic disruption have subsequently arisen, a section 56(1A) direction may be issued specifying times when the works can be undertaken so that the disruption would be avoided or reduced.

In the event of immediate works causing serious traffic disruption, a direction under section 56(1A) may be issued provided that it does not result in danger to life or property.

All section 56 and 56(1A) directions are subject to the following constraints:

(i) it cannot affect the right of a promoter to execute emergency works
(ii) it can be used only where proposed street works are likely to cause serious traffic disruption that would be avoided or reduced if the works were carried out at other specific times
(iii) it can be used only where subsisting street works are causing, or are likely to cause, serious traffic disruption that would be avoided or reduced if the works were carried out at other specific times
(iv) a direction requiring street works to be executed out of normal working hours should not be issued if it would cause the undertaker to breach noise abatement or prevention legislation.

Where a direction is issued for works to be carried out at night, it is the street authority's responsibility to reach agreement with the local environmental health officer on any resultant noise issues.

Where it is considered that the placing of apparatus in a street will cause serious traffic disruption the promoter may be directed under a section 56 notice not to place apparatus in the street. An alternative street may be suggested but the promoter cannot be directed to place the apparatus in the alternative street.

A section 56A direction is subject to the following constraints:

(i) it applies only to new apparatus
(ii) it can be used only where disruption would be reduced by installing the apparatus in an alternative street, (this applies only to the initial installation of the apparatus, the likely disruption over the life of the apparatus due to maintenance work cannot be included)
(iii) it can be used only where it is reasonable to require the promoter not to place the apparatus in the proposed street
• Works such as maintenance of existing apparatus and customer connections cannot be subject to a section 56A direction.

• A section 56A direction may be revoked using a revised section 56A notice.

• If it is considered that a works promoter is causing an obstruction by occupying more of the street or is taking longer to complete the works than is reasonable, a section 66 notice may be issued directing the promoter to reduce the obstruction or remove it altogether. The promoter must comply with this direction within 24 hours or such other time as may be specified in the notice.

• To avoid the issue of directions under these sections, any concerns should be discussed with the promoter of the proposed works at the earliest opportunity.

• While every effort will be made to try and resolve disputes without having to refer them to a formal appeals procedure.

Standards


• Traffic Management act 2004.

• The Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Street Works and Works for Road Purposes and Related Matters. 3rd Edition.

• The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) (England) Regulations 2007.

• The Technical Specification for the Electronic Transfer of Notices (EToN)

• The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works.

8.14 Street Gazetteer and Additional Street Data

Northamptonshire County Council produces and maintains a Local Street Gazetteer, (LSG), for all streets within its geographical area, whether or not it is the street authority for any particular street. This forms part of the National Street Gazetteer (NSG) and Associated Street Data which is designed to be an unambiguous referencing system that will identify any length of street in England and Wales and conforms to the British standard, BS7666.

The system specifies a format for holding details on every street, each of which is assigned a Unique Street Reference Number, (USRN), and provides a complete list of all streets with their names. It also includes a description of the details of ownership or interest and reinstatement obligations in each particular street together with other information relevant to that street such as traffic sensitivity, special engineering difficulties, etc. It is specifically designed to support the electronic transfer of Street Works Notices using a unique street key.
Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will create, maintain and publish a street gazetteer of its geographical area to a level as specified and defined by BS 7666.
- New and/or private streets will be registered as provisional streets and a declaration that a street is likely to become a maintainable highway will be made.
- Northamptonshire County Council will ensure that the Additional Street Data, (ASD), both mandatory and optional groups, will be updated.

Officer Guidance

- The Highway Register Team will maintain the LSG/NSG in liaison with the concessionaire and Northamptonshire County Council’s IT section.
- When proposed works are notified against a provisional street it will be necessary to allocate a USRN, notify the works promoter and create an entry in the LSG and NSG.
- A declaration should be made if a street is likely to become maintainable highway.
- ASD will be provided in accordance with requirements set by the NSG.
- Records of interest for other authorities, works promoters or interested parties should be submitted by the party concerned to the NSG Concessionaire for entering into the ASD who will administer the process.
- Updating of the ASD will be done periodically.

Standards

- The Technical Specification for the Electronic Transfer of Notices (EToN)
- The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works.

8.15 The Register

Section 53 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, (NRSWA), requires each street authority to maintain a register for every street for which it is responsible within its geographical area. The register should contain information about street works and other prescribed types of works.
For streets that are not maintainable highways, the street authority are the street managers however, as this may place an unreasonable burden on the street managers, the regulations exempt them from having to keep registers and this responsibility rests with the highway authority to keep the register in respect of non-maintainable highways.

Northamptonshire County Council maintains a GIS map based register that carries information on all on-going and planned works by undertakers and the highway authority together with details of all streets in the authority's area and associated data for each street where relevant, such as Traffic Sensitive Streets, Protected streets, and Streets with Special Engineering Difficulties.

Northamptonshire County Council's register will also acts as the notice management system, receiving street works notices electronically.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will maintain a register for every street within its geographical area other than those that are the responsibility of another street authority.

- The register will be kept on a GIS system that is nationally consistent and with changes published on a regular update cycle.

- The register will record all information in respect of notices, directions, details, etc., relating to any street as set down in section 4(4) of The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) (England) Regulations 2007.

- The register will be published on Northamptonshire County Council’s public web site in a read only form and will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week except for times when it is necessary to upgrade or maintain the system.

- Confidential and restricted information will not be available on the published register and undertakers should indicate where information is confidential or restricted on their notices.

- Information provided by means of a notice under NRSWA will be retained on the register for at least six years following completion of the guarantee period of the works referred to in the notice.

Officer Guidance

- The register will contain details of every street for which Northamptonshire County Council is responsible together with details of all streets that are not maintainable highways, (i.e. non-publicly maintainable or private streets), within its geographical area. It will not contain details of streets that are the responsibility of another street authority.

- The register will be in accordance with BS 7666-1 2006 “Spatial Data Sets for Geographical Referencing – Specification for a Street Gazetteer” and will be nationally consistent and regularly updated.

- Information that the register must record is tabulated in the Regulations.
• Read only access is to be available to the public at all times except when the system is down for maintenance or upgrading.

• To cover the eventuality of a legal claim being brought in respect of works, information provided by a notice under NRSWA or via the Permit Scheme should be retained on the register for at least six years after completion of the guarantee period for works referred to in the notice and six years after completion for other works.

Standards


• Traffic Management act 2004.

• The Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Street Works and Works for Road Purposes and Related Matters. 3rd Edition.

• Spatial Data Sets For Geographical Referencing – Specification for a Street Gazetteer. BS 7666-1. 2006

• The Street Works (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) (England) Regulations 2007.

• The Technical Specification for the Electronic Transfer of Notices (EToN)

• The Northamptonshire Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works.

8.16 Cross Boundary Agreements

To enable people and goods to travel freely and safely around the country there should be a smooth transition between neighbouring authorities as well as between county highway authorities and the motorway and trunk road network, which is maintained by the Highways Agency. In few other situations is this more important than with the salting of roads during wintery conditions. However, there are other times when it is necessary to have in place lines of agreement, consultation and co-ordination with adjoining authorities to avoid a potential conflict between activities.

The Highways Act 1980 makes a number of provisions that, by agreement, allow authorities to carry out works on the road network of other highway authorities.

An agreement under Section 4 of the Act enables the Highways Agency to undertake work on a local authority’s roads and is usually where the local authority’s road is affected by construction or improvement works on an adjacent trunk road. Provision is also included for the local authority to contribute towards the Highways Agency’s costs.

Section 5 is basically the opposite of Section 4 and allows the local highway authority to carry out construction or maintenance works on a road for which the Highways Agency is the highway authority.

Section 8 gives adjoining highway authorities the power to enter into agreements with each other in respect of the construction, reconstruction, alterations, improvement or maintenance of the
highway for which any party to the agreement are the highway authority. It enables a highway authority to carry out the functions of another highway authority and have the same powers, rights and liabilities of that authority. This section is most commonly used for cross boundary salting operations.

Northamptonshire County Council will liaise and co-operate with adjoining authorities and the Highways Agency over its activities which are expected to extend over boundaries or to have an effect outside of its area of jurisdiction. This will include:

- The co-ordination of planned events, street works and road works where they are likely to have an effect outside Northamptonshire.
- The development of diversionary routes and abnormal load routes.
- Emergency plans.
- Joint working on construction/improvement schemes undertaken at authority boundaries.
- The general sharing of information.

**Policy**

- Northamptonshire County Council will liaise closely with adjoining highway authorities over its activities where they are likely to have an effect or consequences outside Northamptonshire.
- When the situation arises, Northamptonshire County Council will enter into agreements with the Highways Agency under sections 4 and 5 of the Highways Act 1980.
- Where it is beneficial operationally, Northamptonshire County Council will enter into agreements with adjacent highway authorities under section 8 of the Highways Act 1980 to enable salting of roads by others who are party to the agreement.
- Neighbouring highway authorities will be involved in the co-ordination of planned events, street and road works where it is anticipated that these activities will impact on that authority’s highway network.
- Northamptonshire County Council will liaise with adjacent highway authorities and the Highways Agency with the view to developing emergency diversion routes and routes designated for use by abnormal loads.
- Where significant works of construction, improvement or maintenance are proposed at or near the county boundary, Northamptonshire County Council will liaise with the adjacent highway authority with a view to combining works to achieve benefits of economy of scale and to minimise disruption to road users.
- Northamptonshire County Council, as the highway authority, will freely exchange emergency plans, policies and other information with adjoining authorities and members of regional groups.
**Officer Guidance**

- Contacts will be established with each adjoining highway authority for the initial approach over cross boundary matters. Subsequent discussions will be with that authority’s officer responsible for the issue in question.

- The Highways Agency will be permitted to carry out works on Northamptonshire’s county road network subject to the entering into an agreement under section 4 of the Highways Act 1980 by both authorities.

- Where it is found necessary for Northamptonshire County Council to undertake works on a road for which the Highways Agency is the highway authority, both authorities will enter into an agreement under section 5 of the Highways Act.

- During the summer months, and as soon as possible following amendments to Northamptonshire County Council’s salting routes, cross boundary salting arrangements will be agreed with the adjacent highway authorities and confirmed by an exchange of letters.

- Where cross-border arrangements with adjoining highway authorities are in place, treatment under snow conditions, adverse weather conditions or in response to Police requests following accidents will be carried out by the authority within whose area the treatment is required.

- Liaison and co-ordination with adjacent highway authorities over planned events, street works and road works that may have an effect on their highway network will be undertaken through Regional HAUC and/or by direct contact with the respective street works teams.

- Designated routes for the movement of abnormal loads will be developed and agreed with adjacent highway authorities and the Police. Consideration should be given to both abnormal weight and height of loads.

- Prior to undertaking works on strategic roads at or near the county boundary, the adjacent highway authority should be approached to see if there are any planned works at or near its boundary that could be incorporated in a joint scheme to reduce costs and minimise the disruption to road users that would be caused by having two occasions where traffic control was in operation.

**Standards**

- Highways Act 1980
- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- Traffic Management Act 2004
9.0 Highway Regulation

9.1 Highway Regulation and Licensing

While most works that are undertaken by the highway are permitted under statute, i.e. works on behalf of the highway authority and those carried out by the statutory undertakers, (water, gas, etc.), there are other activities that require the issue of a licence, permit or consent by the highway authority. These include skips, scaffolds, seats, notice boards, etc., and in some cases, require the payment of a fee to Northamptonshire County Council.

In most cases the highway authority will grant the issue of the licence, permit or consent, but it needs to consider that the activity concerned will not create a hazard or difficulties for other highway users. Consequently, there may be occasions where it is necessary to refuse the request.

The Highways Act 1980 identifies a number of actions that may be carried out on the highway that are unlawful and the party carrying out these actions is committing an offence under the Act. Examples are the placing of unauthorised signs and objects on the highway, damaging the surface of the highway, enclosing part of the highway and gaining vehicular access to a property without the benefit of a properly constructed verge or footway crossing.

To ensure compliance with the legislation governing activities on the highway, Northamptonshire County Council will take enforcement action against any unlawful activity.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will issue licences, permits and consents, on payment of the designated fee where appropriate, where it is satisfied that the proposed activity and any associated works to protect the public, will not cause unreasonable difficulties for other users of the highway.

- Wherever possible, requests for licences, permits and consents will be dealt with promptly so as not to cause any unnecessary delay to the applicant.

- Northamptonshire County Council will investigate unauthorised activities and will take enforcement action as necessary.

Officer Guidance

- Requests for skips, scaffolds, hoardings, etc., need to be considered to determine if there will be an adverse effect on the highway or highway users.

- The Procedure for Stopping Up of the Highway under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 will be followed for all requests for stopping up orders.

- Regular spot checks will be undertaken to ensure that the signing and lighting of skips satisfies the legislation.

- Licences permits and consents will be checked to ensure compliance with the conditions.

- Unauthorised activities will be investigated and enforcement action taken where necessary.
Standards

- Highways Act 1980
- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- Traffic Management Act 2004
- Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
- Public Health Act 1925 and other relevant legislation.

9.2 Fees for Licences, Permits and Consents

There are a number of permitted activities that can be carried out under, over or on the highway by other than the highway authority or the statutory undertakers. The most common of these are the placing of builder’s skips and scaffolds on the highway but there are many other activities for which a licence, consent or agreement may be granted by Northamptonshire County Council as the highway authority. These include the construction of vehicle accesses, the placing of building materials on the highway, the installation of private apparatus, (e.g. a private water supply), the cultivation of the highway verge and the construction of buildings over the highway.

These licences, consents and agreements are issued under various legislation including the Highways Act 1980; the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. In most cases, the legislation permits Northamptonshire County Council to recover its reasonable costs in administering the granting of the licence, consent or agreement. These costs are generated by the assessment/investigation of the request; consultation with other parties; in some cases, legal fees; supervision and monitoring of the activity; enforcement and the issue of the licence, consent or agreement and keeping of records.

There are some activities for which the legislation makes no provision for recovering costs and these mainly relate to the issue of consents to other local authorities such as district, borough and town and parish councils.

The carrying out of activities on the highway without the granting of a licence, consent or agreement by Northamptonshire County Council constitutes an offence under the relevant legislation over which Northamptonshire County Council will take formal enforcement action against the party or parties concerned.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will not unreasonably withhold the granting of a licence, consent or agreement where the request is considered to be appropriate and in accordance with the relevant legislation.

- Northamptonshire County Council reserves the right to refuse the granting of a licence, consent or agreement if it considers that the proposed activity or works will have an unreasonable effect on the highway or highway users.
Where permitted under legislation, Northamptonshire County Council will recover all reasonable costs associated with the granting of a licence, consent or agreement.

Under its Network Management Duty, Northamptonshire County Council will impose charges for the temporary occupancy of the highway based on the area or length of highway taken out of use by the activity covered by the licence, consent or agreement.

Enforcement action under the relevant legislation will be taken by Northamptonshire County Council in those cases where unauthorised activities, works, etc., are undertaken without the granting of a licence, consent or agreement.

Northamptonshire County Council will periodically review the scale of fees for licences, consents and agreements to ensure that they reflect the true cost of administering them.

**Officer Guidance**

- All applications for licences, consents or agreements will be assessed to ensure that they are appropriate, alternative arrangements are not available and to ensure that the rights of other highway users are not compromised.

- Where the granting of a licence, consent or agreement is not approved, the applicant will be advised of the reasons leading to the decision.

- Where appropriate, the granting of a licence, consent or agreement will not be made until the applicant has agreed in writing to the conditions of issue and, where levied, the necessary fee has been paid.

- Skip licences will not be issued unless payment has been received by Northamptonshire County Council. Invoices will only be issued for skips that have been placed on the highway without a licence.

- Random sample checks will be undertaken at licensed sites to ensure the full compliance with the licence conditions. Enforcement action will be considered where there is non-compliance.

- Where activities take place on the highway without the granting of a licence, consent or agreement, formal enforcement action will be taken against the party responsible.

- A periodic assessment of the scale of fees will be undertaken to ensure that increases in costs are accounted for in the charges for the licence, consent or permit.

**Standards**

- Highways Act 1980
- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
- Public Health Act 1925
- Public Health Acts 1890

The rights of the public to use the highway are established and cannot be removed by the unlawful enclosure or encroachment of any part of the highway, regardless of how long such enclosure or encroachment exists. The law of adverse possession applies to land ownership but does not apply to highway rights over it. However, it may be necessary to close parts of the highway to support development and formalise an unlawful enclosure or encroachment. To carry out this action and for other cases like it, a formal application must be made to Northamptonshire County Council, as the highway authority, for a stopping up order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will consider all applications for a stopping up order Northamptonshire Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980.

- Where Northamptonshire County Council considers that the area of highway that is proposed to be stopped up is still required for highway purposes; the stopping up would be inappropriate to the rest of the street scene; or for other reasons that would make the stopping up disadvantageous to highway users, Northamptonshire County Council will reject the application.

- All costs and legal fees associated with the making of a stopping up order will be payable by the applicant.

Officer Guidance

- Northamptonshire County Council will consult with the local district and parish councils over the proposal as they have absolute right of veto over any proposed stopping up under s116 of the Highways Act. In this even the application will not be progressed.

- The Council will contact all statutory undertakers to ascertain if they have any objections.

- The application is to be posted on site, in the local newspapers and the London Gazette.

- An application to the local magistrate’s court needs to be made and court attended.

- Local Authorities (Transport Charges) Regulations 1998
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953
- Litter Act 1983
- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
9.4 Stopping up of the Highway: Section 247 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990

There are further situations where it may be necessary to close parts of the highway to support development;

- The release of part of the highway to the adjoining landowner where it is considered by the highway authority that the area is no longer required;
- To close whole sections of a highway to accommodate changes to the network.

For these cases given above, it is necessary for the applicant to apply to the Secretary of State for an order under Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will consider all applications for a stopping up order under Section 247 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- Where Northamptonshire County Council considers that the area of highway that is proposed to be stopped up is still required for highway purposes; the stopping up would be inappropriate to the rest of the street scene; or for other reasons that would make the stopping up disadvantageous to highway users, Northamptonshire County Council will reject the application.

Officer Guidance

- Northamptonshire County Council will consult with the local district and parish councils over the proposal as they have absolute right of veto over any proposed stopping up under s116 of the Highways Act. In this event the application will not be progressed.
- The Council will contact all statutory undertakers to ascertain if they have any objections.
- The application is to be posted on site, in the local newspapers and the London Gazette.
- An application to the local magistrate’s court needs to be made and court attended.

Standards

- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990

9.5 Gating Orders

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 included provision to amend the Highways Act 1980 in relation to the making of gating orders. These amendments allow Northamptonshire County Council to make, vary or revoke gating orders in respect of minor highways such as footpaths, bridleways, cycle tracks and unclassified roads. The effect of a gating order is to restrict public access to any such highway by gating it without removing its highway status such as occurs with stopping up orders. A gating order does not require the highway to be designated as a high crime area by the Secretary of State. It can be used where there are crime and/or anti-social
behaviour issues, and may still be introduced by Northamptonshire County Council even where objections are made if the authority considers its introduction would be in the best interests of the community. They may also be used as an interim measure to restrict access to the highway while seeking to revoke highway status.

Gating orders are intended as a temporary measure and Northamptonshire County Council, as the highway authority, will keep them under review so that where there are changes to crime and anti-social behaviour patterns, the highway restrictions can be varied or revoked.

**Policy**

- Gating orders will be considered where:
  1. Premises adjoining or adjacent to the highway are affected by crime or anti-social behaviour.
  2. The existence of the highway is facilitating the persistent commission of criminal offences or anti-social behaviour.
  3. It is in all the circumstances expedient to make the order for the purposes of reducing crime or anti-social behaviour.

- There must be evidence of previous, unsuccessful action taken to deal with crime/anti-social behaviour on the section of highway in question.

- Where appropriate, a gating order may be made to be effective part-time only.

- Requests will be considered on a case by case basis.

- Northamptonshire County Council will keep all gating orders under review and where considered appropriate, will vary or revoke the order to reflect changes that have taken place.

**Officer Guidance**

- All applications for gating orders will be considered and approved by Northamptonshire County Council before being submitted to a Review Panel which will determine if the application should go forward.

- Consideration must be given to the likely effect which the making of an order would have on the occupiers of premises adjoining or adjacent to the highway in question.

- The likely effect which the making of an order may have on the occupiers or other persons in the locality should also be taken into account.

- Where the highway subject to the proposed order forms a through route, reasonable alternatives should be explored.

- A gating order only temporarily suspends the public right of access and where a more permanent closure is required consideration should be given to a closure by means of a stopping up order.
Where a part-time gating order is implemented, arrangements will need to be made for the opening and closing of the highway in question at the appropriate times. For this the cooperation of local people to take the responsibility for opening and closing the highway should be sought.

Where a proposal goes forward to the consultation stage, regular site checks will be undertaken to ensure that all relevant notices are in place and clearly visible during the 28 day objection period.

In the event of an objection being made against the proposed order by other than the Police, Fire and Rescue Service or NHS Trust, consideration should be given to revising the terms of the proposed order in such a way as to reduce the likelihood of objections being made.

Gating orders are intended to be used as a deterrent while the crime or anti-social behaviour is persistent, therefore all gating orders are to be reviewed at twelve monthly intervals in order to determine whether the closure needs to be made permanent, revoked or amended.

Once a gating order has been made, a copy of the order will be prominently displayed on site and maintained as such for as long as the order is enforced. A copy will also be published on Northamptonshire County Council’s web site.

A register will be maintained of all existing, proposed making, variation or revoking orders and this will be available for general inspection.

Standards

- The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- Section 129A -129G, Highways Act 1980

9.6 Memorials on the Highway

The sites of fatal accidents are increasingly being marked by floral tributes, usually immediately following the incident, but occasionally on the anniversary of the accident. Such tributes are temporary and create few problems, although where the cellophane wrappings are left there can be an issue over litter, requests are also received for more permanent memorials. These can be for plaques or small monuments placed at the site of the incident within the limits of the public highway.

Such memorials can be a distraction for motorists and are potentially an obstruction on the public highway. Their long term presence raises concerns over the maintenance, repair and insurance issues which in time are likely to rest with the highway authority. The memorials could become an attraction for vandalism, causing distress to relatives. In time, there could become a proliferation of memorials.
As there are alternative means of leaving a memorial to the victim of an accident, plaques and monuments will not be permitted by Northamptonshire County Council for this purpose.

**Policy**

- Permanent roadside memorials to traffic accident victims will not be permitted within the limits of the public highway.
- Advice will be given to applicants regarding alternative means of creating a permanent memorial.

**Officer Guidance**

- This is a sensitive issue and applications for memorials should be treated accordingly.
- The reasons for refusing requests for roadside memorials are namely:
  
  (i) They may be a distraction for drivers
  
  (ii) They are potentially an obstruction on the public highway.
  
  (iii) There are issues over the long term maintenance, repair and insurance of the memorial.
  
  (iv) It is likely that they will become an attraction for vandals.
  
  (v) Approval could lead to an unwanted proliferation of memorials.
  
  (vi) Alternative means of memorial are available.

- Alternative means of providing a memorial within the public highway already exist, namely:

  (i) A tree planted in accordance with Policy.
  
  (ii) The planting of the highway verge subject to a licence agreement.
  
  (iii) Seats, notice boards or other items for community use controlled by the local district, town or parish council.
  
  (iv) A memorial placed adjacent to the highway by agreement with the landowner and subject to planning requirements.

- A Memorial Removal Notice should be left on a roadside memorial requesting the memorial is removed before it is removed by Northamptonshire County Council.

**Standards**

- Highways Act 1980
9.7 Monuments and Historic Structures on the Highway

There are many monuments and historic structures in the highway where ownership or the responsibility for maintenance is unclear. These are an important part of the heritage of Northamptonshire and it is important that the item and its location should be maintained.

Most monuments and historic structures within the highway boundaries are bridges. Provision for the general maintenance of these structures is included in the appropriate County Council budgets and any works are carried out by the highways Service Provider. There are other monuments within the County, such as market crosses, dovecotes, etc., that are listed as County Heritage Sites and are open to the public and owned by the Northamptonshire County Council or are in private ownership with Northamptonshire County Council acting as guardian. Some of these are outside the limits of the highway. Where the ownership or maintenance responsibility for items within the highway cannot be established, Northamptonshire County Council will undertake essential maintenance to ensure the safety of the public but will also encourage the respective town or parish council to take on the responsibility for future maintenance.

Requests are received occasionally for memorials or other commemorative features of public interest to be placed within or adjoining the highway. Northamptonshire County Council may give consent for these under the appropriate legislation. Licences can also be granted for the placing of seats and the cultivation of the adjacent verges for planting to compliment the memorial or commemorative feature. Due to the public interest that such memorials generate, it is often necessary to provide facilities within the highway to accommodate parking and pedestrian access to the item in question and the funding of these works should be taken into account when determining the total cost of the project.

Personal memorials to road accident victims are excluded from this policy.

Policy

- Highway bridges and structures that are listed or designated as ancient monument will be maintained by Northamptonshire County Council through its highways Service Provider and in liaison with the County Archaeological Advisor and English Heritage.

- Northamptonshire County Council will undertake essential maintenance to all other monuments and historic structures within the highway where the ownership or maintenance responsibility cannot be established to make them safe.

- Where the ownership or maintenance responsibility for a monument or structure cannot be established, Northamptonshire County Council will encourage the town or parish council for the location to take on the future maintenance responsibility.

- Consideration will be given to the granting of licences and consents for the erection of memorials and commemorative features on the public highway.

Officer/Service Provider Guidance

- Maintenance work will be carried out to ensure that all items are kept in a good state of repair.

- Wherever possible, all materials used in maintenance shall match the existing.
No work shall be carried out, (unless it is in the immediate interests of public safety), until a method statement and schedule of materials has been submitted to and approved by Northamptonshire County Council's Historic and Cultural Environment section and where applicable, English Heritage.

In the event of damage due to vehicle impact or vandalism, any displaced materials shall be recovered as soon as possible and taken to a safe storage point for re-use.

In the event of a monument or structure within the highway becoming unsafe or presenting a hazard to the public, and the ownership is unknown, minimum works will be undertaken to make the site safe. Any re-usable materials are to be taken to a secure storage location.

Requests for new monuments shall be considered with due regard to the nature of the item; the future maintenance provisions; the likely public interest that it will attract; the type of road that it will abut and the traffic flows that are carried; the available space within the highway to enable vehicles to safely pull off the road and park and supporting features such as the provision of seats, interpretation panels and planting.

The promoter will be responsible for all design costs, obtaining the necessary planning permission and clearance by statutory undertakers.

No work will be permitted on the highway without the promoter obtaining the necessary licences and permissions.

Standards

- Highways Act 1980
- Public Health Acts 1890 and 1925
- War memorials Act 1923
- NCC Standard details
- Sites and Monuments Records

9.8 Trading on the Highway - Street Café Licences

Northamptonshire County Council acknowledges that there is an increasing demand for the setting out of tables and chairs on the pavement outside premises such as cafes and bars. While Northamptonshire County Council will consider issuing a licence for the placing of tables and chairs on the pavement, it has also to consider the needs of other users of the highway, particularly those with disabilities, and it is essential that controls are put in place to ensure that the pavement is not obstructed unnecessarily.

As well as protecting the interests of other highway users, Northamptonshire County Council will wish to see consideration given to the visual impact of street cafes on the existing street scene and will therefore require full details of the nature and layout of the tables, chairs, barriers, etc., prior to the granting of a licence.
Before applying for a licence, the applicant will need to consult with the Police, town or parish council, (if applicable), and the licensing authority. Subject to there being no objections from these consultations, the applicant will then need to consult with relevant borough or district council planning department to ascertain if planning permission is required and if necessary, this must be obtained before a licence will be granted.

Policy

- Tables and chairs shall be located immediately adjacent to the frontage of the premises.
- No obstruction shall be caused to pedestrians and there should normally be at least 1.8 metres clear width of footway available for use. For Category 1 footways this should be 2.4 metres.
- The entrance to the premises shall not be obstructed.
- The tables and chairs must be located in such a way to have regard for the needs of those with disabilities.
- Tables and chairs must be removed at close of trading each day and that part of the highway shall then be cleansed.
- Tables shall be cleared and cleaned as soon as they are vacated by a customer and the whole area shall be kept free of litter at all times.
- Suitable attractive planters of about 1 metre in height may be placed around the area with the tables and chairs to separate pedestrians using the footway from customers.
- The owner of the premises must ensure that the facility is conducted in an orderly manner at all times and that no nuisance or annoyance is caused by patrons to passers-by.
- Each business must hold public liability insurance in respect of all of the street café furniture.
- An annual fee for the licence issued under Section 115E of the Highways Act 1980 will be payable by the applicant.

Officer Guidance

- Prior to granting a street café licence, checks must be made to ascertain that the necessary consultations have taken place and, if necessary, planning permission has been granted.
- The positioning of tables and chairs outside a café should relate to the existing street scene and movement of pedestrians and should be seen as an integral part of the main premises.
- Where street cafes are to be located on a main pedestrian thoroughfare, the tables and chairs may be required to be enclosed in order to allow for ease of pedestrian movement.
- The positioning of tables, chairs, barriers, etc., should be spaced to allow for wheelchair and pram access and adequate emergency service and highway authority access must be permitted at all times.
When determining the minimum width of remaining clear footway, due consideration must be given to the location of existing street furniture.

Parasols may be required and should be of sturdy construction and firmly secured against strong winds when in use.

As a guide to the visually impaired, barriers and a means of enclosure may be considered. Post and chain barriers, hoop top garden fencing and small plant pots/tubs will not be permitted.

No street café furniture, barriers, parasols, etc., will be permitted to be stored on the highway when the premises are closed but should be stored securely within the premises.

The defined area and the area between the premises and the furniture must be kept free of litter, all spillages removed immediately and the area washed if necessary and all tables and chairs and the outdoor area must be regularly cleaned and food debris and waste must be removed immediately.

All glasses must be manufactured from polycarbonate safety glass.

No patio heaters will be permitted.

There must be no excessive levels of noise, disturbance, smell or other nuisances.

Music will not be permitted.

Evidence of the required level of public liability insurance cover must be produced by the applicant prior to the granting of the licence.

Any permission is not transferable to new owners.

Standards

- Northamptonshire County Council Street Café Licences – Guidance note for applicants, including general highway authority conditions.
- Highways Act 1980

9.9 Trading on the Highway - Advertising Boards

Northamptonshire County Council recognises that the use of free standing advertising boards, or “A” boards, can help attract people to businesses, especially where the business is not immediately apparent. Considerately designed signs can also add character and colour to the street scene. However, as with all potential obstructions of the highway, it is necessary to introduce a degree of control to protect other highway users, especially those with disabilities, and ensure that the highway is not obstructed unnecessarily.

Subject therefore to compliance with the following policy conditions, Northamptonshire County Council will give non-disapproval for the placing of advertising boards on the highway.
Policy

- Each business will be allowed up to two signs which must relate to the normal business carried out on at the premises.
- The sign shall be located immediately adjacent to the frontage of the premises unless the highway authority advises an alternative location in the interest of public safety.
- No obstruction shall be caused to pedestrians and there normally should be at least 1.8 metres width of clear footway available for use at all times. This should be increased to 2.4 metres on a Category 1 footway.
- The signs shall be double-faced; of a stable and sound construction and of good quality design. Details of construction and sign display are to be submitted to Northamptonshire County Council before the boards are permitted on the highway.
- Signs shall be approximately 1 metre in height and 0.75 metres in width with the two sides joined by braces or stays to prevent collapse of the sign.
- Signs shall be of a colour and size, (within the above limits), to enable them to be seen by the partially sighted, i.e. with a light border to contract with the background.
- Signs shall be removed at the close of trading each day and will be securely stored within the business premises.
- Each business must hold sufficient public liability insurance in respect of the advertising board.
- Any signs that do not comply with this policy will not be permitted and will be removed without notice by Northamptonshire County Council.

Officer Guidance

- The positioning of the sign(s) shall take into consideration the location of existing street furniture in the vicinity.
- The sign(s) shall be positioned to ensure clear access to the premises at all times for customers and emergency services.
- Where businesses are located immediately off the main thoroughfare, e.g. on a minor side road, alley, footpath or jetty, consideration may be given to placing the sign(s) on the main thoroughfare.
- The design of the sign display shall be assessed to ensure that it does not unreasonably offend other highway users.
- No signs are to be permitted on the highway after the close of trading.
- The owner of the sign(s) must produce evidence of the public liability insurance cover before the sign(s) may be placed on the highway.
Non-compliant signs may be removed without notice and taken to the Service Provider’s depot for collection by the owner. A retrieval fee will be payable by the owner and signs not collected after three months will be subject to disposal.

**Standards**

- Highways Act 1980

### 9.10 Trading on the Highway - Shop Front Displays

The display of goods in front of shop windows has been a part of the street scene for many years although in effect it is an obstruction of the highway and consequently could be considered to be an offence under the Highways Act. Northamptonshire County Council recognises that these displays of goods can help attract people to businesses and can enhance the street scene. However, as with all potential obstructions of the highway, it is necessary to introduce a degree of control to protect other highway users, especially those with disabilities, and ensure that the highway is not obstructed unnecessarily.

Subject therefore to compliance with the following policy conditions, Northamptonshire County Council will give non-disapproval for the display of goods on the highway.

**Policy**

- Where displays are less than 1 metre in height a suitable barrier such as attractive planters of about 1 metre in height shall be displayed to reduce the risk of pedestrians tripping over the goods.
- Goods must be kept within the frontage of the premises. They should not extend more than 1 metre from the front wall and should be no more than 1 metre in height.
- Goods must be arranged attractively to enhance the appearance of the street scene.
- All displays should be stable and must not present a danger or obstruction to members of the public.
- There should normally be a minimum of 1.8 metres clear width of footway available for use. This shall increase to 2.4 metres on Category 1 footways.
- Displays must be visible to the partially sighted, i.e. of a light colour to contrast with the background.
- The area used must be kept clear of litter at all times and, in the case of perishable goods, the displays cleared of deteriorating produce throughout the trading day.
- All displays must be removed at the end of each day’s trading and the area cleansed if required.
- No display units, tables, trestles, etc., are to remain on the highway at the end of each day’s trading but must be stored securely within the premises.
• Each business must hold sufficient public liability insurance in respect of the display of goods.

Officer Guidance

• The positioning of the goods display shall take into consideration the location of existing street furniture in the vicinity.
• The display shall be positioned to ensure clear access to the premises at all times for customers, the emergency services and the highway authority.
• No displays are to be permitted on the highway after the close of trading.
• The owner of the business must produce evidence of the public liability insurance cover before the display may be placed on the highway.
• Shop owners will be instructed to remove non-compliant displays immediately.

Standards

• Highways Act 1980

9.11 Landscaping in the Highway by Other Local Authorities

The value of planting within the highway should not be underestimated. The planting of trees and bushes can be used to add interest to an otherwise plain area of grass verge; it can break up and soften the outline of buildings; provides replacements for felled trees and introduces a habitat for wildlife. The use of planters and flower beds at the entrance to towns and villages provides a local welcome to visitors and can act as a “gateway” giving a message to drivers that they are entering a populated area.

This does not mean that all areas of grass verge and highway open space should be covered with planting. The highway is there to enable the public to pass and re-pass and it is the duty of Northamptonshire County Council to protect and uphold this right. Visibility at bends, junctions and accesses must be protected and plenty of room should remain for pedestrians to use as a refuge if there is a need to get off the road to avoid vehicular traffic. It is therefore necessary to carefully consider planting proposals to ensure that the public with not be endangered or inconvenienced by such schemes.

While Northamptonshire County Council may include some planting in new road schemes, the majority of planting within the highway is promoted by local authorities. Individual residents may wish to plant a tree in a prominent position in memory of a loved one, but in the interests of future maintenance, this can only be carried out if the respective town or parish council is prepared to undertake the responsibility for the planting. The authority promoting the planting scheme must accept responsibility for maintenance in perpetuity.
Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will consider applications from other local authorities for the planting of trees and shrubs in the highway in their area.
- Where the proposals are acceptable, Northamptonshire County Council will give its consent to the local authority subject to the latter’s acceptance of certain conditions.
- Northamptonshire County Council will reserve the right to refuse consent for a local authority to plant trees or shrubs in the highway.
- Where it is considered necessary for the improvement of the highway, to protect the rights of the public to use the highway or for any other reason, Northamptonshire County Council may request the local authority to remove any or all of the planting and restore the land to highway verge.
- The responsibility for the maintenance of the planting will rest in perpetuity with the local authority promoting the scheme.
- Northamptonshire County Council will not be responsible for any costs in connection with such schemes.

Officer Guidance

- Other local authorities are defined as including the following
  - Parish Councils
  - District Councils
  - Borough Councils
- All planting schemes submitted under Section 96(5) of the Highways Act 1980 shall be carefully considered to ensure that highway visibility and safety at junctions, bends and private accesses is not compromised and that the rights of the public are upheld.
- When deciding on the location of trees consideration shall be given to the level of risk of a vehicle leaving the road and colliding with the tree.
- Planting should be designed to avoid interference with overhead or underground statutory undertakers’ apparatus both at the initial time of planting and when the trees and shrubs mature.
- Only approved species of tree and shrub listed in the attached schedule shall be planted in the highway.
- Planting distances from the carriageway edge and property boundaries shall be strictly observed to avoid root damage to the highway and properties and to minimise the effect of leaf fall and drippings from trees forming ice patches in the winter.
- Where possible, and to create the greatest effect, trees and shrubs should be planted in groups or belts and in odd numbers.
• Consideration shall be given to replacement planting where the distance criterion is not met.

• The promoting local authority shall be encouraged to carry out the planting in the autumn or failing that, the early spring to ensure good survival rates for the plants.

• No consent will be granted until the promoting local authority has agreed and signed up to the conditions and that evidence of approval from the statutory undertakers and adjacent land owners has been passed to Northamptonshire County Council.

Standards

• Highways Act 1980

• Chapter 8 “Traffic Signs Measures and Signs for Road Works and Temporary Situations” of the Traffic Signs Manual.

9.12 Licence to Plant Trees, Shrubs etc in the Highway. Section 142 Highways Act 1980

The public highway, generally, stretches from one boundary to the other and includes all roads, footways and verges within that area. The Highways Act permits the highway authority to grant a licence to the occupier or owner of premises adjoining the highway to plant and maintain trees, shrubs, plants or grass on the highway verge. For reasons of visibility, obstruction, etc., it is not possible to grant a licence in all cases and where a licence is granted, care has to be taken in respect of the choice of planting.

The Highways Act allows for a licence either to be granted to the occupant of the premises at that time with no subsequent assignment to successors in title or for it to be granted to the owner of the premises and his successors in title.

Policy

• Northamptonshire County Council will give consideration to applications to cultivate areas of a highway under Section 142 of the Highways Act 1980 and will not unreasonably withhold or delay its approval to such applications.

• Licences will only be granted to the occupant of the property at the time of the application and automatically terminate upon the licensee ceasing to occupy the property.

• Where Northamptonshire County Council considers that any of the planting is adversely affecting the highway users or property owners, other than the Licensee, it may take action to remedy the situation without notice to the Licensee.

• In the event of the Licensee being in breach of the agreement; Northamptonshire County Council requiring access to the area of land in question in the exercise of its duty or it is considered that statutory undertakers’ apparatus is being affected by the planting, Northamptonshire County Council may terminate the licence following an appropriate notice period.
• The Licensee shall be responsible for all costs associated with the licence, planting, maintenance and reinstatement of the area covered by the licence.

• Northamptonshire County Council has elected to grant a licence only to the occupier of the property at the time of the application.

Officer Guidance

• All planting schemes submitted shall be carefully considered to ensure that highway visibility and safety at junctions, bends and private accesses is not compromised and that the rights of the public are upheld.

• When deciding on the location of any trees consideration shall be given to the level of risk of a vehicle leaving the road and colliding with the tree.

• Plants, trees or shrubs that are of a poisonous nature or may present a hazard due to the presence of thorns shall not be planted.

• Planting should be designed to avoid interference with overhead or underground statutory undertakers’ apparatus both at the initial time of planting and when the trees and shrubs mature.

• Only approved species of tree and shrub shall be approved for planting in the highway.

• Planting distances from the carriageway edge and property boundaries shall be strictly observed to avoid root damage to the highway and properties and to minimise the effect of leaf fall and drippings from trees forming ice patches in the winter.

• No planting shall take place until a detailed scheme has been submitted to, and approved by, Northamptonshire County Council.

• Persons authorised by Northamptonshire County Council or any statutory undertakers may enter the licensed area at any time without notice to the Licensee in order to carry out works for the purpose of the highway or the undertaking.

• Neither Northamptonshire County Council nor the relevant statutory undertaker shall be responsible for any damage caused to the planting as a result of the action described above.

Standards

• Highways Act 1980

• NJUG – National Joint Utilities Group Regulations.

9.13 Tree and Hedge Maintenance

Trees and hedges along the line of the highway form part of the landscape and serve a valuable service of visual screening and blending the road into the surrounding countryside. Hedges are also of historical importance with many of them dating back to the enclosure acts and they provide a sanctuary for many forms of wildlife. However, unless trees and hedges are maintained they can
become a potential hazard to users of the highway and can shadow the road from the effects of the sun and wind. Northamptonshire County Council has a duty to ensure that they are kept in good condition so that this does not happen and that when trees reach the end of their life, they are removed so that they do not fall or shed dead branches on to the highway.

In nearly all cases the roadside hedge forms the highway boundary and is the responsibility of the owner or occupier of the adjacent land. Where hedges and trees growing within the hedge line present a problem for the highway then the highway authority can request the owner or occupier to take action as necessary to remedy the situation. The Highways Act 1980 provides two courses of action for highway authorities to deal with problems with trees and hedges.

Section 136 of the Act deals with the prevention of damage to the highway due to the exclusion of sun and wind by a hedge or tree. The highway authority can apply to a magistrates’ court to require, by order, the landowner to cut the hedge or tree. If this order is not complied then the Northamptonshire County Council can carry out the work itself and recover the reasonable costs thereby incurred.

Where a hedge, tree or shrub overhangs or presents a danger or obstruction to the highway, section 154 makes provision for the highway authority to serve a notice on the owner or occupier of land on which a hedge, tree or shrub is growing to take action to remove the danger or obstruction within fourteen days. However, landowners have 21 days to appeal the notice to the Magistrates Court. Again, if no action is taken by the owner or occupier within this period then Northamptonshire County Council can carry out the work itself and recover the costs incurred. This section of the Act is also applicable where trees and shrubs growing in a garden overhang and obstruct the highway.

Northamptonshire County Council is sympathetic to property owners who may consider that highway trees are obstructing light from entering their property, it does not however undertake tree works to resolve the problem. Similarly, it will not prune or remove trees where it may be alleged that they are interfering with television signals.

Where tree branches spread over an adjacent property, a common law right exists for the owner of that property to prune back the offending branches to the boundary of that property. Cuttings must, of course, be disposed of in a responsible manner. Northamptonshire County Council cannot be held responsible for any leaves, berries or sap that falls from highway trees on to adjacent land or property nor will it take action to prevent the fall of leaves, berries or sap on to adjacent land or property.

Trees will only be removed from the highway where there is evidence of significant disease, decay or structural damage as identified and assessed by a qualified arboriculturist.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council accepts responsibility for the maintenance of existing trees within the highway where the owner is unknown. The authority will also maintain any trees and shrubs planted as part of a highway landscaping scheme. The responsibility for any other new planting, other than for a highway landscaping scheme promoted by Northamptonshire County Council, will rest in perpetuity with the respective borough, district, town or parish council.
Northamptonshire County Council will only carry out work for safety reasons and limited essential work within available budgets and with regard to the care and protection of the tree. The Highway Authority will not carry out works for aesthetic or amenity purposes.

Where trees on private property are thought to be dangerous, Northamptonshire County Council will advise the owner of its concern and request that prompt action is taken to make the tree safe. If the tree is obstructing the highway, the Authority will contact the landowner requesting the removal of the obstruction, giving clear guidelines with regard to clearance requirements.

In any situation where there is, in the opinion of Northamptonshire County Council, a clear and imminent danger to users of the highway, emergency action to remedy the situation will be taken as based on the response system for all highway emergency issues. Where appropriate, costs will be charged to the owners.

Any works which would involve the removal of an apparently dead tree will only be undertaken following the preparation of a detailed report.

Where felling of a tree is considered to be the only option, the planting of a suitably located replacement tree, subject to safety will be considered.

Officer Guidance

- Highway Maintenance Plan

Standards

- Highways Act 1980
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997
- National Joint Utilities Group: Guidelines for the Planting, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Services in Proximity to Trees
- Highway Maintenance Plan

9.14 Filming and Recording on the Highway

This policy applies to individuals or companies wishing to use the highway, including footways and verges, for which Northamptonshire County Council is the highway authority, for creating non-news film, television or stills photography productions.

Northamptonshire County Council recognises the benefits to tourism and the economy that can result following the use of recognisable locations for non-news filming and welcomes applications from film and recording companies to use locations on the public highway for their productions.
However, at the same time it has a duty to ensure that the use of the highway by the public is not compromised by these activities and therefore it has to balance the needs of the programme producers with those of the public and others who have to undertake work on the highway.

Before filming can commence, production companies are required to make an application to Northamptonshire County Council for permission to carry out filming and recording on the public highway. With the application, the company will be required to submit copies of written agreements from the Police and the respective district or borough council(s) indicating that they have no objections to the proposal.

Provided the application meets with Northamptonshire County Council’s requirements, then permission will be granted to carry out the filming work at the location specified subject to any specific conditions that Northamptonshire County Council may impose such as temporary road closures, revised dates to avoid conflict with planned works and/or events in the locality.

An application for is available upon request to the Northamptonshire County Council.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will consider all requests for filming and recording on the highway and where possible, will grant authorisation for the activity to be carried out.

- Northamptonshire County Council reserves the right to refuse applications where it considers that the proposed activity would be an unacceptable interference with the public highway on the grounds of safety, access, disruption or congestion.

- Northamptonshire granting of permission to carry out filming and recording may be subject to conditions in respect of timing, temporary traffic orders, removal or protection of existing street furniture, road markings, etc., in order to protect highway users and the integrity of the highway.

- For the making of temporary traffic orders the applicant will be charged at the current fee level, and the reasonable costs associated with any changes to the highway, etc., will be charged.

- The applicant will be charged all reasonable costs for reinstating the highway following alterations required during filming and recording or for any damage to the highway caused during the activity.

- Northamptonshire County Council reserves the right to withdraw permission in the event of a critical event or occurrence.

Officer Guidance

- Upon receipt of the completed application for permission to film and record on the highway, the proposed location of the activity should be visited to determine the suitability of the site and identify any measures that need to be taken to accommodate the work.

- As necessary, a site meeting may be arranged with the applicant to clarify the requirements.
Applications to film and record on strategic and traffic sensitive roads will only be considered where such a location is essential to the production. Where permission is granted in these cases it will be conditional on the avoidance of peak traffic times.

The requested dates are to be checked against the Street Works Register to ensure that there is no conflict with proposed street works or other events. Where necessary the applicant will be asked to change their filming and recording dates.

Where the applicant needs to change the approved dates for whatever reason, at least two working days’ notice must be given to Northamptonshire County Council.

Where the applicant wishes to change the location of the filming and recording a new application must be made.

The permission to film and record on the highway is not assignable. Where the production is to be taken over by another company, a new application must be made.

Any complaints from the public, emergency services, transport operators or other authorities in respect of access, safety, conduct of film crew members, etc., will be taken up with the applicant immediately.

**Standards**

- Highways Act 1980
- HSE Entertainment Information Sheet No. 22 “Safe filming and recording involving vehicles”.
- Film London’s Location Filming in London Code of Practice. (Although relating to filming in the Capital, the CoP contains valuable guidance).
10.0 Dealing with Planned Events

10.1 Street Functions

Street functions are one way in which local communities may wish to celebrate national or local events such as the Golden Jubilee or a royal wedding. However, in organising street functions, care must be taken to protect the local residents themselves and minimise inconvenience to other users of the highway.

Northamptonshire County Council may exercise its powers under Section 287 of the Highways Act 1980 to close streets to vehicular traffic with any necessary signing undertaken within the powers granted in Section 57 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1967.

Any application for a street closure must be made to Northamptonshire County Council who will make the necessary order.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will give its consent to the closure of a street for the purpose of a street function where the necessary conditions are met.
- The organisers must nominate a responsible person to ensure that the conditions of the closure are observed.
- If possible, consideration should be given to holding the function in an alternative location other than on the highway.

Officer Guidance

- Consideration will be given to the effect of the closure on any other temporary closures or works in the area.
- Closures must not prevent access by pedestrians, emergency vehicles or vehicles used by those with disabilities.
- Streets must be lightly trafficked residential streets and not bus routes. Where a street is used by through traffic, an alternative route must be made available.
- The road surface is not to be damaged and tents or marquees must not be erected in the highway since they may cause damage or impede access in an emergency.
- Stalls, tables, chairs, etc., must be at least 10 metres from any road used by vehicles.
- All residents in the street must be informed of the party in writing giving 7 days’ notice.
- All signs, cones, barriers, etc., shall be readily visible and removed immediately after the function and the street left in a tidy condition.
- It is advisable that sufficient public liability insurance to cover the activities that are taking place within the highway is obtained by the organisers.
When the Northamptonshire County Council has given approval to a street closure, the Divisional Superintendent of Police, the Chief Fire Officer, the Area Ambulance Officer and the head of Sustainable Transport will be informed giving at least 7 days’ notice of the closure to allow a presence at the parade.

**Standards**

- Town Police Clauses Act 1847 section 21
- Highways Act 1980 section 287
- Road Traffic Regulations Act 1967 section 57
11.0 Management of Incidents

11.1 Service Providers Emergency Response

Emergencies can occur on the highway at any time. They may be due to dangerous highway defects, road traffic accidents, obstructions, vandalism or severe weather conditions such as high winds, heavy rainfall or fog.

When emergencies occur, Northamptonshire County Council's immediate action is to make the area safe for highway users. This may involve the repair or removal of the hazard or, in more severe cases, appropriate signing and the setting up of diversion routes as necessary. Subsequent work and/or permanent repairs are then carried out the next working day, when resources are available or as part of planned maintenance works as applicable.

Other than making safe, accident and vandalism damage will not be automatically repaired but will be considered for attention in the same way as defects identified and recorded during safety or service inspections. Where the person responsible can be readily identified, the repair costs will always be pursued.

Policy

- In all emergencies, safety standards will be maintained by rapid attention to hazardous obstructions and damage.
- Flooding of the highway will be made safe. Appropriate signing and diversion routes may be set up as necessary.
- Obstructions of the highway will be made safe either by removal or by signing, barriers and lighting.
- All hazardous spillages will be made safe by clearing or by signing and barriers.
- After a road traffic accident the highway will be inspected and made safe for traffic to pass freely as soon as possible or as directed by the Police officers attending the incident.
- Where roads have to be closed in consultation with the Police as a result of an emergency, diversionary routes will be established as soon as possible.
- When severe weather warnings are received, appropriate resources will be mobilised in readiness to ensure a prompt and efficient response is achieved when required.
- The cost of accident and vandalism repairs will be recovered wherever possible.

Officer/Service Provider Guidance

- The Service Provider shall provide a 24 hour, 365 days per year, responsive service to highway emergencies employing suitably qualified and experienced staff to receive and assess reports and requests received from Police, emergency services, other councils and members of the public. Staff will determine, implement and monitor actions undertaken to deal with the effects of adverse weather and other emergencies on the highway.
• The Service Provider will be responsible for producing and maintaining an Emergency Response Plan developed in conjunction with Northamptonshire County Council and the emergency services.

• The Service Provider shall have appropriate equipment available to make safe any emergency on the highway and shall have procedures in place to provide equipment and personnel to restore the highway to a safe and unrestricted condition as soon as possible.

• The Service Provider shall provide trained personnel and appropriate equipment to remove and make safe trees obstructing the highway.

• After dealing with the emergency the Service Provider shall remove his equipment from the site and shall advise the Project Manager if any remedial works are required to restore the fabric of the highway or damaged street furniture.

• Where appropriate, throughout the course of an emergency, the Service Provider will liaise with and update the Police, emergency services, the media and motoring organisations over restrictions on the highway.

• Accident and vandalism damage will be made safe with subsequent action being determined in accordance with normal maintenance standards.

• The Service Provider will produce and maintain records of all emergencies and the actions taken.

• In the event of an emergency occurring on the highway where the Service Provider determines attendance is required he shall respond within agreed timescales.

Standards

• Well Maintained Highways – A Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance.

• Northamptonshire County Council Highway Maintenance Plan.

11.2 Winter Service

The weather is difficult to predict and the occurrence and extent of wintry conditions can vary considerably throughout the season, from year to year and across the County. So as to cope with these changing conditions Northamptonshire County Council has developed a highly efficient and responsive winter service. The winter service is essential for public safety and also to the national and local economy in maintaining the movement of traffic and pedestrians. Its operations include treating the network with de-icing agents and clearing roads and footways of snow and ice.

The winter service season runs from October through to April and is a cyclic operation which involves careful planning prior to the start each year. During the winter service period, the County Council and its Service Provider receive a specialised winter weather forecasting service based on data received from weather stations around the County. The forecast, received on a daily basis, gives predictions of the possibility of freezing road temperatures, snow, etc., and the time that those conditions are expected to occur. By drawing on the information provided by these sources decisions are made if or when treatment is necessary.
The road network has been divided into three levels of priority for the treatment of ice and snow. Priority One routes, (P1), comprise all the “A” roads, all the “B” roads together with some other important roads. When ice and/or snow are forecast, all of the roads in this category will generally be treated in a single operation, with the “A” roads given priority. However, during periods of prolonged, extreme conditions, treatment will be concentrated on the “A” roads with other roads in this category receiving treatment only when resources become available.

The next priority network, Priority Two, (P2), includes certain links to villages that are not on the precautionary network together with some bus routes and selected roads in industrial estates. Where the forecast conditions are unlikely to improve for at least 48 hours, which is when the road surface temperature is not expected to rise above freezing within that period, P 2 roads will be treated provided that the P1 routes do not require treatment. However, consideration will be given to pre-salting this network prior to a high confidence forecast of snow settling on the network with a decision at the discretion of the service provider in consultation with the Traffic Manager and providing the resources are available.

On the remainder of the road network, Priority Three, (P3), certain roads may be treated in prolonged adverse conditions if spreaders and manpower are not required elsewhere.

Northamptonshire County Council has a policy of promoting the use of grit bins by the public and will consider requests from town and parish councils for the provision of additional salt bins subject to the requested site satisfying certain criteria. The filling of salt bins shall be the responsibility of the Highway Service Provider.

Precautionary treatment of footways is not carried out. In very severe weather or prolonged cold periods especially where snow or ice may remain for several days, the treatment of some pedestrian routes in the priority of the footway hierarchy will be undertaken. However, consideration will be given to pre-salting the Category 1 footways prior to a high confidence of snow settling on the network, with a decision at the discretion of the Service Provider in consultation with the Traffic Manager, and providing the resources are available.

The Legal Situation

Northamptonshire County Council is under a statutory duty to maintain the highway and under Section 41(1A) of the Highways Act 1980 is under a duty to ensure; so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice. It is not practicable, for reasons of cost, to maintain resources to undertake precautionary treatment of the whole of the highway network and Northamptonshire County Council therefore prioritises routes and provides information about the winter service, including route maps, on its web site and in a leaflet published annually and widely distributed throughout the County via district, town and parish councils, major stores and garages and other outlets.

Policy

- The winter period is commences in October and ends in April, the actual start and end dates to be determined by the weather forecast and agreement by the Assistant Director of Highways, Transport & Infrastructure.

- Where forecast weather conditions warrant, precautionary treatment of the carriageway will be carried out on the Priority 1 network to prevent ice forming or light falls of snow settling. Depending on the circumstances, this may be undertaken as one operation or, as necessary, the treatment of all the “A” roads to be completed within 2 ½ hours of leaving
the depot to the final application of salt followed by the other roads in this category within 3 hours of leaving the depot to the final application of salt. These times apply to planned actions, for example, pre-salting. For emergency actions, an extra hour will be allowed to these times for the mobilisation of the fleet.

- On emergency actions, an extra 1 hour will be allowed for mobilisation of the fleet

- Where the forecast weather conditions indicate that the road surface temperatures are unlikely to rise above zero for at least 48 hours and the prevailing conditions are not expected to change, the treatment of carriageways may be carried out on the Priority 2 network when the Priority 1 roads require no further treatment. Consideration will be given to pre-treating the priority 2 carriageways prior to a high confidence of snow settling on the network, with a decision at the discretion of the service provider in consultation with the Traffic Manager providing resources are available.

- The treatment of persistent ice on road surfaces and snow clearance to prevent the accumulation of, or to clear, snow on carriageways will be carried out where conditions require. In both cases priority will be given in accordance with the road hierarchy followed by providing at least one access from all of those communities not on a precautionary treatment route to the Priority 1 network.

- The precautionary treatment of footways will not take place although some treatment will be given to footways on a priority basis to remove accumulations of ice and/or snow during prolonged periods of adverse weather. Consideration will be given to pre-treating the priority 2 carriageways prior to a high confidence of snow settling on the network, with a decision at the discretion of the service provider in consultation with the Traffic Manager providing resources are available.

- In order to minimise the adverse effects on the environment, the amount of de-icing agent used will be the minimum practicable consistent with achieving adequate treatment.

- Full co-operation will be given to adjoining highway authorities for cross-border arrangements for precautionary treatment.

- Town and parish councils will be encouraged to work in partnership with Northamptonshire County Council and its service provider over winter treatment and the local storage of salt/sand bags.

- Permission for the provision of additional grit bins may be given by Northamptonshire County Council at locations requested by parish and town councils, subject to certain criteria being met and where the requested sites are not on the precautionary salting network.

- Grit bins are provided for self-help by any member of the public and not by an individual nominated person.
Officer/Service Provider Guidance

Routes

- The Priority 1 network will generally comprise all strategic roads, traffic sensitive roads and main distributors together with certain secondary distributors and some other roads, including at least one road to a village community.
- The highest priority roads comprises all the “A” roads, shall be completed within 2 ½ hours of leaving the depot and final application of salt.
- The rest of the Priority 1 network shall be completed within 3 hours of leaving the depot and final application of salt.
- The Priority 2 network will comprise the remainder of the secondary distributors, a link to some villages not on the precautionary network, certain bus routes, industrial estates and some other roads.
- The Service Provider shall be responsible for designing and updating the treatment routes based on Northamptonshire County Council's defined network.
- Cross-border arrangements with other highway authorities are the responsibility of and will be determined by Northamptonshire County Council in accordance with Section 8 of the Highways Act 1980.
- Any emergency calls will allow an extra hour for the mobilisation of the fleet.
- Any requests from Emergency Services for treatment of carriageways which is not on the gritting network will be assessed and only treat if it is an unnatural source (Water Leak, Seepages)

De-icing agents

- The purchase and maintenance of stocks of de-icing agent shall be the responsibility of the Service Provider who will also be responsible for ensuring that adequate levels are maintained in the operating depots to meet all treatment demands during the winter service period. The Service Provider will put in place arrangements with the supply chain to guarantee deliveries of de-icing agents before and during the winter service period.
- The Service Provider will ensure that de-icing agent stocks are protected from the adverse effect of the weather.
- Rates of spread shall be adopted that will be the minimum that is practical to achieve adequate treatment while minimising the adverse effects on the environment.
- The type of de-icing agent to be used is Thawrox plus provided by Salt Union, or similar approved.

Footways

- The precautionary treatment of footways will not be carried out, but consideration will be given to pre-treating the Category 1 footways prior to a high confidence forecast of snow
settling on the Network, with a decision at the discretion of the service provider in consultation with the Traffic Manager, providing resources are available.

- During severe conditions, and within 12 hours of the cessation of snowfall, the clearance of some footways will take place.

- To supplement the resources available from the service provider for the treatment of footways, borough and district councils will provide resources that would otherwise be standing due to the prevailing conditions.

- The service provider will be responsible for mobilising and directing borough and district council resources.

- The decision to treat footways will be made by the service provider in agreement with the Traffic Manager.

- The treatment of footways will usually take place during normal working hours.

- Normal day to day treatment of footways where ice is present will be the responsibility of the service provider.

- A liquefied de-icing product called Ice-Blast will be used for the treatment of footways, along with 50/50 sand salt mix in snow conditions.

Grit bins

- Existing grit bins will be filled prior to the commencement of the winter service season, following a prolonged spell of freezing conditions or on request from town and parish councils and members of the public.

- Permission for the provision of additional grit bins may be given by Northamptonshire County Council at locations requested by town or parish councils subject to the following criteria:
  1. At sharp or difficult bends
  2. At junctions where there is an approach on a gradient from the side road.
  3. On particularly steep gradients elsewhere (of 10% or greater).
  4. At known problem sites
  5. Not on roads included in the precautionary treatment network.

- The condition of grit bins and the use of salt will be recorded at the time of filling. Where a grit bin requires replacement due to vandalism or general deterioration, its location will be assessed against the criteria detailed above before replacement. If the criteria are not met, the respective town or parish council will be consulted. Where there is evidence of limited use, consideration will be given, in consultation with the respective town or parish council, to relocate the salt bin to a more suitable location.

- Extra consideration will be given to the provision of a bin at a problem site on an industrial site.
Grit bins are provided for self-help by any member of the public and not by any nominated person.

The Service Provider is responsible for providing all new and replacement grit bins.

Grit bins will have a 50/50 mix of salt and sharp sand.

Snow conditions

- A Winter Service Operational Plan, which includes details of sub contract plant and labour, will be prepared by the Service Provider.
- To deal with deep accumulations of snow and to clear minor roads, arrangements will be made with local farmers and plant hire firms to call in loaders, excavators and other machines to supplement the County Council and service provider resources as necessary.
- The declaration of snow conditions will be by agreement with the Traffic Manager and will generally occur when the fleet is unable to keep pace with falling snow or accumulations are too deep for ploughing.
- In respect of cross-border arrangements with adjoining highway authorities, treatment under snow conditions, adverse weather conditions or in response to Police requests following accidents will be carried out by the authority within whose area the treatment is required.
- During snow conditions a 50/50 salt and sharp sand mixture may be used.

Spreaders and loaders

- The Service Provider shall be responsible for maintaining Northamptonshire County Council’s gritting fleet and providing and maintaining all other vehicles and plant associated with the winter service operation and for ensuring that it is kept in good condition for its operational life.
- Duty fitters will be provided by the Service Provider during all periods when the fleet is operating to ensure that breakdowns can be dealt with promptly.
- Spreaders additional to those required for the treatment of routes shall be maintained to act as spares in the event of breakdowns.

Depots

- Northamptonshire County Council depots at Brixworth, Towcester and Rushden are available for the operation of the winter service.
- The depots will remain in the ownership of the County Council.
- The Service Provider will be responsible for the day to day maintenance of the depots and buildings.
Weather forecast and decision making

- The Service Provider shall make all necessary arrangements to obtain a daily weather forecast, with updates, etc., throughout the winter service period.

- The Service Provider will undertake all maintenance, updating, replacement, servicing and the payment of all running costs associated with the Vaisala system including weather stations.

- The Service Provider will make the decision on when to carry out treatment and the type of treatment required.

- The Service Provider will develop and implement a system to monitor treatment and snow clearing operations and weather forecasts and also undertake on site checks of temperatures and road and weather conditions as required. The system will also be capable of providing a 24 hour response to changes to weather forecasts and unpredicted events as well as providing situation updates to the media and motoring organisations.

- The Service Provider will retain detailed records of treatment operations, including weather forecasts, decisions and operation reports for seven years for legal purposes.

Cross border co-operation with adjoining highway authorities

- Under the cross border arrangements, made in accordance with Section 8 of the Highways Act 1980, precautionary treatment will be the decision of the treating authority.

- Treatment under snow conditions, adverse weather conditions or requests from the Police following accidents will be carried out by the authority within whose area the treatment is required.

Standards

- The precautionary treatment of carriageways will generally take place so that completion is prior to the predicted time of frost or ice formation.

- Emergency treatment will be completed within 4 hours of a decision made by the service provider which allows 1 hour for mobilising the fleet and 3 hours of spreaders leaving the depot.

- Planned treatment will be completed within 3 hours of spreaders leaving the depot.

- Treatment during the hours of 0700 to 0930 and 1630 and 1900 will be avoided where possible.

- During prolonged adverse weather without snow, the treatment of the Priority 2 network will be carried out during daylight hours within 3 ½ hours of spreaders leaving the depot whenever possible, and when the fleet is not required on the Priority 1 network.

- A Winter Service Operational Plan, setting out proposals for dealing with heavy snow falls and the employment of additional plant and labour will be prepared by the Service Provider.
• Snow conditions will only be declared by agreement between Northamptonshire County Council’s Traffic Manager and the Service Provider and when the fleet is unable to keep pace with falling snow or when accumulations are too deep for lorry ploughing.

• The decision to treat footways which are the responsibility of Northamptonshire County Council will only be made by the Service Provider in agreement with Northamptonshire County Council’s Traffic Manager and in accordance with the agreed policy based upon the hierarchy.

• The re-filling of grit bins shall take place before the start of each winter service period and after prolonged spells of freezing or snow conditions. Specific requests from town and parish councils or other bodies will be dealt with on an ad hoc basis.

• Grit bins shall not be provided on the precautionary treatment networks.

• Salt or grit heaps will not be provided on highway verges.

• Information regarding the winter service, including route maps, will be maintained on Northamptonshire County Council’s web site. Northamptonshire County Council and the Service Provider will also jointly produce an annual leaflet containing details of the winter treatment networks and advice for winter driving. The costs for this will be met by Northamptonshire County Council.

11.3 Dealing with Major Incidents and Security Alerts

Emergencies within the community can be caused by a number of reasons including the weather, road and rail accidents, fires, etc. While such events can be traumatic for those directly affected, the majority are generally localised and are ably dealt with by the emergency services, the County’s Highways Service Provider and other support services. However, there are occasions, fortunately not occurring too frequently, where the effect is more widespread, and it is then necessary to take a more co-ordinated approach to the deployment of resources.

Northamptonshire County Council has a duty to prepare and have in place plans to deal with major events. Northamptonshire County Council has the responsibility for preparing and, when necessary, implementing emergency plans to manage the emergency, incident or security alert, working in close association with the emergency services. The officer charged with this responsibility is the County Emergency Planning Officer.

In situations arising from a major incident or security alert, Northamptonshire County Council’s highways teams and its Service Provider will provide support and assistance as requested and directed by the County Emergency Planning Officer.

Policy

• In the event of a major incident or security alert, Northamptonshire County Council’s highways teams and its highways Service Provider will provide all possible assistance and support to the County Emergency Planning Officer and the emergency services and the associated strategic, tactical and operational controls that are put in place.
• Northamptonshire County Council’s highways Service Provider will maintain 24 hour emergency links to high management levels and where required, will nominate a senior manager(s) to take overall control of the procurement and deployment of resources under the direction of the County Emergency Planning Officer.

• Northamptonshire County Council's highways Service Provider will develop contingency plans with Northamptonshire County Council to support the County Emergency Planning Officer in the event of a major incident or security alert.

• Northamptonshire County Council’s highways Service Provider will achieve initial mobilisation within one hour of being called by the County Emergency Planning Officer.

• Northamptonshire County Council’s highways Service Provider will ensure that arrangements are in place to call upon plant, tools, signage, barriers, materials, etc., additional to its own resources.

• Northamptonshire County Council’s highways Service Provider will have Business Continuity Plans and such arrangements in place to ensure continuity of service provision to and on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council in the event of any business disruptions that may adversely affect operations.

• All Business Continuity Plans shall be reviewed and monitored on a regular basis to ensure that risks are effectively managed.

Officer Guidance

• The County Emergency Planning Officer has the overall responsibility for managing major incidents and security alerts and will direct County Council and highways Service Provider's staff accordingly.

• Depending on the scale of the event it may take some time to fully mobilise the resources necessary to deal with the incident. Northamptonshire County Councils Service provider shall endeavour to make an initial presence within one hour of being called by the County Emergency Planning Officer.

• In addition to the highways Service Provider’s emergency equipment supplies, arrangements must be in place with its supply chain to access additional equipment if the scale of the event demands. Access must be available 24 hours a day.

• Appropriate vehicles, containers and disposal points shall be available at all times for the controlled removal and disposal of hazardous and contaminated materials.

Standards

• Civil Contingencies Act 2004

• Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) Regulations 2005

• The Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations 1999

• Major Accident Hazard Pipelines Regulations 1996

• Local Government Act 1972
11.4 Dealing with Mud on the Highway

During periods of wet weather, works that are being carried out off the highway inevitably lead to mud being brought on to the road by vehicles. This is common in rural areas due to farming activities but it can also occur in more urban locations during the early stages of construction for new developments. Permanent works, such as stone or sand and gravel quarries, should have wheel washing equipment installed to prevent mud being brought out from the site but this is often not feasible for activities that are of short term.

Mud on the highway can present a serious hazard to road users as well as being an inconvenience to the travelling public. It is also an offence under the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud on the road and Northamptonshire County Council, as the highway authority, has powers under the Act to serve notice on the persons responsible or alternatively take action to remove the mud and recover the costs from the responsible party.

As stated above, in certain conditions little can be done to prevent the transference of mud from adjoining land out on to the highway and although the timing of works to avoid the worst weather can help, this is often not practicable. To avoid action being taken by the highway authority against them, those involved in such operations can make sure that appropriate advance warning signs are in place before work commences and that the road and, where applicable, footways, are kept clean both during and at the end of the working day so as to prevent a build-up of mud. All cleaning operations should be carried out safely and any equipment used should not damage the highway surface.

Another source of nuisance from land adjoining the highway is that of mud and water running off fields and onto roads. The owner or occupier is responsible for preventing this happening and this can often be achieved by not cultivating the land right up to boundaries or by carrying out cultivation across the slope where the land slopes towards the road. Regular maintenance of ditches and drains together with the clearance of headwalls and grids of obstructions can also help to avoid this problem. Where run off from fields becomes a regular occurrence, or it presents a serious problem, particularly in the winter when ice may occur, the owner or occupier of the land may be required to undertake preventative measures.

Policy

- Reports of mud on the highway will be investigated by the Highways Service Provider for the potential risk to the road user and, where necessary, appropriate signage set out pending identification of the responsible party and the issue of a notice to remove the hazard.

- Where Northamptonshire County Council or its highways Service Provider considers that the mud constitutes a danger to users of the highway they will remove it forthwith without giving notice.

- Costs incurred by Northamptonshire County Council in removing the mud from the highway will be recovered from the responsible party.

- Where mud and water running off from fields adjoining the highway becomes a significant problem Northamptonshire County Council may serve a notice on the owner or occupier of the land to undertake preventative measures.
Officer/Service Provider Guidance

- Where advance warning signs are not present, signs to Dia. 562 and 563 (Mud on road) of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002, will be erected pending the removal of the hazard.

- Where the responsible party can be identified, the Service Provider will request the immediate removal of the mud.

- Where the presence of the mud is considered to be a serious hazard to road users, Northamptonshire County Council or their Highways Service Provider will remove the mud immediately.

- Where possible, any costs incurred in clearing the road will be recovered from the responsible party.

- Parties who are responsible for activities on land adjacent to the highway that result in the frequent movement of vehicles in and out of a site should be advised to clean the road regularly throughout the working day to prevent the build-up of mud on the road surface.

Standards

- Highways Act 1980

- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
12.0 Managing Parking and Other Traffic Regulation

12.1 Residents Parking Schemes

No one has the right to park their vehicle on the highway in front of their property and by doing so, can be considered to be creating an obstruction to the free passage of traffic. While there are locations where the parking of vehicles on the highway can cause significant disruption, in many residential areas, any problems are minimal and only have a local effect.

With the increase in car ownership and the number of people driving to work, parking spaces are at a premium and drivers often park in residential streets because the car parks are full or to avoid parking charges.

Traditional Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) can be used to alleviate any access, road safety or environment problems associated with high levels of parking but these offer no priority to the residents affected, both residents and non-residents are equally affected by any such restrictions.

It is possible to give priority to residents by introducing Residents Permit Holders Only parking schemes and defining various parts of the highway where parking may be permitted only if a valid permit issued by the Highway Authority is displayed on the vehicle. Permits are normally only issued to residents living in a street within the zone and are under the control of, and issued at the discretion of, the Highway Authority.

**Policy**

Northamptonshire County Council will consent to the introduction of residents’ parking schemes where the following criteria are met:

- Not less than 85% of the available kerbside space is occupied for more than six hours between 8am and 6pm on five or more days a week from Monday to Saturday inclusive and a bona fide need of residents is established.
- Not more than 50% of the car owning residents have, or could have, parking available within the curtilage of their own property or within 200 metres walking distance by way of garages or other private off-street space.
- The peak or normal working day demand for residents’ spaces should be able to be met.
- The introduction of a scheme should not cause unacceptable problems in adjacent roads.
- The Council is satisfied that a reasonable level of enforcement of the proposals can be maintained by parking attendants.
- Permits for non-residential premises will be limited in their use to essential operational use only.
- In areas where parking space is severely limited, the introduction of reserved parking does not seriously affect the commercial viability of the area.
- After a full consultation process a minimum of 50% of the residents of the zone directly affected are in favour of the proposals.
Officer Guidance

- The above criteria should be used as a guide and be treated as reasonable requirements for a scheme. Special circumstances need to be taken into consideration and it is therefore important to consider each scheme on its merits.

- In determining the layout of a residents’ parking scheme the following issues need to be considered — areas of prohibited waiting; vehicle accesses; loading areas; bus stops; the needs of blue badge holders; limited waiting for local businesses; visitors, etc.

- In determining the amount of available space for permitted parking and to ensure that all schemes are treated in a similar way, it is appropriate to base it upon guidance set out in the Institution of Highways and Transportation in “Transport in the Urban Environment”.

- Residents’ parking schemes will be introduced on a zonal basis.

- As a basis for starting the design process for residents’ parking schemes, restrictions will be based on standard scheme timings, (e.g. Monday to Saturday 8am to 6pm). However, flexibility needs to be used in determining the actual time period of the parking restrictions within each scheme to meet the parking needs of local residents as far as possible.

- Residents’ permits will only be issued to residents owning or keeping vehicles and who live within the residents’ parking scheme zone. Proof of residency and vehicle ownership or responsibility will be required.

- Residents’ permits will be valid for 12 months and are not transferable. In the event of a change of vehicle the old permit shall be surrendered in exchange for a permit for the new vehicle. An administration charge will apply.

- A maximum of two permits will be issued to each household. Each permit must be for a vehicle registered to the owner at the given address. In the case of a company car or lease/hire car, a letter or lease agreement will be required to confirm the arrangement.

- Where a business operates within a residents’ parking scheme zone, consideration will be given to the issue of one business permit per business/vehicle responsibility.

- Limited waiting areas will be accommodated in all residents’ parking schemes for short term visits.

- Long term visits will be accommodated by the use of visitors’ permits restricted to 50 per property per year and for which an administrative charge will be made. They will be available to all properties in the scheme irrespective of whether or not there is a residents’ parking permit. Proof of residency will be required.

- Long term medical related visits will be accommodated by the use of Carer/Medical permits which will be issued after strict procedures have been agreed with the relevant organisations. Generally “district” based, in some cases they may be “countywide”. Details of exemptions and dispensations are given in Appendix 1.

- Dispensations will be considered in respect of TRO exemptions and for trades people. Dispensations will only be issued for individual requests.

- Residents’ parking schemes will be reviewed periodically.
Standards

- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002

12.2 Waiting and Loading Restrictions

Waiting and loading restrictions may be introduced to overcome problems created by vehicles parked on the highway and can include a total prohibition of parking, (“at any time”), limited waiting for one or two hours or a prohibition of waiting during certain times, for instance, during the working day. Orders for waiting restrictions are required to provide the legal support to the use of signs and lines on the highway that are designed to manage on-street parking.

While the introduction of waiting or loading restrictions may appear to be the solution to a particular problem, this is not always the case and there are occasions where such action may have an adverse effect, such as transferring the problem elsewhere or denying residents the opportunity to park near their home. Therefore, prior to the introduction of any order, a full consultation is undertaken with local authorities, the emergency services and, via advertisements and notices, the public at large. In addition, as any order is only effective if it is enforced, all proposals must have the support of the Police.

Where existing restrictions are no longer appropriate due to changes to the highway network or re-development, Northamptonshire County Council may consider introducing an order to revoke the original regulation.

Policy

- Restrictions will not be introduced if the consequence of this action is to transfer the problem elsewhere.
- Waiting and loading restrictions will be considered where
  (i) Positive accident savings have been identified as part of an accident investigation study.
  (ii) Parked vehicles cause an obstruction to emergency vehicles and an order is supported by the emergency services.
  (iii) Vehicles create a potential safety problem by regularly parking close to a hazard such as tight bends, road junctions, narrow bridges, etc.
  (iv) A serious disruption of commerce or industry is caused by parked vehicles.
  (v) There is an opportunity to reduce maintenance costs by preventing damage to verges and footways.
  (vi) There is evidence of operational difficulties to public transport.
  (vii) The free movement of traffic on major routes is affected by parked vehicles.
Officer Guidance

- Waiting and loading restrictions will not be introduced if the problem is merely moved elsewhere.

- On strategic routes and main and secondary distributors, clearway orders and/or no waiting restrictions may be employed to ensure that the maximum road space is available for moving traffic.

- Where the above routes pass through areas where there are premises fronting the road, peak hour loading bans will be included and all junctions will be kept clear of parked vehicles 24 hours a day at least 15 metres from the junction.

- Waiting restrictions will only be introduced in rural areas where accident investigation studies have identified that positive accident savings will result.

- In conservation areas and other areas of visual amenity, narrow lines may be used to denote sections of waiting restriction.

- Existing waiting restrictions will only be amended or revoked where a benefit can be identified.

- No waiting or loading restrictions will be publicly advertised until a full consultation with the relevant district, town/parish council has been completed and the proposal agreed and supported by both the Police and the local County Councillor.

Standards

- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
- The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
- County Council's standard detail drawings.

12.3 Speed Limits and Speed Limit Extensions

Speed limits are used to provide both protection for residents in towns, villages and hamlets as well as for safety measures where accident records indicate that there is a problem caused by inappropriate speed. Speed limit extensions are generally required where new development takes a built up area beyond the limits of existing speed limits. Northamptonshire County Council has powers to impose, vary or remove speed limits on certain roads in its area and in observance of Government criteria. In addition to speed limits that are implemented by order, a 30 mph speed limit is automatically created where there is a system of three or more street lights spaced at 183 metre (200 yards) intervals.

Policy

- On County Council maintained roads, speed limits will be introduced where
  
  (i) The Department for Transport’s revised criteria and guidelines published in Circular 01/2013, “Setting Local Speed Limits”, are fully met.
(ii) The speed limit is considered appropriate and is supported by the Chief Constable.

(iii) A speed limit extension provides consistency resulting from increased development or the improved visibility and effectiveness of the terminal signs will result.

(iv) Villages and hamlets will be protected by the introduction of a speed restriction.

(v) Changes to local speed limits will be assessed on a yearly basis with priority given to locations with an identified accident history.

**Officer Guidance**

- On local roads and local access roads, speed limits will be considered either where the policies are met or to provide protection to villages and hamlets.

- In villages which have a 30mph speed limit by virtue of street lighting, requests for an extension of the speed limit will be considered in the context of providing additional lighting if this is more cost effective than making a TRO. Where the town or parish council is the lighting authority, the provision of additional lighting will be subject to discussion and agreement with that council.

- Where there is a technical choice as to the level of speed limits, the presumption will be in favour of a lower limit; however, this must be realistic.

- No speed limit will be publicly advertised until a full consultation with the relevant district, town/parish council has been completed and the proposal agreed and supported by the Police.

- Contact with the public over speed limits, including meetings, correspondence and e-mails, will be dealt with by the Police who will be the customer interface for this. They will not, however, recommend speed limits.

- Speed limit enforcement is the responsibility of the Police; however, engineering advice will remain with Northamptonshire County Council.

**Standards**

- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002

- The Department for Transport’s Circular 01/2013, “Setting Local Speed Limits”

- County Council's standard detail drawings.

- Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

- DfT Traffic Advisory Leaflets

### 12.4 One Way Streets

In towns, one-way streets are a means of reducing conflicts and improving traffic flows. However, in rural areas they can have significant disadvantages by increasing vehicle speeds and creating
problems for local access. Proposals for introducing one-way streets in villages are often controversial and are rarely supported by the whole community. In general, one-way streets are best avoided wherever possible in rural areas.

**Policy**

- One-way streets will:
  1. Be considered in urban areas where significant improvements can be achieved in safety or network capacity without creating access problems.
  2. Only be considered for safety reasons in rural areas where there is evidence of an injury accident problem that could be resolved by one-way traffic flow.
  3. Not be considered in rural areas where traffic speeds in a village may increase; significant difficulties of access would be created or transferred traffic volumes would cause significant problems elsewhere.

**Officer Guidance**

- One-way streets in rural areas should be avoided if at all possible.
- The effect on cyclists will be evaluated when considering one-way street proposals.
- Roads will not normally be closed to cyclists unless there are specific safety reasons.
- No one-way street order will be publicly advertised until a full consultation with the relevant district, town/parish council has been completed and the proposal agreed and supported by both the Police and the local County Councillor.

**Standards**

- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
- County Council’s standard detail drawings.
- Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

**12.5 Parking on Verges**

Most grass verges adjacent to roads form part of the public highway and therefore come under the responsibility of Northamptonshire County Council. One of the responsibilities of the highway authority is to keep verges safe and unobstructed, particularly at road junctions where clear visibility for road users is important.

Parking on verges can cause many problems, including:

- Reducing visibility at junctions
- Causing environmental damage and appear unsightly, particularly during adverse weather
- Obstructing road users entering and leaving properties
Obstructing vulnerable road users who use the verge

It is not an offence in law to park a motor vehicle, other than a heavy goods vehicle, (HGV), on a grass verge unless it causes an obstruction or a Traffic Regulation Order, (TRO), or bylaw is in force prohibiting it. It is a criminal offence to park an HGV on a verge adjacent to a road irrespective of the presence or absence of waiting restrictions and this can be enforced by the Police. Caravans which are parked on the verge, and are unlit during the hours of darkness, again constitute an offence under the Road Traffic Act, and this can be enforced by the Police.

Although there is no blanket prohibition of parking on verges, a particular incident of verge parking may be considered dangerous or obstructive and therefore constitute a criminal offence which would need to be investigated, and enforcement action taken, by the Police rather than Northamptonshire County Council as the highway authority.

Policy

- Enforcement action will be taken by Northamptonshire County Council, as the highway authority, over the unauthorised placing of wooden posts, concrete blocks, white painted stones, etc., on the highway.
- Requests for posts or bollards to be erected to protect the verge in order to stop parking will not be considered except on safety grounds to persons using the highway or to self-enforce an existing TRO.
- On the Strategic and Traffic Sensitive Network, consideration will be given to the making of a TRO to restrict verge parking where there are safety related problems involving visibility, obstruction, etc.
- Northamptonshire County Council will liaise with local councils over the introduction of byelaws to prohibit parking on verges where there are problems with environmental damage. Due their expense and difficulty of enforcement, Northamptonshire County Council will not promote their introduction.
- Northamptonshire County Council will liaise with District and Borough Councils over the provision of dropped kerbs and the hardening of certain verges in residential areas to create parking bays where safety issues are not compromised and the cost of the work is met by the District or Borough Council.

Officer Guidance

- Section 19 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 prohibits parking on verges by HGVs.
- Particular incidents of verge parking may be considered dangerous or obstructive and therefore constitute an obstruction under one of the following statutory provisions:
  (i) Regulation 103 Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 – vehicles causing unnecessary obstruction of the road (including the verge).
  (ii) Section 22 Road Traffic Act 1988 – leaving vehicles in a dangerous position on the road (including the verge).
102

(iii) Section 137 Highways Act 1980 – wilful obstruction of the free passage along a highway (including the verge).

- Where there are existing waiting restrictions in place by virtue of a TRO, and the signs and lines are correctly displayed to give lawful effect to the restrictions, unless otherwise stated, these restrictions apply to the full width of the road which by definition means any length of highway or road to which the public has access. Therefore, the kerbside lines and signs apply to the whole width of the road up to the boundary of the adjacent properties, including the verge.

- In places where verge parking is a particular problem, the issue may be resolved by the imposition of a TRO which specifically prohibits parking on the verge.

- On certain lengths of the highway network it may be relevant to prohibit the parking of motor vehicles on highway verges by means of a TRO, particularly on the Strategic and Traffic Sensitive Networks. In areas where a Special Parking Area, (SPA), is in force, the offence is decriminalised and can be enforced by Northamptonshire County Council as the traffic authority rather than the Police.

- In residential areas in particular, it may be more appropriate for the local district/borough/town or parish council to make a local byelaw. Such a byelaw would not require the prescriptive signs and lines that a TRO would and it would give the local community ownership of the matter.

- The unauthorised placing of objects on the verge with the aim of deterring parking will be dealt with initially by letter from the engineering contract Service Provider and then, if no action is taken, by means of the formal notice procedure under the Highways Act 1980 by Northamptonshire County Council as the highway authority.

- Where there are posts or bollards that have previously been permitted but which do not meet the above criteria, they will not be replaced when damaged, removed or require other maintenance.

- At locations where it is considered that the hardening of the verge may be an option, it will be necessary to replace the existing kerb with dropped units and construct the parking area to County Council standards with the rear edge level with the footway. (Where practical – the available verge width and existing kerb height may mean that the resulting crossfall of the hardened verge may be unacceptable).

**Standards**

- Highways Act 1980
- Road Traffic Act 1988
- Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986
- Local Government Act 1972
12.6 Access Only Orders

Under the Highways Act 1980, the public enjoys the right to pass and re-pass over a highway maintained at public expense. However, from time to time circumstances arise where it may be considered necessary to restrict certain types of traffic for reasons that include physical obstruction; in the interests of safety and security; the unsuitability of roads for certain types of vehicle and limited highway room.

More specifically, these reasons can be identified as:

- Height, (low bridge, flying leasehold)
- Width
- Lack of turning and/or parking facilities
- Anti-social behaviour (Gating orders)
- To restrict motorised vehicles from entering an area during certain times when there may be a high pedestrian presence, e.g. shopping areas.

While restricting certain categories of traffic, it is still necessary to allow access to properties and businesses and therefore, rather than introducing an overall restriction, problems can be dealt with by an access only order. Any vehicle requiring legitimate access to premises within the prohibited area would be exempt from the order.

While consideration will be given to requests for access only orders, in view of the difficulty of enforcement and the denial of the public’s fundamental right to pass and re-pass, such orders will only be implemented after all other options have been investigated and rejected and a full consultation has taken place.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will only consider introducing an access only order after all other alternative solutions have been considered and shown to be inappropriate.
- Access orders to prevent “rat-running” will not be considered due to the difficulty of enforcement.
- A full consultation will be undertaken involving the relevant Borough or District Council, Town or Parish Council, local County Councillor and all residents and businesses that will be affected by the introduction of an access only order.
- An access only order will be introduced only with the full support of the community directly affected by it.
- Where it is confirmed that an access only order will be introduced, it will initially be temporary for a period of eighteen months to assess its effectiveness and will be made permanent if it is shown to resolve the issues for which it was introduced.
Officer Guidance

- Requests for access only orders shall be fully investigated to see if there are alternative measures that can be introduced to resolve the issues that have initiated the request.

- In addition to the standard consultees, i.e. borough, district, town and parish councils, emergency services, etc., all residents and businesses that will be directly affected by a proposed access only order shall be consulted on the proposal.

Standards

- Highways Act 1980
- Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

12.7 Quiet Lanes

The Quiet Lanes initiative was promoted by the Countryside Agency, (Natural England since October 2006), and is intended to make selected country lanes more attractive for walking, cycling and horse riding and is in the interests of a more tranquil and attractive rural environment, maintaining the character of minor rural roads by seeking to contain rising traffic growth which is occurring on the whole of the highway network. Roads that are to be considered as Quiet Lanes will generally already have low traffic flows with relatively low speeds.

The initiative is not intended to be a traffic calming measure for busy roads nor is it a means of dealing with rat running and the use by heavy goods vehicles, but instead is a way of achieving positive changes in driver behaviour on minor unclassified rural roads without recourse to speed limits or traffic calming. Because of this aim, community involvement is essential in determining the roads that should be designated, the objectives for the individual schemes and to encourage the behavioural change by developing community ownership of the scheme. The process of designating Quiet Lanes involves extensive consultation with the community that will be directly affected if the scheme goes ahead and this will be achieved through public meetings and the notification of the proposals to all households in the designated area.

In view of the costs involved in completing the process for the designation of Quiet Lanes, generally, Northamptonshire County Council will not initiate such schemes but will consider requests from district, town and parish councils.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will consider requests for the designation of Quiet Lanes from district, town and parish councils.

- Schemes intended to address use by heavy goods vehicles or where “rat running” occurs will not be considered.

- Promoters of Quiet Lane schemes must be able to demonstrate the extent of community support within, and adjacent to, the proposed area to be designated.
Roads and areas put forward for designation should fit in to the local route hierarchy with suitable diversion routes available for traffic to bypass the area. They may form a network of roads and, where possible, incorporate public rights of way.

Where a scheme is considered to be viable, Northamptonshire County Council will develop the proposal via the process set down in The Quiet lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006.

In the spirit of the community involvement within the initiative, the promoting authority will be expected to work closely with, and assist, Northamptonshire County Council with the consultation process such as providing venues for the public meetings, distributing notices, etc.

Conventional traffic calming measures, e.g. road humps, etc., will not form part of a Quiet Lane scheme.

Successful schemes will be monitored using control roads to assess the effect on traffic flows and speeds and identify possible problems and solutions.

Officer Guidance

Quiet Lane schemes may comprise a single road or a group of connecting roads.

Requests for Quiet Lane designations should initially be assessed for suitability in respect of the setting in the highway network and community; the nature of the current traffic flows and the availability of alternative routes.

The promoter of a Quiet Lane scheme shall provide evidence of support for the proposal from the community and the adjacent area before further work takes place.

The promoter of the scheme will be engaged in the provision of a suitable venue in, or within a reasonable distance of the proposed area, for the convening of public meetings; the delivery of notices giving details of the area being considered for designation and how representations can be made and the posting of notices in accordance with Schedule 1 Part 3 of The Quiet Lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006.

Consultation on the proposed designation shall be in accordance with section 4 of The Quiet Lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006.

Any objections received in accordance with section 6 of The Quiet Lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006, and not subsequently withdrawn, will be fully considered and taken into account before proceeding with or abandoning the scheme.

Upon the finalisation of a Quiet Lane designation, signs in accordance with The Traffic Signs (Amendment) Regulations 2006 will be placed on the road(s) designated and maintained as long as the designation remains in force.

Other than the provision of signs, additional works are to be avoided although consideration can be given to reducing the number and size of existing signs as maintenance becomes due and not replacing some road markings following surface dressing, etc.
Where Quiet Lane Schemes are to be implemented, control roads of a similar nature will be identified and used for comparative purposes in respect of traffic flows and speeds to establish if the scheme has been successful.

Standards

- The Transport Act 2000
- The Quiet Lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006
- The Traffic Signs (Amendment) Regulations 2006

12.8 Parking Enforcement

The provision of parking facilities is vital to ensure that the community has the access to the goods and services which it requires and plays an essential part in the County's economy. However, some parking provision, such as on-street, can also have an adverse effect on the movement of goods and people and it is therefore essential to have in place a parking strategy which in addition to addressing the demands for parking will also operate as a means of reducing congestion, encouraging traffic restraint and supporting alternative modes of transport. The introduction of a parking strategy cannot be undertaken in isolation, it will be influenced by the overall environmental, development and employment objectives affecting Northamptonshire.

Northamptonshire County Council’s Parking Strategy has been designed to enable Northamptonshire County Council to meet the Government’s shared objectives for transport, namely tackling congestion; delivering accessibility; improving safety and reducing air pollution and also the local objectives set out in the Northamptonshire Transport Plan, (NTP), covering healthier travel; improving maintenance and accommodating growth.

Policy

- The Parking Strategy will fully support the Northamptonshire Transport Plan objectives.
- Civil parking enforcement will be extended to all borough and district councils in Northamptonshire.
- All local authorities that maintain car parks to introduce car park charging tariffs by the year 2021.
- The parking strategy will support accessibility by improving the availability of parking spaces for those with disabilities.
- The civil parking enforcement scheme will provide a consistent level of involvement for borough and district councils.
- The charges for Park and Ride facilities will be set at a level below that of the charge set for town centre tariffs.
- A Parking Partnership for Northamptonshire has been established to advise Northamptonshire County Council on strategic matters.
The strategy will promote the use of travel plans by all organisations with the objective of reducing demand for travel by private vehicles.

**Officer Guidance**

- A periodic review of waiting and parking orders will be undertaken to ensure that they meet current needs and are appropriate to an efficient self-funding parking operation.
- To meet the principles set down in the Traffic Management Act 2004, reduced parking provision is to be introduced on certain major roads.
- Parking provision in both residential and work place areas is to be promoted in partnership with local planning authorities.
- Parking charges are to be set at levels that will ensure that the objectives of controlling demand and discouraging undesirable car journeys, such as car commuting, are met.
- The quality and quantity of parking provision for those with disabilities will be designed to fully meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Travel Plans will be required from all new developments, irrespective of land use considerations.
- Contributions will be sought from developments to fund improvements to alternative modes of travel to help reduce the use of private vehicles.

**Standards**

- Traffic Management Act 2004
- Northamptonshire County Council’s Countywide Parking Strategy
- Residents Parking Scheme Policy Notes December 2006
- Charging Framework for Residents’ Parking Schemes
13.0 Accommodating Essential Service Traffic (Lorries etc)

13.1 Amenity Weight Restrictions

The potential for wear and tear on roads by heavy goods vehicles, (HGVs), has been calculated as being 30,000 times greater than that of the average car. New roads are built to withstand the loads imposed on them by HGVs, but for most of the road network, deterioration and the need for frequent maintenance is largely due to the passage of such vehicles.

The use of inappropriate minor roads by HGVs, as well as causing significant damage, also generates a considerable volume of complaints from the public both from other road users and people living in communities through which these roads pass. It is therefore important to manage the movement of freight to reduce the need for maintenance and improve the quality of life for communities, but at the same time, ensuring that the problem is not just transferred elsewhere.

Where the criteria are met, the appropriate introduction of an Amenity Weight Restriction, (AWR), can reduce the volume of HGV traffic passing through a community. However, such a restriction will still permit access for loading and unloading so where there are premises that are generating HGV movements, the introduction of an AWR will have a limited effect.

It should be noted that AWR orders can not be made on the Primary Road Network (PRN) and only in exceptional circumstances on other “A” roads.

Policy

The introduction of an amenity weight restriction will be considered where:

- A minimum reduction of 30 HGV movements per day, representing at least 50% of the observed movements, can be achieved.
- A restricted area can be defined which does not transfer the problem to other communities and has sensible and practicable terminal locations.
- An alternative route exists for diverting HGVs that does not pass through environmentally sensitive areas, does not create a major increase in distance for lorry operators, avoids dangerous junctions or other unsuitable locations and will not result in increased road maintenance costs.
- Structural damage to buildings, walls and vehicles occurs.
- The road that is to be the subject of the restriction is not part of the Primary Road Network (PRN) or, other than in exceptional circumstances, a non PRN “A” road.

Officer Guidance

- Involve the local town or parish council in carrying out a survey to determine vehicle movements, registration numbers, company names or logos, date, time and direction of travel.
- Where the majority of vehicle movements are local to the area, consideration to be given to advisory signing to take vehicles away from inappropriate roads together with liaison with companies involved.
Where the introduction of an AWR will result in a large area of prohibition that would be difficult to enforce, the need for an order should be re-evaluated and either alternative measures considered or the area broken down into manageable areas or reduced to individual lengths of road.

Requests for an AWR involving a non PRN “A” road in whole or part will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Each request shall be considered on an individual basis but for guidance, if a non PRN “A” road is to qualify then the following points would need to be taken into account:

(i) Its width.

(ii) The alignment, e.g. series of bends.

(iii) Evidence of highway damage attributable to HGVs or other vehicles avoiding HGVs.

(iv) Evidence of property and/or vehicle damage caused by rat running HGVs.

(v) The availability of a suitable and local alternative route.

No amenity weight restriction will be publicly advertised until a full consultation with the relevant district, town/parish council and local councillors has been completed and the proposal agreed and supported by both the local County Councillor and the Police.

Standards

- EU Directive 89/460/EC
- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
- County Council’s standard detail drawings.

13.2 Lorry Routes

Northamptonshire’s central location within the country and being at a crossroads of major freight routes, including the A14/M1/M6 and A43 south/A45 corridors, explains why for many years haulage growth in the county has expanded at twice the national average. These factors have resulted in a large number of national and regional distribution companies establishing centres in the county and these are likely to increase, leading to more heavy goods vehicles, (HGVs), using the highway network, not always travelling on the most appropriate roads.

The unnecessary use of inappropriate roads by HGVs is an emotive issue leading to complaints from local communities and other road users as well as causing significant highway damage leading to increased maintenance costs. Satellite navigation systems have tended to exacerbate the problem due to incorrect information being entered into the systems or direct routes being identified, regardless of the nature of the roads in question. While it has to be accepted that access for HGVs loading and unloading has to be accommodating on lower category routes, through
traffic needs to be directed to strategic routes thereby minimising congestion, pollution and the potential for accidents; improving the efficiency of distribution and speeding up delivery times.

The use of inappropriate roads by HGVs often leads to calls from local residents for an amenity weight restriction, (AWR), however, unless these are limited to a small area or to individual roads, their effectiveness is small. Vehicles delivering within the area covered by the weight restriction are excluded from the order and the larger the area the more difficult it is to be sure that a particular HGV is legitimately entering the area. Northamptonshire County Council has therefore developed a programme for improving traffic signs to direct HGV traffic on to the core road network together with advisory signing to dissuade the use of unsuitable routes as an alternative to introducing expensive and possibly ineffective AWRs, although such restrictions will still be employed where they are necessary.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will provide and maintain a lorry route map together with a mapping system for amenity weight restrictions and structural limits, both available via the internet.

- Positive HGV signing and restrictions will be prioritised and implemented as required.

- Northamptonshire County Council will be represented at local and regional freight partnerships.

- Continued liaison with developers, councillors, district councils, communities, local businesses, agencies and the freight industry.

- Northamptonshire County Council will support borough and district councils in securing lorry parking facilities countywide.

Officer Guidance

- Knowledge of current and future trends in haulage and associated developments will be acquired by regular and frequent communication with other authorities, businesses, agencies and the freight industry.

- When determining the strategic and local lorry network, consideration is to be given to the needs of hauliers for access for deliveries.

- The provision of positive signing to encourage the use of the core road network must be balanced with the need to avoid sign proliferation and to avoid street clutter. (See Policy 18.3.1 Townscape).

- The requirements of Policy 13.1 Amenity Weight Restrictions are to be followed where it is considered necessary to introduce an AWR to resolve a particular lorry problem.

- Structural weight limits will be introduced where required by the highway service provider’s structural engineers to protect weak bridges, culverts, etc.
Standards

- The Traffic Sign Regulations and General Direction 2002
- Road Traffic Act 1988

13.2.1 Lorry Parking

While many lorry movements are associated with day to day deliveries around the county, others are related to delivery and collection of goods as well as through traffic and this often results in drivers needing to park up overnight before continuing their journey. Facilities for parking need to be safe and secure, especially as many lorries will be parking up fully loaded. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of lorry parks countywide and as a consequence, drivers are parking in residential streets and rural lay-bys, neither of which is secure or provide the necessary facilities. In residential streets, large, stationary lorries also present a hazard to other road users and pedestrians.

It is essential that proper provision for overnight parking with the necessary security and facilities is provided at suitable locations across the county. The provision of lorry parks is something which the borough and district councils can promote by encouraging developers of sites that will generate significant heavy goods vehicle, (HGV), movements to include parking facilities within the development site.

Northamptonshire County Council provides and maintains a location map of lorry parks throughout the county and encourages drivers to make full use of these facilities. The Police and parking attendants will issue fixed penalty tickets where HGVs are partly or wholly parked on a footway or verge, day or night and vehicles parked on the highway overnight may be reported to the Traffic Commission who issue the operating licences to the haulage companies.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will support the borough and district councils in encouraging developers to provide safe, secure lorry parks at strategic points across the county.
- In conjunction with the Police and the parking attendants, enforcement action will be taken where offences are committed under the road traffic regulations in respect of HGV parking on footways and verges.
- Signage to lorry parks shall be in accordance with DfT Circular 01/2008 “Policy on service areas and other roadside facilities in motorways and all-purpose trunk roads in England”.

Officer Guidance

- It is the role of borough and district councils to encourage developers of sites that will generate significant lorry movements to incorporate adequate lorry parking within the curtilage of proposed sites.
Borough and district councils should be encouraged to work together in the creation of lorry parks within the county to ensure that they are strategically placed and meet the needs of the haulage industry.

Under section 19 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 it is an offence to park an HGV on a verge, the land situated between carriageways that is not a footway or on a footway.

Northamptonshire County Council’s Guide to Lorry Parks in Northamptonshire will be kept up to date as new lorry parks are created or changes take place with the existing sites.

Standards

- The Road Traffic Act 1988
- DfT Circular 01/2008 “Policy on service areas and other roadside facilities in motorways and all-purpose trunk roads in England”.

13.3 Routing of Abnormal Loads

Occasions arise when it is necessary to move large loads around the country which, by virtue of size and/or weight, necessitate vehicles that exceed the dimensions and weights set down in regulations. Such units are designated as “Abnormal Loads” and are subject to The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order or Special Order under Section 44 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

As with other vehicles, lawfully an abnormal load can travel on any road provided that the haulier complies with traffic orders that apply to the road or roads that are being used. However, The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order requires hauliers to give advance notice to the Police and the Highway Authority when it is intended to travel on the highway with a vehicle or vehicle combination which does not comply with The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations. The haulier is also required to indemnify the highway authority against any damage that may occur as a result of the movement of the load. Other agencies such as the Highways Agency, Network Rail, British Waterways Board, etc., should also be consulted.

The movement of vehicles over 150 tonnes is covered by Section 44 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. Vehicle operators are required to submit to the Overseeing Organisation (the Vehicle Certification Agency) an application for an individual Special Order authorising the movement of the vehicle.

An abnormal load has to be indivisible. If it can be broken down into smaller loads that are within the permitted size and weight covered by the Construction and Use regulations then this must be done.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will through its highways service provider receive and process applications for the movement of abnormal loads through the County to ensure that the operation is carried out safely and with the minimum disruption to other road users and the environment.

- In processing abnormal load applications, Northamptonshire County Council, through its highways service provider, will work closely with the Police to achieve the above.
Where problems with the proposed route are identified during the processing of the application, Northamptonshire County Council, through its highways service provider, will liaise with the haulier and the Police to determine an acceptable alternative route.

Where alterations to the highway are unavoidable, the haulier will be responsible for all costs of carrying out the work and reinstating the highway to its original condition. There will be no allowance for any betterment of the highway.

**Officer Guidance**

- An “Abnormal Indivisible Load” is defined in the Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order 2003.

- Details of vehicle categories, etc., are in accordance with The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order 2003.

- The haulier making an application for the movement of an Abnormal Indivisible Load must supply the following information:
  - Operator’s address and contact details; licence No. etc.
  - Point of departure and point of destination,
  - Time and date of journey,
  - Details of proposed route,
  - Brief details of load, e.g. transformer, boat, etc.,
  - Vehicle details, formation and registration number,
  - Length, width, height and gross weight of load,
  - Number of wheels and axles,
  - Axle weights and spacing.

(Hauliers can make applications through ESDAL (Electronic Delivery of Abnormal Loads).

- The haulier will be responsible for surveying the route and contacting other agencies that are likely to be affected including the Highways Agency, Network Rail, British Waterways Board, Environment Agency, Police and owners of overhead cables and wires.

- The proposed route is to be assessed in respect of the strength of bridges, safe clearances and other restrictions such as lorry ban areas, restricted access, temporary traffic management measures and road/street works.

- In the event that the proposed route raises some concerns over its viability, the haulier shall be contacted as soon as possible and an acceptable alternative identified in liaison with the Police.
To accommodate the movement of wide and/or long loads, arrangements can be made for the temporary removal and subsequent reinstatement of street furniture at the haulier’s cost.

More extensive works such as temporary or altered carriageways may be considered where there is no suitable alternative route or means of delivering the load. Again, full costs will be met by the haulier for the carrying out of the works and the subsequent reinstatement of the highway to its original state. There will be no betterment allowance.

**Standards**

- The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 and subsequent amendments.
- The Road Traffic Act 1988
- The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order 2003

### 13.4 Bus Routes

Any bus operator can run services on any route at any time without the approval of the local authority. These “commercial services” have to be registered with the Traffic Commissioner and the only obligation on the operator is to send a copy of the registration to the local transport authority, Northamptonshire County Council in the case of Northamptonshire. The bus operators are responsible for the timetable and the introduction of new commercial services depends on the operator’s opinion of the likely demand and the commercial viability of the service, although Northamptonshire County Council can also work with them to explore possible commercial opportunities.

The 1985 Transport Act requires Northamptonshire County Council to subsidise such socially necessary services in addition to the commercial network as they consider appropriate. In Northamptonshire, subsidised bus services operate mainly in rural areas. Funding for these non-commercial services comes from Northamptonshire County Council’s own revenue support budget and Northamptonshire County Council is required to invite tenders from or enter into de minimis arrangement with bus operators for these services as set out in the 1985 Transport Act.

Northamptonshire County Council can also procure services on behalf of developers, or other public bodies wishing to support a service. Alternatively, such parties could procure the service directly with the operator.

**Policy**

- Northamptonshire County Council will work in close partnership with the bus operators to ensure that the best possible bus service will be provided for the people of Northamptonshire.
- Northamptonshire County Council in partnership with the bus operators will work to introduce a low floor bus fleet on all services in the County.
- To encourage the bus operators to improve customer care by providing training courses including disability awareness training.
The minimum levels of supported service agreed by Cabinet in May 2011 are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Days of operation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Peak Service</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market Towns 6,000+</td>
<td>Mon - Sat</td>
<td>Hourly</td>
<td>Arrivals before 0800 and 0900; departures after 1700 and 1800; service to more than one major town should be provided.</td>
<td>Settlements to anchor high-frequency direct inter-urban services where possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,000 – 6,000</td>
<td>Mon – Sat</td>
<td>Hourly</td>
<td>Arrivals before 0800 and 0900; departures after 1700 and 1800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 – 2,000</td>
<td>Mon - Sat</td>
<td>2-hourly</td>
<td>Arrival before 0900; departure after 1700</td>
<td>Three villages together having a population in excess of 3,000 within 5 miles likely to define the corridor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 – 2,000</td>
<td>Mon - Sat</td>
<td>3 per day fixed route; County Connect</td>
<td>0700-1900h DRT operation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-500</td>
<td>One market day round trip per week to nearest large town or Mon-Sat County Connect to nearest hub</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;200</td>
<td>Mon-Sat County Connect</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>Where feasible and deliverable as part of an area strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Review routes to and from bus stops and interchanges.

Standards

• The Transport Act 1985 and amendments
• The Transport Act 2000

13.4.1 Bus Priority

Although efficient movers of large numbers of people, buses can easily become caught up in congestion leading to delays and unreliability which subsequently results in customer dissatisfaction. Northamptonshire County Council can assist bus services through a variety of bus priority measures. By doing this it will help bus operators maintain a reliable and consistent service, enabling them to use their vehicles more intensely and contribute to Northamptonshire County Council’s objective of reducing the number of cars on congested roads.

While bus priority lanes can resolve many issues of delay arising from congestion, there is often insufficient room within the limits of the highway to enable effective lengths of lane to be provided.

Policy

• As part of a bus priority scheme, Northamptonshire County Council will examine each route in detail to determine what bus priority scheme would be most appropriate to alleviate the worst effects of congestion. It will also examine whether selective vehicle detection can be incorporated into a real-time information system for all traffic signals over an area.

• Priority will be given to routes where there is existing congestion or is likely to be future congestion as a result of development; there is a high frequency of bus services; the bus operator has plans to improve the service or the quality of vehicles; the bus operator is prepared to invest in any on-board equipment or an effective scheme can be developed.

• Northamptonshire County Council will audit all traffic management and highway improvement schemes to ensure that there are no detrimental effects on bus services and to establish whether any beneficial bus priority measures can be added to each scheme.

Officer Guidance

• Routes where significant congestion takes place will be assessed to see if there is scope for bus priority facilities.

• Opportunities to introduce bus priority facilities will be considered in conjunction with road improvement schemes and highway alterations generated by large developments.

• Where bus priority facilities cannot be introduced as part of the above, such schemes will be scrutinised to ensure that bus services will not be adversely affected.
Standards

14.0 Traffic Signs, Bollards, Road Markings

14.1.1 Road Markings

The provision of clear, well maintained road markings is an important contribution to highway safety giving drivers information to enable them to safely travel the County’s road network. Where lines have deteriorated, or are missing due to resurfacing works, the safety of road users is reduced, particularly at night or during spells of inclement weather.

Policy

- Centre line markings will be provided on strategic routes and main distributor roads in accordance with Department for Transport’s criteria and advice.

- In roads lower in the hierarchy, centre warning lines will only be provided at potentially hazardous locations or where their use is recommended following an accident investigation study.

- Edge of carriageway markings will be provided on all rural strategic routes and main distributor routes whether or not the carriageway is kerbed.

- Edge lines will also be used where required as an accident prevention or reduction measure.

- Stop lines will be laid where a stop sign is provided and where the Department for Transport’s lack of visibility criteria are met and at all traffic signal controlled junctions, level crossings and signal controlled pedestrian and cycle crossings.

- Give way lines will be laid at all junctions where no other marking is provided on strategic routes and main distributor roads and on local roads at their junctions with secondary distributors. Give way lines will also be provided on any road if their use is recommended following an accident investigation study.

- Give way triangle markings will be laid in conjunction with give way signs, on the approach to strategic routes and main distributor roads and at other locations where their use is recommended following an accident investigation study.

- Miscellaneous road markings, such as “SLOW”, lane arrows and warning messages will be provided as accident prevention measures; in conjunction with the utilisation of road space and to avoid obstructions at schools, fire and ambulance stations, etc. “SLOW” markings will only be provided next to an appropriate warning sign.

- It will be endeavoured to be consistent when introducing new lines and markings with the smallest size and minimum number being used and the intended function. It will be endeavoured to use yellow lines with a reduced permitted width and an alternative less obtrusive colour.

- Bus stop markings will be provided where necessary in urban areas and at particular locations where indiscriminate use of the carriageway for loading or waiting causes problems to bus operation.
Road markings for cyclists will be provided wherever a cycle track or segregated cycle track/footpath is provided.

Officer Guidance

- Double white centre lines, (indicating no overtaking), shall only be laid on “A” roads or, exceptionally, “B” roads, where the carriageway is a minimum of 6.1 metre wide and following a forward visibility survey at the appropriate 85th percentile speed for that section of road.

- At particularly hazardous locations and where the road width permits, the solid lines may be separated to 1.2 metre maximum width with hatched markings between them.

- Where overtaking is hazardous but does not justify solid lines, warning lines may be split and separated with hatched markings between them.

- Normally, no markings will be provided on roads with a width of less than 5 metres.

- Raised profile edge lines should be considered on all Strategic and Main Distributor roads when improvement and structural maintenance are carried out, except when the road is subject to a 40mph speed limit or less. They should be provided on the offside of all dual carriageway roads and only on the nearside of dual carriageway roads where there is a hard strip of minimum width 1 metre. They should also be provided on single carriageway roads where the minimum width of hard strip is 1 metre.

- School entrance markings will be provided outside all school entrances used by pupils unless it is clearly inappropriate to do so and should not extend past the school boundary otherwise residents’ parking may be affected.

- Box junction markings will be used only at junctions where persistent blockages are known to occur and subsequently cause delays to other traffic movements.

- Lane arrows and destinations will be used where it is essential to advise on lane discipline to achieve optimum utilisation and maximum flexibility in the use of road space.

- Route numbers and/or destinations can be marked on the carriageway in conjunction with the lane arrows on through routes.

- Warning messages such as “KEEP CLEAR” shall be used only in exceptional circumstances to prevent a slow moving queue of vehicles, such as on the approach to junctions, from blocking the path to an essential access. They will not be used to prevent parking across private accesses. A variation is used for fire and ambulance stations.

- Subject to an assessment of the relative costs and benefits, existing lines in the vicinity of new ones will be replaced to match the new.

- Edge markings, (“H” bar), will be provided to keep accesses and crossing points clear of stationary vehicles where there is a clear case of problems due to indiscriminate parking and to supplement “Disabled Resident” signs.
Standards

- The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
- Department for Transport directions and advice
- Traffic Signs Manual
- County Council standard details.

14.1.2 Road Studs

Retroreflective road studs are often used to supplement longitudinal road markings and it is a statutory requirement for them to be used with double white centre line systems. However, with improvements to the performance and reflectivity of road marking paint, the need for the widespread use of road studs at non-statutory locations has declined and Northamptonshire County Council will no longer maintain retroreflective road studs on non-qualifying sections of road. As and when retroreflective road studs at these locations are removed, for instance when the road is resurfaced, or they become displaced, then they will not be replaced.

Where required, appropriately coloured retroreflective road studs will be used to delineate the edge of carriageways, particularly where the road is part of the Primary Road Network and is a dual carriageway with metre strips and ribbed edge of carriageway road markings.

Road studs used to mark a crossing place must be coloured white, silver or light grey. They should not be fitted with reflective lenses or with a steady or intermittent light source, but may be formed from retroreflecting material.

Policy

- Retroreflective road studs will not be provided on roads where there is a system of street lighting, except where there is a legal requirement, or where there is only a short length of street lighting.
- Retroreflective roads studs will not be provided on roads that are not an “A” class road, except where there is a legal requirement to do so.
- Retroreflective road studs shall comply with current the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions.
- A coloured retroreflective road stud system will be provided where appropriate to indicate the edge of carriageways.
- In the case of studs placed temporarily at road works, the stud body must be fluorescent green/yellow.

Officer Guidance

- Where retroreflective road studs are no longer required, they will be removed in conjunction with other maintenance work.
• The provision of retroreflective road studs at particular sites will be reviewed as the opportunity for replacement arises.

Standards
• The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
• Traffic Signs Manual
• Department for Transport directions and advice
• County Council standard details.

14.2.1 Traffic Signs and Bollards (General)
Traffic signs are a familiar part of the street scene and are a means of conveying a wide range of information to the motorist and other road users. Traffic signs give directions, both long distance and local; instruct motorists over mandatory matters with which they must comply such as give way or turn left/right; provide warnings of hazards, for example, bends of junctions; as well as providing community information through boundary and village signs.

However, there is a need to control the extent to which signs are employed because an excess of signs can have a negative effect providing too much information for motorists to take in as they pass. They can also become a distraction leading to potential hazards with drivers taking their eyes off the road and other traffic.

It is important to get the scale of signing correct and appropriate to the environment in which they are placed. Consequently signs in conservation areas and those that are of a local nature will be to a smaller scale than those used for major routes. All signs must, however, comply with the national legislation and regulations.

Policy
• Traffic signs on strategic routes and main distributor roads will be provided in accordance with Department for Transport standards and policy.
• Non-mandatory signs and/or bollards will be provided where road safety benefits would accrue.
• Warning signs will be used on the approaches to hazards and where drivers cannot readily perceive the condition of the road ahead.
• In order to encourage traffic to use strategic routes and main distributor roads, traffic signs will direct all but local traffic along these routes. Existing signs on routes other than the primary network will not be renewed except as local “guide post” signs at junctions usually indicating the next village only.
• Traffic bollards will be used where necessary to provide safety information to drivers and to protect refuges where pedestrians can cross the road safely.
Parish councils will be permitted to erect signs on or near footpaths and bridle paths to indicate warning of miscellaneous local dangers such as “deep quarry”.

No permanent traffic signs other than those specified in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 and subsequent amendments, or in Department for Transport circulars, publications or advice will be erected on Northamptonshire County Council managed roads unless special authorisation has been obtained from the Department for Transport.

No permanent signs will be erected on Northamptonshire County Council managed roads unless authorisation has been obtained from the County Council for signs necessary to bring bylaws into effect or they are Neighbourhood Watch signs.

The international wheelchair symbols will be added to appropriate local direction signs where the basic amenities are available.

Where routes of special convenience to people with disabilities follow a separate path to the normally signed pedestrian routes, special signed routes for disabled people will be considered in consultation with the appropriate disability groups.

Where new highway signs are introduced in conservation areas, it will be endeavoured to use the smallest size and minimum number of signs whilst being consistent with carrying out safely the intended function.

Where a new sign is introduced onto the highway network, the removal of two redundant signs or posts will be considered to reduce sign clutter on the network.

Existing, and proposed, traffic signing should be assessed to see if they are necessary or excessive in order to reduce, or avoid, sign clutter.

Traffic sign no. 7014 “New Road Layout Ahead” and its variations should not be used, unless there is a specific reason to do so. Then the sign must be removed no later than 3 months after the completion of the works.

Signage to service areas shall be in accordance with DfT Circular 01/2008 “Policy on service areas and other roadside facilities in motorways and all-purpose trunk roads in England”.

**Officer Guidance**

Care will be taken in the design, number, size and mounting of signs to ensure that their environmental impact is kept to a minimum consistent with road safety and traffic management needs.

Where possible signs should be installed on use existing posts or lamp columns to reduce street clutter. Unless the lamp column has been specifically designed to take additional loading the maximum size of the total of all signs on a lamp column below 10m in height to be 0.3m². All attachments to lamp columns shall be notified to the Street Lighting contractor.

Sign post diameter/cross-section to be appropriate for the size of the sign with single post arrangements to use square section posts or locking devices to prevent signs being turned.
• Passively safe posts will be considered on strategic or major routes and provided at specific locations where there is a history of accidents involving vehicles leaving the carriageway and hitting objects in the verge.

• In conservation areas, signs will be of the minimum size and number consistent with road safety and traffic management needs. Where possible, waiting restriction and other small signs to be mounted on adjacent walls with the owner’s permission. Sign posts to be of an appropriate colour to the particular conservation area unless a particular colour would create a hazard.

• Where it is possible to do so traditional concrete post/wooden arm guide posts are to be retained and repaired when necessary, if requested by the town or parish council.

• Subject to the relative costs and benefits, existing traffic signs in the vicinity of any new signs to be assessed for clutter to see if they can be removed, replaced or incorporated into the new signage.

**Standards**

• Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002.

• Construction, foundations and mounting to be in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s standard detail drawings.

• Traffic Signs Manual

• DfT Signing the Way

• DfT Circular 01/2008 “Policy on service areas and other roadside facilities in motorways and all-purpose trunk roads in England”.

• Traffic Advisory Leaflet 01/13 “Reducing Sign Clutter”

**14.2.2 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Roundabout Signing)**

Roundabouts are an effective means of managing traffic by allowing vehicles entering from busy side roads to merge with those already on the roundabout with minimum delays to all. It is essential that the signing is clear and in advance of the roundabout so that drivers can adjust their speed appropriately.

Once on the roundabout, drivers should be clearly directed by means of white on blue arrows and chevrons around the island to their desired exit point.

**Policy**

• Appropriate sized chevrons will be provided at all roundabouts together with “go left” arrows unless the roundabout is too small to accept them.

• Chevrons will be sited so as have the greatest effect while not obstructing drivers’ visibility.
“Chasing arrows” formed in block work around the circumference of the island may be considered to supplement chevrons and arrows.

Officer Guidance

- The above policies apply to all new roundabouts. Where maintenance works are undertaken, consideration will be given to bringing existing sites into line with the policy, subject to financial restraints.

- When designing the chevron signs, the size adopted should relate to, and be in proportion to, the size of the roundabout

- The use of “chasing arrows” in block work should be carefully considered due to its cost, its lack of reflectivity and its tendency to soon become covered in grime, etc.

- Exit point direction signs should be positioned to be clearly visible while not obstructing drivers’ visibility.

Standards


- Contract for the Commercial Sponsorship of Roundabouts, Landscaped Areas and Signage in Northamptonshire.

- Construction, foundations and mounting to be in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s standard detail drawings.

14.2.3 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Boundary and Community Signing)

With an increasing desire to establish and protect an identity for a community, many towns and villages request or establish unique signage and measures to protect their environment. These include “Please drive slowly” signs; twinning signs; carved village signs; and verge posts and bollards to deter damage to grassed areas. In addition to these, County boundary signs are provided on main routes entering Northamptonshire.

While many of these can be accommodated, subject to funding being available, (possibly from sources other than Northamptonshire County Council), there is a need to ensure that all non-standard signage on the highway is to appropriate design standards and that the safety of the public and other highway users is not compromised.

Policy

- County boundary signs will be provided on strategic routes and main distributors and on other roads as appropriate.

- Town signs which may incorporate the district name will be permitted at urban area boundaries only.

- Village name signs may be provided by Northamptonshire County Council for villages on strategic routes and main distributor roads. Parishes on other routes may have village
name signs provided and erected at their expense with Northamptonshire County Council taking over the future maintenance.

- “Please Drive Slowly” will be an integral part of a village name sign which will also incorporate the speed restriction sign where possible. No other form of supplementary place or sign aimed at a similar objective to “please Drive Slowly” will be permitted. “Thank you for driving slowly” may be added to the reverse side of a village name sign.

- Signs displaying the name of a twin town or village will be permitted as an integral part of the village or town sign.

- Carved village signs mounted on a single post and with a base plinth may be permitted subject to certain conditions being met.

- Bollards or posts will only be permitted on highway verges where there is a clear need to prevent vehicles being driven and parked on them in the interests of road safety. They will not be permitted for the sole purpose of preventing damage to grass verges.

**Officer Guidance**

- Wherever possible, village name signs will incorporate the speed restriction sign or will be placed alongside existing speed restriction signs to emphasise the built up nature of the route and should help to reduce vehicle speeds.

- Where “Please Drive Slowly” or twinning signs are required on existing village name signs they will be designed to the same overall width.

- The design of twinning signs will be as for “Please Drive Slowly” signs.

- The use of verge posts or bollards is to be strictly controlled. Existing verge posts or bollards that do not meet the criteria should not be maintained or replaced.

- Carved village signs and plinths will only be permitted under a Section 142 licence issued under the Highways Act 1980.

**Standards**


- Northamptonshire County Council local standards specifications.

- Traffic Signs Manual

**14.2.4 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Unauthorised Signing)**

All signage on the highway has to be in accordance with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002, or where non-standard, to have specific approval. Any other signs or objects, such as stones placed on the highway verge to deter parking, constitute an obstruction under the Highways Act 1980.
Policy

- Owners of unauthorised signs will be requested to remove the obstruction.

- Where the owner of an unauthorised sign is not present, and the sign is considered to be a safety hazard, it will be removed by Northamptonshire County Council immediately.

- Where stones or similar objects are placed on the highway in such a way as to prevent or obstruct the public use of the highway then the highway authority may serve notice on the owner seeking their removal.

- Where an offence persists, the highway authority will seek a Magistrate’s removal and disposal order in respect of such objects.

Officer Guidance

- Any signs or objects removed from the highway are to be taken to a store for collection by the owner.

- Items will only be retrieved from store following reimbursement of removal and storage costs to Northamptonshire County Council.

Standards

- Highways Act 1980

14.2.5 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Temporary Signing)

The need for temporary signing can be due to a number of reasons. Primarily, as far as the highway authority is concerned, it is for providing directions around a diversion route due to a road closure or other temporary traffic regulation order that prevents the free passage of traffic in one or both directions. This is usually associated with road works although other activities adjacent to the highway may be the reason.

Temporary signing is also required to direct the public to sporting and cultural events, most usually provided by the motoring organisations, and housing developments, the signs for which are provided to a standard design by the developer in question.

Other temporary signing is used when traffic signals or light controlled pedestrian crossings are out of action and is placed in position by the highway authority, its agents or the Police and also where new traffic signals, roundabouts or other road layout is provided to warn motorists of the change.

Policy

- Diversion routes will be signed where road closures or other temporary traffic regulation orders prevent the free passage of traffic.

- Advisory diversion routes will be signed where delays may be expected due to road works, sporting events, etc.
• Temporary signing to events provided by the motoring organisations will be permitted on the highway subject to the written authorisation of the highway authority.

• Temporary signing to housing developments provided by developers will be permitted on the highway subject to the written, conditional authorisation of the highway authority.

• Signs indicating “Traffic Signals Not Working” or similar will be erected as soon as possible following the failure of an installation and removed as soon as the fault has been repaired.

• Signs for new signals, roundabouts, changed layouts, etc., may be provided when the works are completed for use by traffic and require removal three months after the highway changes have taken place.

Officer Guidance

• Temporary diversion routes and signing are to be approved in writing by the highway authority.

• Regular and frequent inspections and maintenance of diversion routes shall be carried out by the requesting authority.

• The number and positions of temporary event signing to be agreed in writing by the highway authority and removed within 24 hours of the event ending.

• Signs to housing developments will generally only be permitted for sites with more than 30 bedrooms and will be located within one kilometre or two junctions from the site.

• Signs to housing development sites may be erected as soon as work commences on site and must be removed 3 months after the development is completed.

• Temporary “Traffic Signals Not Working” signs or similar will be positioned carefully to ensure that they are clearly visible and cause the minimum of inconvenience to pedestrians and other road users.

• Signs indicating new signals, roundabouts, changed road layouts, etc., shall be positioned to be clearly visible to drivers approaching the changed site from all directions.

Standards

• Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002.

• DfT Traffic Advisory Leaflet 04/11 “Temporary Traffic Signs for Special Events”

14.2.6 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Incorporating Community Safety Signs)

There are numerous schemes in existence now that seek to create partnerships between local communities, the Police and local authorities to jointly target local crime areas and take preventative action. The traditional example of one of these schemes is Neighbourhood Watch; however there are now many others such as Industrial Watch, Farm Watch or No Cold Calling
Zones. These schemes link in with Northamptonshire County Councils Community Safety Strategy.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will authorise the erection of Neighbourhood Watch signs within the public highway where the signs have been given consent by the local planning authority in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations and where the Police or local Neighbourhood Watch scheme organiser accept responsibility for the provision and maintenance of the signs and indemnify Northamptonshire County Council from any claims that may arise from these signs.

Officer Guidance

- The proposed Neighbourhood Watch scheme area which is to be signed must not overlap with any other previously agreed and signed Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

- The scheme must be properly established and the Police must agree to the display of the sign.

- The sign is not to be sited where it is likely to obscure the driver’s view of any traffic sign or signal. The siting of the signs is to be agreed with Northamptonshire County Council.

- The Police or local Neighbourhood Watch scheme organiser must accept responsibility for the provision and maintenance of the signs and indemnify Northamptonshire County Council from any claims that may arise in connection with the signs. Appropriate public liability insurance must be held.

- Northamptonshire County Council reserves the right to remove the signs if they fall into disrepair or otherwise constitute a hazard, or if Northamptonshire County Council wishes to affix a traffic sign to the post on which the Neighbourhood Watch sign is already attached. In such cases, the neighbourhood Watch scheme organiser is to be advised well in advance and agreement reached on an alternative location.

- Upon the cessation of a scheme, the highway authority must be advised and the signs removed by the Neighbourhood Watch scheme organiser.

- The signs must have been given consent by the local planning authority in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations. No commercial advertising is to be incorporated as part of the text of the sign.

- The signs must not resemble a traffic sign in any way and in particular, must not incorporate a red circle, red triangle or have a red background in the design.

- The size of the sign must not exceed 350mm in width or 500mm in height and must be mounted with the lower edge not less than 2.2 metres above the footway or with the upper edge not more than 3 metres above the footway.

- The sign is to be securely fixed to a sign post or other similar item of street furniture by two stainless steel bands fastened around the column or post and tightened into place by a banding tool. Other secure fittings that will not damage the column or post are also acceptable.
- The signs must not be affixed to any post or column to which a traffic sign is already attached, other than a village name sign.

**Standards**

- The Town and Country (Control of Advertisements) Planning Regulations

### 14.2.7 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Roundabout Sponsorship)

Roundabouts present a unique opportunity to promote commercial interests to the travelling public by the display of sponsorship signs. Although there are many mini-roundabouts in existence, the larger islands lend themselves to enhancement with appropriately designed landscaping to make each site look more attractive and interesting. Such works attract interest from commercial companies and Northamptonshire County Council has a contract with a marketing company to attract sponsorship of the sites in return for the company being able to display an approved promotional sign.

**Policy**

- The sponsorship arrangements will be at no cost to Northamptonshire County Council and the authority will receive an annual income from the sponsorship agreements.
- The improvement, enhancement and sponsorship of any roundabout with a solid island will be considered.
- Roundabout sponsorship signs will be permitted, usually one per roundabout approach, where appropriate legal agreements with sponsors exist.

**Officer Guidance**

- Northamptonshire County Council has entered into a contract with a marketing company to arrange for the sponsorship of roundabouts.
- All roundabout islands will be considered for enhancement and subsequent sponsorship where space and the constraints of visibility allow.
- The number, size, siting and text of roundabout sponsorship signs will require the agreement of Northamptonshire County Council.
- Signs bearing the name of the sponsor will be permitted, usually one per approach to the roundabout.
- Signs will be in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council's specification. The design, text and colour will have to be agreed for each sign.
- Planning permission may be required for each site.
Standards

- Contract for the Commercial Sponsorship of Roundabouts, Landscaped Areas and Signage in Northamptonshire.
- Construction, foundations and mounting to be in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s standard detail drawings.

14.2.8 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Miscellaneous)

A number of signs, etc., other than the more common items, are occasionally requested by local authorities, communities, members of the public, etc. Where these can be permitted within the highway, Northamptonshire County Council will consider giving its consent.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will allow with the introduction of white on brown tourism signs throughout the County in accordance with the Tourism Signing Policy

Officer Guidance

- The traffic information service will operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with a minimum of 4 broadcasts an hour during peak times, (0600-1000; 1600-1900), and 2 broadcasts an hour at other times.
- Local radio stations will be monitored against the specified criteria and the signs will be removed if the requirements are not met.
- The local radio station will meet the full cost of the initial provision of the sign and mounting and any safety barrier, a commuted sum for maintenance and replacement and all consultation undertaken by Northamptonshire County Council. The ownership of the signs will remain with Northamptonshire County Council.
- Memorial plaques, signs or similar can be a distraction to drivers and potentially an obstruction on the highway. They would become a liability to maintain and could be exposed to vandalism. Alternative ways of providing a memorial on the highway or elsewhere already exist.

Standards

- Northamptonshire County Council local standards and specifications.

14.2.9 Traffic Signs and Bollards (District Council Boundary Signs)

District boundary signs have generally not been permitted within Northamptonshire. However, many of the large towns now have their own individually designed signs and the changes to the
Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions in 2002 relaxed the rules and enabled the use of such signs for borough, district, and town boundaries. The regulations permit a degree of freedom of design so that the promoting authority can introduce some individuality to their signs.

As there are potentially a large number of boundaries and features for which signage may be requested if a precedent is set, district boundary signs will only be permitted on Class 1 and 2 roads, (A and B roads), within the authority’s area of jurisdiction.

**Policy**

- District boundary signs will only be permitted on Class 1 and 2 roads under Northamptonshire County Council’s jurisdiction subject to its approval. Where the district council requires boundary signs on trunk roads authorisation must be obtained from the Highways Agency. Where the district is entered via a minor road, district boundary signs will not be permitted.

- Where possible, the district boundary sign will be combined with the existing county boundary sign. Where the county boundary sign does not allow the district boundary sign to be reasonably combined with it, the latter shall be erected 30-50 metres behind the county boundary sign.

- In the event that the district boundary coincides with the entrance to a town or village, where possible the sign will be combined with the existing town or village sign. Where the town or village nameplate does not allow the district boundary sign to be reasonably combined with it, the latter shall be erected 30-50 metres behind the town or village sign.

- The design of the district boundary sign will be standard across the district and will require the approval of Northamptonshire County Council.

- The design of the sign and colours used shall be such as to bear no resemblance to a mandatory, warning or other authorised traffic sign.

- All costs incurred in producing, installing and combining with the existing town or village nameplate will be met by the district council.

- The district council will be responsible for all maintenance and replacement works to the sign which will be undertaken at its own expense.

- Where a district boundary sign falls in to disrepair Northamptonshire County Council will instruct the district council to remove the sign and posts and restore the highway. Where the sign is combined with a county boundary sign or town or village nameplate, this will be re-erected to Northamptonshire County Council’s satisfaction. All costs will be met by the district council.

- In the event of the district council failing to comply with an instruction to remove the sign, Northamptonshire County Council will undertake the work and recover all reasonable costs from the district council.

- Northamptonshire County Council reserves the right to remove or relocate a district boundary sign at its own expense and where required for the purposes of highway improvement or maintenance.
Officer Guidance

- No signs are to be permitted until the design, size and colouring of the sign has been approved by Northamptonshire County Council as the highway authority.

- The location of each district boundary sign to be agreed on site with representatives of the authority in question.

- Care will be taken to ensure that the district boundary sign does not obscure any driver’s sight lines either from the highway or from accesses.

- Where the sign is to be combined with an existing county boundary, town or village boundary sign, the existing posts are to be replaced with longer units and positioned to provide secure fixing for both signs.

- Where the existing county boundary, town or village sign is of a width less than the preferred spacing of the posts, it will be fixed to a grey backing plate to the same width as the district boundary sign which will then be secured to the posts.

- In the event of a district boundary sign being permanently removed from a location coincident with an existing county boundary, town or village sign, the latter shall be re-fixed to new posts. Where the nameplate had been fixed to a backing plate, this will be removed and the posts spaced accordingly.

Standards

- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
- Highways Act 1980
- Northamptonshire County Council’s Standard Construction Details

14.2.10 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Traditional Guideposts and Milestones)

Traditional direction signs, or guideposts, make an important contribution to the local character and identity of villages and rural areas within the County. Sometimes known as finger posts, they are a cherished part of the English countryside and are protected by the communities where they exist. Because of their relatively recent date, their removal during the Second World War and the regular renewal of their component parts due to vehicle damage and the effects of weather, traditional direction signs will not normally qualify for listed status.

Milestones generally qualify for inclusion in the statutory list of buildings of special architectural interest and the best examples of their type are scheduled under the Ancient Monuments Acts. Where they still exist, they should be retained in their original position as far as possible.

Policy

- A register of traditional guideposts and milestones will be maintained including details of destinations, distances, etc.
Where traditional guideposts exist they shall be retained and maintained in their original condition as far as possible.

In the event of a traditional guidepost being lost due to vehicle damage, vandalism, etc., a replacement sign to a similar design or a modern equivalent in character with the old style shall be provided.

At junctions of minor roads, Class 3 and below, traditional style guidepost shall be reintroduced using modern equivalent designs.

Milestones will be maintained in their original positions as far as possible. Where a milestone has to be moved to accommodate highway improvements it will be reset at the same distance point but further back from the road centre.

Officer/Service Provider Guidance

- Repairs to traditional guideposts shall be carried out to match the original materials and details as closely as possible.

- Modern signs shall not be attached to traditional guideposts as they do not comply with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002.

- New guideposts in the traditional style shall not be introduced on “A” and “B” roads.

- Lettering on new guideposts is to be in upper case font. If the lettering is required to be in lower case to meet conservation area requirements, authorisation must be sought from the Department for Transport.

- Care will be taken when mowing and undertaking other verge maintenance to ensure that milestones are not damaged.

- Where it is necessary to move a milestone to accommodate highway improvements it should be reset as near as possible to its original position. This will usually be at the same distance point but further back from the centre of the carriageway.

- Where the highway is realigned and the new route bypasses the milestone point, the milestone shall be retained on the old alignment where possible.

Standards

- Department for Transport Traffic Advisory Leaflet 6/05 “Traditional Direction Signs”.

- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002

- Milestone Society Policy Note “Position and Conservation of Milestones”.

14.2.11 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Traffic Mirrors)

Although newly approved accesses and road junctions are required to meet current requirements in respect of visibility for the drivers of emerging vehicles, there are many existing accesses, particularly in the older parts of towns and villages, where visibility is minimal. With the increasing
volume and speed of vehicles using the road network, joining a road from an uncontrolled side road or access can be hazardous. It is in situations such as these where traffic mirrors are wrongly perceived to be a solution to the problem.

Traffic mirrors are regarded as traffic signs and as they do not appear in the Traffic Signs and General Directions 2002, their use would require special authorisation from the Department for Transport which is a lengthy process and permission is unlikely to be granted except in exceptional circumstances and even then for a limited period until the hazard has been eliminated. However, Northamptonshire County Council has always refused to allow traffic mirrors on the highway due to the following reasons:

- The image created by a mirror is deceptive and the distortion of that image can lead a driver to believe that an approaching vehicle is straight ahead when it is, in fact, round a corner.
- It is very difficult to judge the speed of an approaching vehicle from the reflected image.
- Drivers may concentrate on the image in the mirror and miss seeing a nearby pedestrian or cyclist.
- There can be problems with glare from daytime sunlight or headlights at night.
- Mirrors can be subject to vandalism and are affected by wear and tear, rain condensation, frost and snow.
- Even a minor misalignment can result in a distortion of the image even to the extent of giving no image of an approaching vehicle.

Owners and tenants of properties having accesses with limited driver visibility are encouraged to look at possible ways to overcome the problem such as removing or lowering the height of any obstructions, e.g. reducing the height of walls, or repositioning the point of access. However, it is appreciated that such action is not always practical.

If the owner or tenant of such a property wishes to erect a mirror on private land then the permission of that landowner must be sought. It may be necessary to obtain planning permission and in this respect, enquiries should be made to the local district council’s planning department but it should be borne in mind that Northamptonshire County Council is consulted on all planning applications and is likely to object for the reasons given above. In addition, public liability insurance will be required by the landowner and the owner of the mirror in the event that the mirror is cited as a contributory factor to a subsequent road accident at the location.

Any mirrors erected on the highway without authorisation will be removed by Northamptonshire County Council and the owner may be liable for any reasonable costs incurred. Northamptonshire County Council also has powers to remove or alter mirrors that are erected on private land if they are considered to be a safety hazard to road users.

**Policy**

- Northamptonshire County Council will not permit traffic mirrors to be erected on the highway.

- Any unauthorised mirrors erected on the highway will be removed by Northamptonshire County Council and the owners may be charged for any reasonable costs thereby incurred.
Northamptonshire County Council will instruct the owners of traffic mirrors erected on private property to remove them or adjust their position if it is considered that they are a safety hazard to road users.

**Officer Guidance**

- All requests for traffic mirrors on the highway are to be refused.
- Where unauthorised traffic mirrors are placed on the highway the owner is to be contacted in writing and advised that the placing of the mirror is unlawful and that immediate steps must be taken for its removal.
- If an unauthorised mirror is not removed after the action taken above, the owner of the mirror will be guilty of an offence under s.132 (1) of the Highways Act 1980 and Northamptonshire County Council will remove the mirror under its powers given in s. 132 (2) of the Highways Act 1980.
- Mirrors placed on private land are generally outside the jurisdiction of the highway authority. However, where these create a hazard to road users, such as reflected headlight glare, the owner should be contacted and directed to remove or re-align the mirror to eliminate the hazard.
- Other legislation that may be employed to deal with unauthorised traffic mirrors in the highway are s.143 and s.333 of the Highways Act 1980

**Standards**

- Highways Act 1980
- Traffic Signs and General Directions 2002

**14.2.12 Traffic Signs and Bollards (Tourist Signing)**

The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions defines a tourist attraction as “A permanently established attraction or facility which attracts or is used by visitors to an area and which is open to the public without prior booking during its normal opening hours.” As well as providing places of interest to visitors to an area, tourist attractions are invaluable for the tourist industry as well as providing a boost to the local economy.

So as to ensure that visitors can find their way to visit these attractions with ease it is sometimes appropriate to provide some level of signage, especially as some attractions may be a way from the main through routes. With the larger attractions and where high numbers of visitors are expected, well planned signage is essential to ensure effective traffic management. Care must be taken to avoid a proliferation of signs that lead to confusion for the road user. For this reason Northamptonshire County Council has introduced criteria to regulate the number of potential signs that could be generated in this category.

Where tourist signs are required on motorways or trunk roads applicants need to contact the Highways Agency who will assess the application against their criteria. Establishments that are
situated on or near the Northamptonshire County boundary may need to apply to neighbouring highway authorities.

**Policy**

- The extent of the signing will be dependant upon the type of tourist attention, its location and its traffic management needs, but other than in exceptional circumstances signs will only be permitted from the nearest “A” or “B” road.

- Applicants will have to provide evidence to justify the need for tourist signing.

- Approval will not be given to the following as the approval will generate too much signage: specialist shopping areas, garden centres, village halls, public houses, restaurants, bed and breakfast establishments and guest houses other than in exceptional circumstances although some of these facilities may qualify for standard traffic signs.

- The applicant will be liable for all costs incurred in the design, manufacture and installation of the signs together with a non-refundable assessment fee. Request will not be processed until the assessment fee has been received.

- Northamptonshire County Council reserves the right to remove the signs if the attraction fails to maintain the qualifying standards or for other reasons as indicated by the County Council Officer.

- Unauthorised or privately owned signs will not be permitted on the highway and any existing signs of this nature will be removed.

**Officer Guidance**

- Applications are to be checked for inclusion of the following:
  - Evidence the establishment is accredited by VAQAS or similar
  - Evidence the establishment is of value to the tourist market
  - Evidence of tourism publicity
  - Evidence that over 50% of the visitors are from outside the area
  - Evidence that there is a proven need for signs
  - Confirmation that there are no unauthorised signs on the highway
  - Evidence there is adequate on-street parking
  - Evidence there are facilities for people with disabilities
  - Evidence that there are amenities for families with children of all ages.
  - Evidence of fire certificates and compliance with health legislation
  - Details of opening times
  - Details of visitor numbers
o Plans showing the location of the establishment, access to and egress from the public highway and route plans

o Proposed locations for signage

- Consideration of certain other types of facility:
  - Hotels and serviced accommodation – Only inspected serviced accommodation of 20 bedrooms or more will be considered and applicants must provide written confirmation of their grading together with a copy of their current membership documentation.
  - Self-catering accommodation – will not normally be considered unless there are specific traffic management or safety reasons for some larger establishments
  - Recreational facilities – these should not have limitations on public use such as private membership only or be dependent on pre-booking, there should be facilities to enable tourists to have meals and refreshments when visiting.
  - Retail outlets, garden centres and nurseries – will only be considered in exceptional circumstances such as for traffic management and safety reasons.
  - Camping and caravan sites – only inspected sites with 20 pitches or more will be considered. Sites must be licensed and be subject to an inspection scheme.
  - Youth Hostels – those managed by YHA may be granted tourist signing and in exceptional cases those managed by other bodies and are open to the public without prior booking may be signed.
  - Tourist Information Centres – centres that meet English Tourist Board standards and are recognised by the Regional Tourist Board will be eligible for signs.

- Historic and redundant churches – may be considered for signing. Approval will be restricted to buildings designated as being of historical, architectural or community interest and should be open from 1 March to 31 October as a minimum.

Standards

- Highways Act 1980
- Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
- English Tourist Board
- British Graded Holiday Parks Scheme
- Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960
- Public Health Act 1936
- The Churches Conservation Trust
15.0 Regular Reviews of the Network

15.1 Inspections of the Highway

The highway network of Northamptonshire, for which Northamptonshire County Council is responsible, is a valuable asset to all of those who live, work or travel through the County. It includes all classes of road, together with the associated footways and verges and public rights of way from byways down to public footpaths. It makes a vital contribution to the local and national economy and is used for the movement of the vast majority of freight and people. To ensure that the highway network continues to fulfil this role, it is essential that it is effectively maintained.

To fulfil Northamptonshire County Council’s obligation to maintain the highway and also protect users of the highway from damage, obstruction, danger or annoyance caused by a third party, as well as ensuring that there is a defence in place where action is taken against it, Northamptonshire County Council must be aware of the condition of the network and what is happening on it.

To achieve this, Northamptonshire County Council’s service provider undertakes a system of regular inspections of all aspects of the highway the findings of which are fully documented to ascertain the allocation of maintenance funds and retained for reference in the event of enquiries and/or legal action.

Details of the type, frequency and items covered are given in Northamptonshire County Council's Highway Maintenance Plan.

Policy

- All features of the highway including footways, carriageways, cycle tracks and structures will be inspected frequencies dependant on the feature, its hierarchy and type of inspection or survey being carried out.

- A detailed Inventory of the Network will be kept and regularly updated to provide data necessary to manage the network effectively

- Ad hoc inspections of highway features may be carried out at any time to ensure safety of the network is maintained.

Officer Guidance

- For Officer Guidance, current inspection standards and performance information, see the Highway Maintenance Plan

- Details of inspections on public rights of way are given in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

- The following additional surveys can be undertaken as and when required, Deflectograph to measure carriageway deflection under load, Detailed Visual Inspection (DVI) for Footway, Footways Network Survey (FNS). Half-cell potential, carbonation and chloride content testing of concrete in structures.
15.2 Structural Surveys

Northamptonshire County Council, as the highway authority, has a duty under section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 to maintain the public highway to ensure the safety of those using it. This duty is discharged via Northamptonshire County Council’s highway service provider by a system of regular inspections. In addition, Northamptonshire County Council also carries out condition assessments to obtain information on the condition and maintenance need of the highway in order to obtain value for money for its structural maintenance.

All highway structures are inspected for safety and structural condition on an alternating cycle of General Inspection (GI) and Principal Inspections (PI). GI’s provide an overview of the condition of a structure. For PI’s it may be necessary for special access arrangements to be made to enable all parts of a structure to be inspected at close quarters.

Special inspections of highway structures are undertaken for safety and structural condition when an unexpected deterioration of a structure has been noted. This may be due to a vehicular impact, or when a report has been received from highway inspectors or members of the public.

Structural assessments of major structures are undertaken at regular intervals to determine their current load carrying capacity.

Policy

- All features of the highway including footways, carriageways, cycle tracks and structures will be inspected frequencies dependant on the feature, its hierarchy and type of inspection or survey being carried out.
- A detailed Inventory of the Network will be kept and regularly updated to provide data necessary to manage the network effectively.
- Ad hoc inspections of highway features may be carried out at any time to ensure safety of the network is maintained.
- Where structures are not able to carry the current required vehicle weight it may be necessary to impose a weight limit or undertake strengthening measures.
Officer Guidance

- For Officer Guidance, current inspection frequencies and performance information, see the Highway Maintenance Plan.

Standards

- Highways Act 1980
- Northamptonshire Transport Plan
- Highway Maintenance Plan
- Highway Asset Management Plan
- Well Maintained Highways – A Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance
- Management of Highway Structures – Code of Practice
16.0 Consultation and Engagement with Stakeholders

16.1 Public Consultation

Northamptonshire County Council wishes to increase the level of participation among local people and communities in its planning and implementation of decisions that affect them. By consulting with the people of Northamptonshire, the authority will gain a greater understanding of local concerns and issues and will enable communities to influence decisions that affect their lives.

In the field of network management, this includes consultation over the introduction of traffic regulations such as waiting restrictions, speed restrictions, etc., major schemes and Northamptonshire County Council’s own programme and highway regulatory matters.

All consultations will be within the guidelines set out in Northamptonshire County Council’s Public Participation Strategy which is available from the authority’s web site.

Policy

- Where appropriate, local people and communities will be given the opportunity to participate in the planning and delivery of network management issues.

- The method and process of participation will be in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council's Public Participation Strategy.

Officer Guidance

- The consultation with, and participation of, local people and communities will be in addition to any statutory consultation requirements set down in legislation.

- The results of consultations will be made available on the online consultation register on Northamptonshire County Council’s web site and will also be made available on request.

- Statutory undertakers proposing street works that are likely to lead to significant traffic disruption in a street should consult with the frontagers and businesses that will be directly affected.

- Where the highway service provider is proposing street works that are likely to lead to significant traffic disruption in a street, they should consult with the frontagers and businesses that will be directly affected.

- When possible advanced signs should be erected in the localised vicinity of the works to inform the public if pending road works or street works.

Standards

- Communities in Control – Government White Paper 2008

- Northamptonshire County Council Public Participation Strategy

- National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships
17.0  Provision of Travel Information to Road Users and the Community

17.1  Road Works Report

As part of its overall policy of informing the community of its activities, Northamptonshire County Council will produce a Road Works Report which will contain details of significant road works together with statutory undertakers’ work of longer than three days duration. The report will be issued to the media; emergency services; travel services and public transport operators as well as being published on Northamptonshire County Council’s web site.

The report will enable road users to plan their journeys to avoid possible delays making more efficient use of the network as well as reducing traffic affecting road works sites.

Policy

- A system of reporting all works affecting the highway will be operated by Northamptonshire County Council.

Officer Guidance

- The Road Works Report will include all work that is being undertaken by Northamptonshire County Council that involves the use of traffic control; temporary traffic regulation orders; is expected to cause delays to traffic or will be active for more than three days.

- The Road Works Report will include details of all statutory undertakers’ work that will be active for more than three days.

- Once works have been completed, their details should be removed from the report at the next update.

- Recipients list for Road Works Report can be obtained from the New Roads and Street Works Team.

- The Road Works Report will be used by the out of hours Duty Officer.

- Where appropriate travel information relating to delays caused through road works or street works should be displayed on VMS signs.
18.0 Network Management - General

18.1 Traffic Signals

In addressing safety and congestion issues, Northamptonshire County Council will maximise the use of its existing highway assets in order to avoid the cost, disruption and potential environmental dis-benefits of new road building.

Within its strategy for dealing with congestion on the highway network, Northamptonshire County Council will utilise modern, cost effective junction and crossing control systems. The junction and crossing control systems will be capable of effective isolated control but will also be capable of coordinated central control from the central Urban Traffic Control (UTC) or Remote Monitoring (RM) systems which are located in NetCom.

The junction and crossing control systems will be capable of automatic fault detection and fault reports will be automatically transmitted, via the UTC and RM systems, to NetCom where rectification measures will be initiated.

A maintenance regime is in place and faults are be reported to a specialist maintainer to ensure that they are dealt with in an appropriate manner to an appropriate time scale.

Policy

- Traffic signal, including pedestrian crossing, installations will be provided where it is appropriate, to minimise congestion and delays, and where there is a need identified by an accident reduction study.

- Traffic signals, including pedestrian crossings, will be set to balance the needs of, and minimise delays, to all road users. Where appropriate they will also be set to encourage the use of the primary road network.

- Signals in urban areas shall be biased towards minimising delays suffered by inbound traffic in the morning peak, outbound traffic in the evening peak and pedestrians at all off peak times.

- A programme of small-scale works to improve the capacity of junctions will be developed from the results of Northamptonshire County Council’s congestion monitoring programme.

- A programme of small scale works to maintain the effectiveness, maintainability and safety of the equipment will be developed based on the condition of the equipment.

- Performance will be monitored through core indicators LTP 6; LTP 7a; LTP 7b; LTP 7c; LTP 7d; LTP 7e; LTP 7f.

Officer Guidance

- Consideration to be given for the provision and maintenance of traffic signal installations to manage traffic flow and make provision for pedestrians and/or cyclists.
Standards

- Department for Transport standards for safety related times and pedestrian crossing times.
- County Council standard details.
- Code of Practice for the Management of Electronic Traffic Equipment

18.2.1 Safety

Collision data is used to identify at risk road user groups and the most dangerous sections of the road network with the most hazardous identified as Red Routes. Optimising a data-led approach, activities will be directed to where they are to be most effective. The basis of a data-led approach to road safety is to combine education, engineering and enforcement to achieve reductions in casualties across the County.

Wider casualty reduction engineering works in the form of minor works and safer routes to school projects are carried out in accordance to the Northamptonshire Transport Plan (NTP). In addition, schemes are often carried out in conjunction with other work, funded by the revenue and capital budgets.

County Council road safety education is targeted at the most vulnerable groups which are identified annually through the interpretation of accident data. The current target groups are:

- Young drivers (17-24)
- Working drivers
- Older drivers (55+)
- Motorcyclists
- Children

Various driver/rider improvement courses are offered to these groups based around the main collision causation factors e.g. drink driving, driver error, speed etc.

Policy

- To provide safer roads within Northamptonshire, whereby the current levels of death and serious injury resulting from road conditions are significantly reduced.
- Fully integrate education, enforcement and engineering within the community.
- Engineering schemes designed to reduce the number of killed and seriously injured casualties will be carried out focussed on the “Red Routes” and identified collision cluster sites.
- Northamptonshire County Council will promote road safety using education, training and publicity initiatives as appropriate.
Officer Guidance

- Work with partners and stakeholders to agree joint solutions to specific problems and understand partners work and priorities.
- Analyse data at regular intervals to identify trends and patterns in an intelligence led process.
- Liaise, consult and work with local communities and road user groups.
- Maximise the use of the media.
- Maximise funding opportunities developers.

Standards

- All works are to be undertaken to the relevant technical engineering standards.

18.2.2 Safety Fences and Barriers

Safety barriers and fences play a valuable role on dual carriageways by ensuring separation of opposing traffic in the event of driver loss of control. On these and other roads, they also provide protection for road users where there is a significant drop adjacent to the highway, over rail bridges and to protect vehicles from bridge abutments, lighting columns and other street furniture and installations.

Policy

- Central reserve barriers will be added to existing dual carriageways where major maintenance work is being carried out to the road and the criteria for central reserve barriers are met.
- A central reserve barrier will be provided where a detailed accident investigation study has shown that a sufficient rate of return in accident savings will be achieved as part of the Casualty Reduction Programme.
- Safety fences and barriers will be provided to reduce dangers at locations such as bridge abutments, road over rail bridges, deep embankments and to protect vehicles from lighting columns and other street furniture and installations.

Officer Guidance

- Other than for use on central reserves, sites will be investigated to see if the dangers can be eliminated by means other than safety barriers and will also be considered in the context of the Casualty Reduction Programme.

Standards

- NCC Standard Details
18.2.3 Street Lighting

Northamptonshire County Council has established a programme to update all of its lighting to modern standards. This will ensure improvements to light definition at street level but at the same time, reduce the amount of upward light spillage which leads to light pollution.

The Department of Transport approved Northamptonshire County Council’s Private Finance Initiative (PFI) to deliver street lighting. The PFI enables Northamptonshire’s street lighting to be modernised within five years of the award of the PFI contract; the risks associated with a deteriorating stock and the need for further demands on finance would be dealt with; the street lighting service would be provided entirely by a private sector partner and the end of the PFI contract the handover condition of the street lighting asset would be pre-defined and it would be comparatively higher than in its current condition.

Policy

- Where Northamptonshire County Council is to adopt new housing or industrial estates the street lighting should comply with the County Council’s Street Lighting PFI Specification.

- Where a section of unlit road exists within the boundaries of street lighting, infill lighting, where appropriate, will be provided to make the lighting continuous.

- Where appropriate, extension lighting will be provided to extend the existing lighting on a road to cover a new access or junction.

- Where accident investigation reveals that safety at a site can be improved by the provision of street lighting, it will be considered as an element of the Accident Reduction Project.

- The provision of new, or the replacement of existing, street lighting in conservation areas will take into account the effect upon the historic character and appearance of the area.

- Measures to minimise light pollution will be taken where particular problems occur, especially in non-built up areas.

Officer Guidance

- Where possible, old street lighting columns will be recycled and not taken to landfill – town and parish council use to be considered.

- Where an organisation makes a request to fix hanging flower baskets to lamp columns that organisation will pay for the structural testing of the columns if the general condition is acceptable.

- Street lighting columns will be located to minimise the encroachment in to the footway clear space.

- Where the available footway width is restricted, and in conservation areas, consideration is to be given to fixing luminaires to adjacent buildings.

Standards

- BS 5489 Road Lighting
18.2.4 Traffic Calming

Traffic calming measures are often considered to be the answer to all actual and perceived problems relating to the speed of traffic in residential areas.

Unless careful consideration is given to the type of measure to be employed and its appropriateness to the location, traffic calming can produce more problems than it solves. For example, the use of road humps at intervals along a street can produce pollution due to vehicles slowing up to and accelerating away from the humps as well as the nuisance of noise outside residential properties and vibration problems. Certain schemes may also have dis-benefits as far as the emergency services are concerned and therefore full consultations will be undertaken with all the emergency services at the initial consideration stage.

Northamptonshire County Council continues to investigate new approaches to traffic calming schemes involving visual cues to influence drivers’ speeds. New approaches to highway design have been pioneered in recent years, which take into account the overall appearance and characteristics of the highway environment to encourage drivers and other users to use road space in a safe and appropriate way. These techniques will avoid the disadvantages that are experienced with the original style of traffic calming in certain areas.

Policy

- Traffic calming will be considered where there is evidence of vehicle speeds exceeding the appropriate speed limit and there are no conventional traffic management methods for improving the safety of the road environment.

- Traffic calming schemes are to have a majority of positive local support for their introduction and will not adversely affect the local environment or safety of inhabitants or road users or prevent or deter bus services from serving the area or community.

- Where their introduction is agreed, traffic calming schemes will be assessed and ranked, taking into account a number of common factors.

- Priority will be given to schemes which seek to achieve a reduction in recorded injury accidents or form part of a “Safer Routes to School” scheme 20mph zone.

- Consultation will take place with residents and businesses directly affected by the proposed traffic calming and the formation of a residents’ representatives group will be encouraged to facilitate this.

- Wherever possible, urban safety schemes will be designed to meet the criteria set down by the government for 20mph zones.

Officer Guidance

- The Emergency Services will be consulted on all proposals for traffic calming or improvements prior to any public presentation, consultation or meeting.
Agreed requests for traffic calming will be assessed and ranked.

The achievement or otherwise of meeting the criteria for 20mph zones set down by the government will not be used as a factor in determining whether or not a scheme progresses.

Typical conventional schemes include Throttles/chicanes; gateways; mini-roundabouts; changed road priority; encouraging on-street parking; signing and carriageway markings; speed restrictions; pedestrian crossings; cycling infrastructure; footways and facilities for the disabled.

In areas having a low speed restriction, reduce the segregation between different road users by removing pedestrian barriers, footways and cycle paths.

Consideration to be given to reducing the certainty for motor vehicle drivers in areas having a low speed restriction by removing road markings and signs.

Fire access routes have been agreed with the Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service concerning the implementation of traffic calming/improvement schemes throughout the County.

Where possible, road narrowing will be used as part of an area-wide traffic calming scheme incorporating parking bays and environmental improvements.

Careful attention must be paid to the needs of local parking and accesses.

Standards

- Highways Act 1980
- The Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations 1999
- The Highways (Road Hump) Regulations 1999
- Department for Transport Manual for Streets 2
- DfT Traffic Advisory Leaflets
- County Council standard details

18.2.5 Speed Management

Northamptonshire County Council’s speed management strategy aims to balance the needs of traffic flow with the safety of all road users. This will be achieved through the setting of appropriate speed limits and by encouraging drivers and riders, by the use of engineering, education and enforcement, to travel within the speed limits and at a level appropriate to the immediate environment and conditions.

Speed in road safety terms is generally categorised as ‘excess’ or ‘inappropriate’. Inappropriate speed means driving too fast for the conditions but not breaking the speed limit, whereas excess speed is both inappropriate and in excess of the speed limit. It is important to stress that the
speed limit is not necessarily the safe speed at which to drive, but is the maximum speed at which a driver or rider is allowed to travel, although this may be too fast for the conditions.

Policy

The Police and County Council have an integrated approach to managing traffic speeds in the county and various initiative / measures are available to encourage drivers / riders to travel at a level appropriate to the conditions / environment.

- Requests for speed surveys – If there is an accident history speed surveys can be carried out by the Road Safety team. All other speed surveys will be carried out by the Police

- Speed Indication Device (SID) - All requests from Parish / Town Councils etc for a visit by the SID team will be co-ordinated by Northamptonshire County Council

- Parish Speed Boards – All requests from Parish / Town Councils for the use of the parish speed boards will be co-ordinated by Northamptonshire County Council.

Officer Guidance

- Work with partners to agree joint solutions to specific problems.
- Analyse speed data at regular intervals to identify problem areas.

18.2.6 Vehicle Activated Signs

Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS), including Variable Message Signs (VMS), have been developed to address the problem of accidents caused by inappropriate vehicle speed where conventional signing has not been effective. Vehicle speed can be considered inappropriate if it is excessive and this is generally thought of as being significantly above the legal speed limit. However, inappropriate vehicle speed can also be a speed within the legal limit but which is not suitable for the local situation or conditions. VAS are not a replacement for conventional signing but are permanent post-mounted signs that are activated by vehicles approaching at a speed above a preset level and are intended to provide information to the driver about the speed limit or a hazard ahead such as a bend or junction. On rural roads, driving too fast for the conditions is more likely to be a factor in accidents than exceeding the speed limit.

The signs generally fall into 3 categories,

1) Speed enforcing signs that flash up an appropriate speed roundel and accompanying warning (typically SLOW DOWN)

2) Signs warning of a hazard e.g. ‘sharp bend’, ‘road narrows’ etc.

3) SIDS (Speed Indicating Devices) i.e. signs displaying actual vehicle speeds. (This type of temporary VAS is not within the scope of this policy.)

This policy does not apply to the current Self Purchase Scheme for Temporary Devices.
The Safer Routes to School Scheme, which uses VAS and VMS devices as part of a general traffic calming structure when considering individual school sites, is designed along National Guidelines, and as such would not fall within the remit of this Policy.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council will consider permanent VAS installations subject to appropriate criteria and suitable location.
- Northamptonshire County Council will normally procure, install, and commission all VAS installations.
- Installation works within the highway will not be permitted by third party funding bodies unless the works are under a Section 278 Agreement of the Highways Act 1980, or procured through the current NCC highways framework contract.

Officer Guidance

- Any third party request for a VAS should be made via the parish, town or district council (or local County Councillor in areas where no other council exists) to confirm initial local support.
- A VAS shall only be provided to address a specific collision or speed problem.
- The cost of a VAS can be funded in three ways: Wholly funded by Northamptonshire County Council; Costs shared between Northamptonshire County Council and a third party; Wholly funded by a third party (a public or private sector body) through the NCC highways framework contract.
- Third party installations will be subject to a licence and fee payment to enable private equipment to be placed within the highway. VAS funded wholly by a third party remains the property of the third party. Where continued funding is not available from the third party, the third party may be required to remove the VAS.
- All other VAS installations become the property of Northamptonshire County Council. Northamptonshire County Council reserves the right to de-commission these VAS’s or to relocate a VAS to another site if there is no longer justification for the installation. A relocation site may be at any other approved location within the county.
- Each site must be considered to be unique so the investigation and implementation costs and timescales will vary between sites.
- The council will carry out Preliminary Investigation, Detailed Investigation and Implementation stages. A VAS proposal must meet criteria at each stage to justify its need.
- All new VAS shall include electrical testing, maintenance and faults correction under a 5 year guarantee agreement. Northamptonshire County Council shall be party to a guarantee between a third party and the VAS guarantor.
- The presumption is that Northamptonshire County Council will only introduce VAS legends prescribed under Standards.
Northamptonshire County Council will notify any local frontagers and the local County Councillor to confirm their support before a VAS is taken forward.

Standards

- DfT website - Traffic Advisory Leaflet 1/03 Vehicle Activated Signs
- The Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2002 and subsequent Amendments
- TRL Report 548 Vehicle-activated signs – a large scale evaluation

18.3.1 Townscape

As traffic volumes have increased bringing congestion and conflict with pedestrians, the highway engineer is faced with increasing demands to manage this traffic and reduce road casualties. Because the changes have been progressive, the measures that have been introduced to deal with the problems have tended to be piecemeal on a scheme by scheme basis and not always relating to that which is already in place. The consequence of this has been a proliferation of signs, barriers, bollards, etc., which has led to street clutter and which not only detracts from the traditional street scene but can be obstructive to the free movement of pedestrians.

In August 2010, the Government wrote to all local authorities asking them to look at the streets under their control and remove or reduce the number of items of signs and street furniture wherever possible.

To avoid visual clutter, avoiding obstructions and reducing maintenance costs, Northamptonshire County Council should review siting and placing of signs and street furniture. Along with the continuation of this approach, where unnecessary signs and street furniture are identified, they will be removed when maintenance is required to avoid additional expenditure. However, if it can be demonstrated that the continuing presence of the item presents a safety hazard then it will be removed as soon as possible.

Policy

- Signs will only be introduced where they serve a clear function and to meet the minimum statutory requirements.
- The size of signs and lettering will be no larger than is appropriate for the speed of traffic on the road in question.
- Wherever possible, signs will be fixed to existing posts or, in the case of waiting restrictions, to adjacent buildings. Where new posts are required they should be installed at the rear of footways wherever possible.
- Signs will be “doubled-up” to reduce the number of posts where necessary.
- Where a new sign is introduced onto the highway network, two redundant signs will be removed to reduced sign clutter on the network.
Yellow backing boards will only be used where there is a record of personal injury and approved by Northamptonshire County Council, and only as a last resort due to their intrusive nature.

Centre lines on secondary roads and junction markings on minor roads will only be provided or replaced where there is a clear need or to support give way or stop signs.

Guard rails and pedestrian barriers will only be provided where a clear need has been identified and then only the minimum length will be installed.

Existing guard rails and pedestrian barriers that are found to be unnecessary will be removed when maintenance becomes due although earlier removal will take place if they are considered to be a safety hazard.

Bollards will only be used on footways where there is evidence of unauthorised vehicular use.

Street furniture in the form of litter bins, seats, planters, etc., will not be installed where the remaining clear width of footway is less than 1.8 metres, increasing to 2.4 metres on Category 1 footways.

**Officer Guidance**

- The size of sign and the “x” height of any lettering will be the minimum that is compliant with the speed rating of the road in question.

- Existing posts will be used for mounting signs where possible to minimise the number of obstructions.

- Except in the case of give way and stop signs, where two signs are required in the same location they shall use a common post.

- Single posts will be used for signs except where the size and loading of larger signs require additional posts.

- Where appropriate, the owners of adjacent properties will be approached to seek permission to fix small plates such as those associated with waiting restrictions to the walls of buildings and other structures.

- Prior to installing warning signs, the site and need will be assessed to demonstrate that there is a definite need for the sign and that its use is consistent with other parts of the highway network.

- Where signs are required to give effect to a traffic regulation, the minimum number of signs as indicated in Chapter 3 of The Traffic Signs Manual will be used.

- The use of grey backing boards to signs will be considered where there are a number of signs that can be grouped together on to one panel for a single installation.

- Where it is felt that there is a need to make a sign stand out from the background, consideration should be given to increasing the size of the sign, and/or location, as an alternative to using yellow backing boards.
• Backing boards (yellow or grey) should be avoided on give way and stop signs as they remove the distinctive silhouette of these signs.

• Redundant signs and posts will be removed as maintenance becomes due.

• Other than on strategic routes and main distributor roads, centre warning lines will only be provided at potentially hazardous locations or where their use is recommended following an accident investigation study.

• If “SLOW” markings are required, they will only be provided adjacent to a sign giving warning of a potential hazard, e.g. bend ahead, crossroads, etc.

• Where resurfacing or surface dressing is programmed, the existing road markings and studs will be assessed for need and, where found to be unnecessary, will not be reinstated following the surface treatment.

• Where the available footway width is restricted, and in conservation areas, consideration is to be given to fixing luminaires to adjacent buildings.

Standards

• The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002
• DfT Traffic Signs Manual
• DfT Manual for Streets 2
• DfT Traffic Advisory Leaflet 01/13 “Reducing Sign Clutter”

18.3.2 Streetscape

For the ease of maintenance and delivering value for money, materials used on the highway will generally come from standard varieties that will give long term service, are readily and continuously available, are easy to repair without difficulties that may occur in getting colour matches, etc., and do not present problems for statutory undertakers who need easy access to underground apparatus with simplicity of reinstatement.

Within Northamptonshire there are many villages where houses and cottages have been built using the local stone such as ironstone and limestone with the roofs of many using thatch or tiles. As well as the rural parts of Northamptonshire, the towns themselves have areas of historical and significant importance. It is in these locations where the use of precast concrete kerbs and slabs together with black surfacing would create a visual intrusion.

Where works are proposed in these areas consideration will be given to the use of more suitable materials such as granite setts, golden gravel footway surface dressings, natural stone paving and pavers that are complementary to the surroundings. In addition, carefully planned planting will be looked at to enhance the street environment.

Policy

• Where non-standard materials are to be used they must meet the following criteria:
(i) Ease of maintenance.
(ii) Safe for the purpose for which they are to be used.
(iii) Durable.
(iv) Sustainable.
(v) Appropriate to the local character of the area.

- Before carrying out works, other than basic repairs, in conservation areas, an assessment will be made with regard to the use of standard or non-standard materials.
- Traditional kerbing materials, e.g. granite setts, (or reconstituted stone equivalents), stone slabs, etc., will be considered for use in conservation areas.
- Where non-standard materials are requested by planning authorities, developers, etc., the extra cost of the materials will be met by the requesting party and a commuted sum deposited to cover future maintenance and/or replacement.
- Coloured surfaces will generally not be acceptable.
- Planting by town and parish councils will be considered where it is felt that it would enhance the street scene.

**Officer Guidance**

- Where non-standard materials are proposed, it should be established that they will be readily available for future maintenance.
- Materials should be appropriate to the character of the area. Local planning authorities should be consulted when works other than basic maintenance are proposed in conservation areas or other enhanced environment areas.
- Any material that will be potentially difficult to maintain and restore, e.g. coloured surfaces, should be avoided.
- Street furniture should be kept to what is essential only with the minimum use of signage. Where it is necessary, consideration should be given to the use of styles appropriate to the location such as cast iron components.
- Where enhanced materials are specifically requested by local planning authorities or developers, the difference in cost between these materials and the preferred option is to be met by the requesting party who will also contribute a commuted sum to cover future maintenance and replacement costs.
- Where appropriate, and it is felt that the street scene will be enhanced, the local town or parish council may be encouraged to undertake planting in the highway for which it will then assume future responsibility for maintenance.

**Standards**

- DfT Manual for Streets
18.4.1 Cycle Tracks & Lanes

The aim of Northamptonshire County Council is to encourage a move away from journeys made by private car to more sustainable forms of transport, of which cycling will be an important component. Northamptonshire County Council’s strategy for this is set down in the Northamptonshire Transport Plan:

- To maximise the role of cycling as a transport mode;
- To ensure that policies to increase cycling and meet the needs of cyclists are fully integrated into wider transport policies and other strategies;
- To promote cycling as a healthy means of travel and as an effective means of reaching local destinations including shops, the workplace and the public transport network;
- To improve cycle safety through improved engineering and training measures; and
- To work in partnership to promote cycling as a means of leisure, and health improvement.

Policy

- In developing the main route networks the hierarchical approach recommended in the National Cycling Strategy and Cycle Audit and Cycle Review will be used.
- Audits of all relevant parts of the transport network will be undertaken, in accordance with national guidance, to ensure that opportunities to encourage cycling are considered comprehensively and implemented appropriately.
- Cycle reviews of relevant parts of the transport network will be undertaken, in accordance with national guidance, to identify their cycle friendliness and to identify broad ways that those networks can be improved to encourage cycling.
- Where provided, cycle lanes should be a minimum of 1.5 metres wide.
- Adequate cycle parking will be encouraged at schools, retail centres, transport interchanges, leisure facilities etc. Design standards will be established and agreed with district councils to ensure facilities are secure and convenient.
- The need for facilities to encourage children to cycle to school will be considered in every Safer Routes scheme. Cycle facilities provided under the Safer Routes to Schools programme will be integrated into the cycle master plans.
- Cyclists may be exempt from restrictive Traffic Regulation Orders such as one way streets where there is a good reason for including them.

Officer Guidance

- Particular attention shall be paid to ensure that drainage gullies, valve covers and other inspection covers do not pose hazards for cyclists.
• Cycletracks and cycle lanes shall be clearly signed and include adequate warning for motorists where routes intersect with the main carriageway.

• Consideration should be given against the use of guardrails to make cyclists slow down or dismount at crossing points, unless there is a proven need.

• The use of ‘Cyclists dismount’ and ‘End of Route’ signs should always be avoided unless there is a proven need.

• Cyclists’ needs should be considered as part of the design of all signalised junctions and, whenever possible, provided with an advance stop line.

Standards

• Northamptonshire Transport Plan
• IHT Cycle friendly Infrastructure – Guidelines for Planning and Design
• DfT Manual for Streets and Local Transport Note 2/08 – Cycle Infrastructure Design
• DfT Local Transport Note 1/12 “Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists”
• Cycletracks and cycle routes shall be constructed in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s standard detail drawings.
• National Cycling Strategy

18.4.2 Rights of Way

The County’s Rights of Way network, both urban and rural, forms an integral part of the transport network providing a healthier alternative to the car for accessing work, leisure facilities, shops, services and schools. It also provides access to the outstanding Northamptonshire countryside together with many places of interest including historic sites, woodlands and waterways all of which provide support for the local economy. The promotion of safe, off-road routes can help towards the County’s road safety objectives by reducing accidents for walkers, cyclists and equestrians.

Northamptonshire County Council has a statutory responsibility to maintain the Rights of Way Network in line with all legislation including the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). This is achieved by the continued development of a close working partnership with Parish Councils, District Councils, Landowners, User Groups, and other stakeholders.

Policy

• Maintenance standards and outputs will be reviewed periodically with consideration of the increasing use of the Rights of Way Network.

• Where necessary and possible the Rights of Way Network will be publicised through the media and by leaflets, interpretation boards and signage.
• Promote the use of Rights of Way by walkers, cyclists and horseriders to develop healthy lifestyles.

• Improve and where possible create new links to provide sustainable inter-village links to local communities and places of interest.

• Continuous review of the Definitive Map and Statement to maintain an accurate record of all Rights of Way and reflect any changes to the network.

• Development and implementation of an Enforcement Policy in conjunction with Defra, National Farmers Union (NFU) and Country Landowners Association (CLA) reflecting the significant changes in agricultural practices and policies.

• Provide support and advice to Northamptonshire Local Access Forum (NLAF) on all issues affecting all areas of public access in the County including the Rights of Way Network.

• Develop and promote support for all Rights of Way Volunteers including Parish Path Wardens, Tree Wardens and Ramblers Association Work Party.

• Develop a close working relationship with Developers and Planners to ensure the accessibility of the Rights of Way network is maintained and where possible obtain funding or resources for improvements.

• Performance is measured through BVPI 178 survey

Officer Guidance

• Work with partners and stakeholders and explore all possible capital and revenue funding sources, especially those available from sources external to Northamptonshire County Council, to develop and improve the rights of way network.

Standards

• National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949
• Countryside Act 1968
• Northamptonshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan
• Highways Act 1980
• Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
• Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
• Equality Act 2010

18.5.1 Vehicular Crossings

Anyone who regularly drives a vehicle over a footway or highway verge to gain access to their property must by law have a properly constructed vehicular crossing. The work entailed in providing a crossing involves the lowering of the kerb, (or the provision of a dropped kerb where
one does not exist), and the strengthening and surfacing of the footway or verge to enable it to withstand vehicular traffic.

Vehicular crossings can be installed by individual householders using contractors approved by Northamptonshire County Council providing the necessary planning permission is obtained, (if on a classified A, B or C road), the Council’s criteria are met, and the work is carried out to Northamptonshire County Council’s specification. A licence is required for this and a fee is payable.

Where Northamptonshire County Council is carrying out a footway scheme, or works that involve re-kerbing, residents who either do not yet have a crossing or cross the footway or verge unlawfully, will be given the opportunity to have a crossing provided at an advantageous rate, subject to meeting the criteria. Where this offer is not accepted a full kerb will be installed.

Northamptonshire County Council reserves the right to refuse permission to form an access to a property for instance, if there is already an access; the creation of an access would present a safety hazard to other road users; the loss of an on-street parking space would disadvantage other residents.

Policy

- Licences will be issued to approved contractors employed by individual householders for the construction of vehicle crossings to Northamptonshire County Council’s specification and in accordance with planning permission where required.

- Northamptonshire County Council will charge a fee for the licence to cover administration and supervision of the work.

- Where a footway scheme is carried out, or works that involve re-kerbing, residents without a lawful vehicular crossing will be given the opportunity to have one installed at an advantageous rate.

- If a resident taking advantage of the above is registered disabled then their contribution may be reduced by 50%.

- Where residents decline the above offer, a full kerb will be installed along the footway.

- In the event of residents continuing to unlawfully cross the footway or verge with a vehicle, legal proceedings may be considered or physical works to prevent unlawful use of the highway.

- Before granting a licence, the effect on other road users and residents will be assessed.

- There must be at least 4.5 metres depth of suitable parking area within the property, measured from the front of the house to the boundary of the property and 3.0 metres in width, or alternatively 3.0 metres depth by 8.0 metres width. There must be enough space around this area for pedestrian access. No part of a vehicle parked within a property must project on to or over the highway.

- The vehicle crossing must be at least 10 metres from a junction.

- The crossfall of the footway/vehicle crossing must not be greater than 1 in 15 (6.7%).
**Officer Guidance**

- Other than in exceptional circumstances, only one vehicular access per property will be permitted.

- Applications for vehicle crossing licences will be considered in respect of siting, the need for planning permission and the possible effect on existing on-street parking.

- The width of a standard crossing is 3.0 metres at the back of the footway. This increases to approximately 5.4 metres at the kerb line. Crossings up to twice that width may be permitted.

- Where the occupiers of two adjoining properties share a driveway, and wish to build a double width crossing to serve the two sites, one occupier should act on behalf of both parties.

- A vehicle crossing may be permitted off an existing on street parking facility, such as in a lay-by, if the proposed off street parking in the property is greater than the loss of the on street parking provision.

- If the proposed position of the access is obstructed by a road sign, lamp post, or tree, etc. the location should be altered to avoid the obstacle. If this is not feasible the item should be removed or relocated with the applicant paying the full cost. If is not possible to remove or relocate this item the application for the vehicle crossing will be refused.

- Gates fitted across the vehicle entrance to the property shall not open outwards on to the highway.

- The occupier is responsible for the costs involved. If it is a rented property, the landlord’s permission must be obtained.

- Work carried out by an approved contractor on behalf of an individual householder will be subject to a 12 month maintenance period.

**Standards**

- All works will be carried out in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s specifications and standard details.

- The standard construction of vehicle crossings is either blacktop, or concrete for commercial premises. Block paving, slabs, gravel or any form of grassed concrete block paving are not permitted.

- Planning permission will be obtained by the applicant for vehicular crossings unless:
  - The property involved has the frontage directly on to an unclassified road.
  - The property involved is not a listed building
  - The property involved is a residential building
  - The property involved is not within a conservation area
18.5.2 Designing for Maintenance

Although Northamptonshire County Council has powers under the Highways Act 1980 to improve highways under its control, there is a duty to maintain them. With the decreasing funds that are available for highway maintenance, it is essential that Northamptonshire County Council achieves the best value for money in carrying out maintenance work. There are many ways that this can be achieved including economies of scale, innovative processes, etc., but savings in maintenance can also be made at the design stage by ensuring that no unnecessary features are included and that the road layout permits straightforward maintenance with no issues of restricted access, expensive processes or extensive traffic control.

Policy

- Materials are to be of a standard nature and chosen relevant to the life and use of the scheme.
- Where enhanced materials are specified the extra cost of the materials is to be met by the requesting party and a commuted sum is to be deposited with Northamptonshire County Council by the requesting party.
- Where enhanced materials are required their ease of reinstatement and future availability must be considered.
- There will be safe and convenient access for personnel and plant to enable maintenance operations to be undertaken.
- The level of traffic management, and associated costs, required to carry out maintenance operations is to be kept to a minimum.
- The use of anti-slip surfacing materials is to be used in line with Northamptonshire County Councils Asset Management Policy.
- Signage will be reduced to a minimum to avoid sign clutter and distraction to drivers. The use of reflective signs will be maximised to reduce energy costs of illuminated signs.
- Vehicle and pedestrian barriers will only be employed where their use can be justified.
- Grass strips between footway and carriageway will be avoided adjacent to the carriageway where possible.
- Footways and cycle tracks will be established on “desire lines” to avoid future erosion of verges.

Officer Guidance

General

- Avoid the use of traffic calming and safety features with a high rate of deterioration.
- Proposed works must be assessed to ensure that there are no future difficulties for routine maintenance operations, for example, drain cleaning that would prevent the safe and convenient access for personnel and plant.
• Inspection covers and access points are to be positioned off the carriageway wherever possible.

• Schemes requiring specialist maintenance or cleansing should be avoided and cheaper alternatives considered.

• Consideration should be given to combining maintenance works, including other authorities works, to minimise disruption to all highway users.

Materials

• Specified materials should be chosen to reflect the intended life, nature, use and future maintenance costs of the scheme.

• Avoiding the use of materials or process that will require a disproportionately high frequency of maintenance should be carefully considered before specifying.

• It must be established that the materials specified can be satisfactorily re-laid, such as after disturbance by statutory undertakers’ work.

• Where non-standard materials are specified by developers, planning authorities, etc., a commuted sum calculated on the estimated 20 year maintenance costs will be deposited with Northamptonshire County Council by the requesting authority. Where a planning authority requests non-standard materials, it will be responsible for the additional cost over standard items unless it is promoting the scheme in which case it will meet the full cost.

• Works in conservation and environmental improvement areas should use appropriate materials. Where the planning authority specifies enhanced materials, commuted sums and contributions will be required as detailed above.

Surfacing

• Surfacing of roundabouts should be completed to avoid joints and subsequent points of deterioration wherever possible.

Signage and bollards

• The number and size of signs is to be minimised to reduce clutter and maintenance costs.

• Signs should be combined on a common post, where permitted, to reduce maintenance costs and sign clutter.

• Signs are to be reflective wherever possible to avoid the maintenance and servicing costs of illuminated units.

• With the owner's permission fixing signs directly to buildings and walls should be considered.

• Where signs are mounted on single posts, the post will be of square section or similar to prevent unauthorised turning.

• Traffic bollards are to be reflective where possible.
• Reflector posts are only to be used in exceptional circumstances.

• Timber or concrete bollards/posts will only be used to deter parking off the carriageway where there is a road safety issue.

• The use of white posts, timber bollards, etc., to prevent the driving of vehicles on to verges will not be permitted.

• All sign posts should where possible be galvanised.

Footways and cycle tracks

• Footways and cycle tracks should be established on routes that will be used to avoid future erosion of verges and additional works.

• Where it is unavoidable that footways are likely to be over-ridden by heavy goods vehicles or other parked vehicles, strengthened construction should be used or measures such as bollards introduced to prevent parking.

Barriers

• Barriers are to be employed only when standards are met in respect of central reservation width, embankment height, approaches to bridges, etc.

• Where barriers are required to be installed within the highway boundary to protect non-County Council installations provision of the barriers will be by the owner of the installation and a commuted sum will be required. Future maintenance and replacement is to be the responsibility of Northamptonshire County Council.

• Pedestrian barriers are to be used on central refuses where there are staggered crossing points to separate pedestrians from traffic lanes.

• Pedestrian barriers are only to be used in other areas where there is an accident or safety risk or where the embankment height necessitates protection for pedestrians.

• The use of pedestrian barriers at junctions should be carefully considered to ensure that there is no potential danger of cyclists being trapped by the overhang of long vehicles.

Drainage

• All highway drainage is to be connected to the water authority’s storm sewer or an open watercourse with the appropriate discharge consent.

• Adoptable highway drains are only to be installed where there is no other system available.

• Soakaways are only to be used in exceptional circumstances and where associated with a new development will require a commuted sum to be deposited with Northamptonshire County Council by the developer.

Grass verges and planted areas

• Verges need to be of a size and position to afford easy and effective maintenance.
• All new developments are to be designed with the footway, (where included), adjacent to the carriageway kerb.

• Highway planting is to be concentrated in areas to avoid single obstructions such as individual trees.

• Any planting is to be located so that subsequent growth will not obstruct visibility, signage or utility apparatus.

• Avoid inappropriate treatment and planting on narrow verges.

• Consideration should be given with planting schemes to ensure that the carriageway, footway and parking areas are not adversely affected by leaf or fruit fall.

Standards

• Well Maintained Highways – A Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance

• Northamptonshire county Council Asset Management Plan

• DfT Manual for Streets & DfT manual for Streets 2

• NCC Standard Construction Details

• National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) publications

18.5.3 Designing for Sustainability Checklist

In meeting the needs of today’s travelling public, sight must not be lost of future generations. Northamptonshire County Council therefore endeavours to protect and enhance the environment using resources and processes that will not adversely affect the future.

In designing maintenance works and schemes consideration is given to ensuring that all working practices are consistent with the principles of sustainability and that a balance will be achieved between cost, benefits, sustainability and acceptability from an engineering perspective.

Policy

• Northamptonshire County Council and the Service Provider will endeavour to support the local economy by contributing to the community and using local materials where possible.

• Services and schemes will be aimed at meeting the needs of the local community.

• Every opportunity will be taken to minimise pollution arising from traffic, works sites and areas of high air pollution.

• In areas of high flood risk, attenuation measures will be incorporated in schemes where possible and in association with the Environment Agency.

• The use of water at depots and works sites will be minimised.
• The use of energy at depots and works sites will be minimised and greater use will be made of cold rather than hot technology.

• The selection of materials will give priority to local sources and will be chosen to avoid adverse environmental effects.

• The creation of waste will be minimised with the emphasis on the re-use and recycling of materials.

• Services and schemes will support biodiversity requirements.

**Officer Guidance**

• The positive and negative effects on the local economy of the service or scheme shall be assessed and where these are adverse, steps should be taken to alleviate or minimise them where practicable

• Measures such as low noise surfacing materials are to be used where the level of traffic noise is high unless other constraints prohibit.

• The Service Provider is to ensure that all vehicles, plant and machinery are well maintained, modified or replaced to ensure that pollution is minimised.

• Schemes are to be designed to avoid environmental quality problems developing and, where possible, they will include measures to mitigate existing air pollution issues.

• Policies and procedures are to be developed for depots and works sites to ensure that pollution controls are in place to prevent contamination from fuel spills, salt, etc.

• Policies and procedures are to be in place to minimise the use of energy at offices, depots and works sites.

• The use of cold rather than hot technology is to be explored.

• Schemes will be designed and materials chosen to minimise the visual intrusion into the environment.

• Maintenance policies and procedures are to take into account biodiversity requirements to maximise nature conservation.

• Works programmes are to be adjusted to assist biodiversity requirements.

**Standards**

• Northamptonshire County Council Sustainability Service: Service Plan

**18.5.4 Drainage Responsibilities**

Drainage law is an involved and complex subject. Although much of it relates to rivers, land drainage, storm and foul sewers and drains and other issues on private land, there are elements
that affect Northamptonshire County Council and where the authority has powers to take appropriate action.

Sewers can be located within the highway and to which piped drainage systems are connected. Private sewers draining one or more households or business premises remain the responsibility of the property owner to maintain, clean and repair until they meet the public highway boundary. The installation of new, private sewer connections under the highway requires a licence from Northamptonshire County Council together with authorisation from the water company for the connection to the main sewer. Similarly, highway gullies are generally connected to the public storm sewer with the gully and the piped connection being the responsibility of Northamptonshire County Council to maintain. No private connections may be made to the highway authority's drainage.

The situation becomes more complicated in the case of roadside ditches. Many such ditches came into being as a result of the appropriate enclosure awards and mainly they are the responsibility of the adjoining land owner to maintain. There are exceptions to these where ditches have been constructed solely for the purpose of draining the highway, or where the ditch falls in land owned by the highway authority or where the highway authority has historically maintained the ditch. Where a highway has drained into a privately owned roadside ditch by whatever means for a period in excess of 20 years, Northamptonshire County Council has a prescriptive right of discharge into that ditch in perpetuity and this right must not be impeded. In the case of a dispute over the ownership of a ditch which is used jointly for highway water and land drainage, the law presumes that the adjoining landowner is responsible for the maintenance of the ditch unless proof to the contrary can be demonstrated.

Northamptonshire County Council has the power to fill in or pipe a roadside ditch, subject to the approval of the landowner, where it is considered necessary to support the highway. Conversely, a landowner may fill in or pipe a roadside ditch subject to first consulting the highway authority and obtaining written consent from the relevant drainage authoriser. If anyone, without the consent of the highway authority, should subsequently open up a ditch that has been filled or piped, they are guilty of an offence and liable for the cost of reinstatement together with a fine.

Northamptonshire County Council is responsible for providing and maintaining many of the pipes, culverts and bridges under the highway to transfer water from one side of the highway to the other. There are other piped drainage systems within the highway, other than mentioned above, such as under gateways and other accesses and these are the responsibility of the owner of the land for which they serve to maintain.

It is an offence under the Highways Act 1980 to permit water to fall on the highway from a roof or other part of premises or to allow surface water to flow from premises onto or over a highway footway. Northamptonshire County Council has powers under the Act to serve notice on the owners of premises where such nuisances occur.

There is no absolute duty on the Highway Authority to ensure that all water from the highway passes into a recognised system thus avoiding any water flowing onto private ground, although the Authority must ensure that any existing system is adequately maintained.

Policy

- Northamptonshire County Council and lead local flood authority will work with district councils, the Environment Agency; the National Farmers’ Union; landowners and farmers
in an endeavour to minimise the risk of flooding on rural roads as well as local flood risk from surface water, ground water and from ordinary water courses.

- Where Northamptonshire County Council considers that a roadside ditch requires maintenance, it may serve notice on the owner.

- Northamptonshire County Council will take enforcement action against owners of premises that permit water to fall on to the highway or flow over the highway footway.

- Northamptonshire County Council or its highways Service Provider will consult with the Environment Agency and report to the NCC Flood and Water Management Group before undertaking any works on or near a watercourse.

**Officer/Service Provider Guidance**

- All new private apparatus within the highway, including sewer connections, will require a Section 50 licence issued under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

- Temporary openings within the highway to enable maintenance work to be undertaken on private apparatus will require a Section 171 Licence issued under the Highways Act 1980.

- Where it is considered that the condition of a ditch or watercourse is hampering the efficient drainage of the highway, the Service Provider will make an initial, informal approach to the landowner with a view to resolving the matter.

- In the event of the landowner failing to take the appropriate action to restore the efficiency of a ditch or watercourse to enable the satisfactory drainage of the highway, the Service Provider will refer the matter to the Northamptonshire County Council for formal action to be taken under the Land Drainage Act 1991.

- Where a prescriptive right of discharge into a ditch or watercourse exists by virtue of a minimum of 20 years use, the right applies to the whole section of the ditch or watercourse and not to the actual points of discharge. Consequently, grips or offlets can be repositioned along the length concerned to ensure that they are placed at low points in the carriageway.

- Entrances to pipes and culverts need to be kept clear of debris if they are to function properly during times of heavy rainfall. To prevent debris being washed into systems, grilles having a 45 degree slope with a horizontal section abutting the headwall to collect debris should be fitted by the landowner, the water company or the relevant district council. These will also prevent children from entering the larger culverts with the risk of becoming trapped.

- Water tank, cistern and other overflows will not be permitted to discharge over the highway and where this occurs, the property owner will be instructed to install pipe work within the property to carry any overflow water to a suitable point of discharge within the premises.

- Where surface water flows across a highway footway from adjoining premises, drainage channels are to be installed by the owner of the premises to intercept the surface water and direct it to a suitable point of discharge.
No work shall be undertaken on or near to a main watercourse without first consulting with and obtaining approval from the Environment Agency.

Where water from private downpipes flows through an original channel in the footway, the channel is the responsibility if of the property the down pipe emanates from. If channels have been replaced by Northamptonshire County Council then the channel is the responsibility of Northamptonshire County Council.

Standards
- Highways Act 1980
- Land Drainage Act 1991
- Public Health Act 1936
- Flood Risk Regulations 2009
- Flood and Water Management Act 2010

18.6.1 Highway Adoption

Before commencing the construction of roads, cycle tracks and footways associated with a new residential or industrial development, a developer will usually enter into a legal agreement under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) with Northamptonshire County Council to ensure that upon completion of the works, and after a maintenance period, typically a minimum of 12 months, these will be adopted as highway by the authority. The works will be inspected to ensure new highways are constructed to Northamptonshire County Council’s specification and requirements although the authority will have no other control of the activities on the site.

Similarly works to existing highway required to facilitate development will be subject to an agreement with Northamptonshire County Council. The developer will be responsible for the management and maintenance of the section of existing highway affected until the works are “adopted” at the end of a maintenance period.

Until such time as the works are formally adopted by Northamptonshire County Council, all responsibility for the management and maintenance of a proposed new highway, rests with the developer.

A new highway constructed by Northamptonshire County Council becomes adopted as soon as it is opened to traffic.

Policy
- The design of new street layouts will be aimed at ensuring that they are fit for purpose, safe and practical for all those that may use the streets in movement and place making terms. Such streets shall also be designed and constructed to minimise maintenance liabilities.

- Streets shall be designed and laid out to give primacy to the movements of pedestrians, (including those with visual or physical impairments) cyclists and public transport over the use by private vehicles where appropriate to do so.
• All works are to be constructed strictly in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s standards, guidance and specifications.

• New streets, verges, footways and cycle tracks etc subject to an agreement under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) will be adopted as highway at the end of a maintenance period which shall typically be no less than 12 months.

• Works within existing highways required to facilitate development will be subject to an agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) or other such agreement or Licence as Northamptonshire County Council determines.

• Northamptonshire County Council will recover its reasonable costs for preparing legal agreements including legal advice, technical and safety audit, administration and inspection of works.

• Subject to such an agreement, the developer will be responsible for the management and maintenance of the section of highway affected until the works are “adopted” at the end of a maintenance period. Under the agreement the developer will indemnify Northamptonshire County Council against any legal claims under any associated legislation arising from the execution or use of the highway works.

• Northamptonshire County Council will allow no more than five dwellings or units without direct existing or proposed highway frontage to be served by a shared private drive.

• Northamptonshire County Council will resist private accesses from an adopted or adoptable highway that would serve both flatted and separate dwelling(s).

• Northamptonshire County Council will resist the proposal of or the creation of multiple vehicular accesses to single dwellings as such proposals would create additional and unnecessary conflicts between emerging vehicles and other highway users.

• Northamptonshire County Council will resist the creation of additional accesses or junctions onto Class 1 Roads in the interests of highway safety and the expedient free flow of traffic.

• If Northamptonshire County Council agrees, as part of a highway adoption agreement, to adopt lighting on new streets it shall comply with its Street Lighting Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Specification. All costs incurred by Northamptonshire County Council in accruing any new lighting for new developments into the PFI Contract will be recovered from the developer prior to adoption of the streets concerned.

Officer Guidance

• All construction and layout details are to be subject to a Technical, Stage 1, 2 and (post construction) 3 Safety and (at the officers discretion) Quality Audit prior to the signing of the S38 or S278 Agreement to ensure compliance with County Council specifications.

• Any non-standard construction details, features or materials, are to be subject to a commuted sum to safeguard Northamptonshire County Council over future maintenance costs. Reference will be made to regional best practice and County Surveyors Society Guidance in calculating such sums.
An estimate of the cost of constructing the infrastructure based on Northamptonshire County Council’s Service Provider’s prices will be prepared for the purpose of determining the value of appropriate security Bond on which Northamptonshire County Council’s Fees will be based.

Inspection of the works will only take place once an appropriate Agreement or License under the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) has been completed. Any work undertaken prior to this may be subject to investigatory work at the developer’s expense.

Consideration will be given to reducing the Bond at the request of the developer as sections of the works are satisfactorily completed.

No adoption of the works will take place until the expiry of a minimum 12 months maintenance period and the satisfactory completion of any remedial works which may extend such a period.

The works will not be adopted until the foul and surface water drainage has been adopted by a recognised Water Company or Drainage Authority.

Any changes to the limits of the adoptable highway are to be covered by a Deed of Variation.

Upon adoption, the developer shall provide “As Built” drawings, Health and Safety file along with an inventory of the highway assets.

The details of the new highway are to be added to the Highway Register, the NSG and Northamptonshire County Council’s mapping systems and the additional maintenance items added to the Service Provider’s schedules.

Standards

New street layouts should comply with Northamptonshire County Council’s “Place and Movement Guide 2008” or any other applicable County Council guidance or policy that Northamptonshire County Council may publish.

All works are to be constructed in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s “Adoptable Standards” as defined within its Estate Road Construction Guide or any other applicable County Council guidance, policy or standard that Northamptonshire County Council may publish.

Northamptonshire County Council local standards and specifications

Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and


18.6.2 Section 278 Agreements

Northamptonshire is a county that is continuously growing with new residential, retail and industrial estates being constructed to meet increasing demand. Northamptonshire County Council acknowledges that there are times when it is necessary to have developers make changes to the
adopted highway to mitigate the impact of any proposed new development. Although Northamptonshire County Council allows changes to the adopted highway to happen they are proactively controlled through entering into a Section 278 agreement with the developer.

A section 278 agreement is a legally binding document between the Northamptonshire County Council and the developer which ensures works on the highway will be carried out to the required standard of Northamptonshire County Council.

**Policy**

- The developer will be responsible for meeting all costs including the design, construction, supervision and legal fees of S278 works.
- Northamptonshire County Council will review detailed design of the developer promoted scheme including plans, specifications and schedules.
- The developer may be required to pay a bond to Northamptonshire County Council that will cover the total cost of the works.
- Commuted sums may be required to cover future maintenance of the works.
- Any section 278 agreement is to be signed by Northamptonshire County Council, the developer and other parties as necessary.
- A developers Engineer must prepare detailed design documentations to current standards and submit them to Northamptonshire County Council for technical approval.
- A S278 agreement will only be considered if necessary planning permission is in place.
- A S278 agreement will only be considered if the developer has demonstrated that the land to be dedicated under the S278 is free of any encumbrances.

**Officer/Service Provider Guidance**

- A draft section 278 agreement will be prepared by Northamptonshire County Councils solicitors to be agreed before the final document is prepared.
- A developers Engineer needs to engage with Northamptonshire County Council to as early in the process as possible
- Detailed design to be reviewed against national and Northamptonshire County council standards and specifications.
- Review bond surety
- Ensure all necessary departments of Northamptonshire County Council are consulted on the proposed works.
- Road space should be booked 12 weeks before work commences and will only be considered once the S278 agreement is signed.
Standards

- Highways Act 1980
- Northamptonshire County Council standards and specifications
- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
- Manual for Streets

18.7.1 Managing Pedestrian Traffic – General

The need for new footways may arise from conflict with traffic or to deal with a real or perceived accident problem. The cost of constructing a new footway is very high, especially where there is no significant separation from a road where it is necessary to include a new kerb, and therefore all proposals for new footways will be assessed and ranked in priority order. With the subsequent identification of higher ranking schemes, low priority proposals may not obtain funding.

Where there is an existing footway close by, link footways will be provided for access to bus stops where hard standings will also be provided.

Full consideration will be given to the needs of the elderly and those with disabilities when designing new footways and associated ramps, handrails, etc.

Policy

- All new works will be designed to include facilities for people with disabilities in accordance with national policies and specifications.
- New footways will be designed to ensure freedom of access and ease of use by all people.
- Where there are steep slopes or drops at the rear of footways, adequate protection for pedestrians will be provided.
- On new schemes, provision will be made for a complementary ramped route where a flight of steps is included in a footway or footpath scheme.
- Dropped or flush kerbs will be provided at crossing points to accommodate wheelchairs, pushchairs, etc. (See Policy Section 18.7.3)

Officer Guidance

- A technical audit will be carried out on the designs for all new works to ensure that facilities for those with disabilities are included in accordance with policies and standards.
- Where there are steep slopes or drops at the rear of footways, a 100mm kerb up-stand will be provided and consideration given to the provision of a handrail or protective fence.
- Where the inclusion of a flight of steps on a footway or footpath scheme is unavoidable, a complementary ramped route will be provided.
Handrails will be provided on both sides of a flight of steps.

An area of texture and colour change will be provided at the top and bottom of a flight of steps will be provided to alert blind and partially sighted people to its presence.

Tapering obstructions such as the spaces below ramps and stairs and the stabilising wires and struts on telegraph poles will be blocked out or masked by a protective handrail, tapping rails, raised kerb or textured surface.

All new street furniture will be located to minimise the potential obstruction to people with disabilities. The location of existing street furniture will be reviewed in association with all improvement or maintenance schemes involving alterations to footways or footpaths.

Dropped or flush kerbs will be provided at crossing points to accommodate wheelchairs, pushchairs, etc. *(See Policy Section 18.7.3)*

Link footways will be provided at locations where a demand is identified and their provision is justified by the ranking system.

**Standards**

- Compliance with national policies and specifications for facilities for those with disabilities.

- All works to be in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s specifications and standard details.

- The footway hierarchy.

**18.7.2 Controlled Pedestrian Crossings**

Zebra, pelican, puffin and toucan are all types of controlled pedestrian crossing. The selection of crossing type will depend on various factors including traffic flow, vehicle speeds, pedestrian demand and cycle routes. In general, zebra crossings will be used on the secondary road network with signal controlled crossings being employed on the major routes. Zebra crossings may also be incorporated with road humps on traffic calming schemes where appropriate.

In addition to the above, pedestrian phases may be incorporated within a signal controlled junction where justified by the pedestrian demand.

**Policy**

- Controlled pedestrian crossings may be considered on roads where the speed limit is 40 mph or less.

- Wherever possible, a presumption will be made in favour of zebra crossings on roads below main distributor in the network hierarchy and on signal controlled crossings on strategic routes and main distributor roads.
• Where road humps are used as a traffic calming measure, zebra crossings will be incorporated with the road hump if the site satisfies the requirement for the provision of a zebra.

• Where a significant pedestrian demand exists at a junction, pedestrian facilities may be incorporated within a signal controlled junction layout.

• Alternative pedestrian crossing measures will be considered where it is not possible to incorporate signalled pedestrian facilities.

**Officer Guidance**

• Coloured tactile paving will be provided at all zebra and pelican crossings and at all junctions with positive pedestrian control by traffic signals.

**Standards**

• The Zebra, Pelican and Puffin Pedestrian Crossing Regulations and General Directions 1997

• Department for Transport Local Transport Note 1/95 Assessment of Pedestrian Crossings

• Department for Transport Local Transport Note 2/95 Design of Pedestrian Crossings

**18.7.3 Dropped Kerbs**

The presence of a kerb, while providing protection for pedestrians from traffic on the adjacent carriageway, can present serious difficulties for those confined to wheel chairs; pedestrians pushing baby buggies and those who have difficulty with walking. The situation is particularly severe where a kerb has been recently installed and may be up to 125 millimetres in height. Those people who find such situations difficult to overcome have a justifiable expectation for access to be made possible for them to be able to engage in social, recreational and business activities.

To overcome the problems detailed above, dropped kerbs are provided in association with carriageway and footway schemes; controlled crossing points and as part of an identified and prioritised programme.

In the design of dropped kerbs, the interests of all people with disabilities need to be taken into account by providing some physical indication for visually impaired people without causing any difficulties for wheelchair users. This is achieved by liaising with local disability groups.

**Policy**

• Dropped kerbs may be provided at identified pedestrian crossing points where works are being carried out and can also be provided at other crossing points where a need has been identified.

• The design of crossing points and their installation will be developed in consultation with local disability groups.
At side roads, the dropped kerbs will be located in the minor road but as close as possible to the desired line for pedestrian crossing movements, subject to constraints such as visibility and safety requirements.

**Officer Guidance**

- When crossings are installed, a corresponding crossing will be provided on the opposite side of the road.

**Standards**

- Crossings shall be constructed in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s standard detail drawings.

### 18.7.4 Bus Stops

Northamptonshire County Council works in partnership with other stakeholders to agree the location of bus stops and the provision of the associated infrastructure, shelters, hard standings, link footways, etc. In many cases, Northamptonshire County Council takes on the responsibility for stops with borough and district councils having the responsibility for shelters in the urban areas where many have contracts with advertising companies for the provision of free shelters. In rural areas, shelters may be provided by the local town or parish council. Northamptonshire County Council maintains the pole supporting the bus stop sign with the bus operator being responsible for the flag.

Bus stop works are often undertaken for a number of reasons; bus-stops may be moved as a result of another highways scheme, a Section 278, or as a request from a member of the public or a bus operator; new stops may need to be implemented as a result of a new or re-routed bus-service, or at the request of existing passengers.

Bus stops need to be located within reasonable walking distance of housing or other destinations and have good pedestrian links, good street lighting and, where possible, be where there are other people about. As a result, the siting of bus stops can be a locally sensitive issue and Northamptonshire County Council will therefore consult with a variety of interested parties including ward members, the local town or parish council, residents and/or businesses, the bus operator, the highways service provider and other NCC Highway teams when deciding a location. The process for determining bus stop works will vary and will be dependent on whether the need arises from a request for a new bus stop, a complaint about an existing bus stop or as a result of a highways scheme.

**Policy**

- Northamptonshire County Council will agree the location of new bus stops in consultation with ward members, the Police, the town/parish council, local residents and/or businesses, the bus operator and other interested parties.

- A number and name will be provided for each stop.

- Northamptonshire County Council will provide a pole/post and timetable case at each stop.
• Northamptonshire County Council will encourage district, town and parish councils to provide shelters at heavily used boarding stops.

• Identify in partnership with district councils, bus operators and other partners, locations for interchanges and agree with these partners the responsibility for operating and maintaining these interchanges.

• Agree with these partners the facilities required at these interchanges.

• Renew all stops and raise kerb heights wherever possible on routes where low floor buses operate.

Officer Guidance

General

• The location of bus stops is an important consideration. They need to be located so that, as far as possible, all housing areas are within about 400 metres, or 10 minutes walk, of a bus stop.

• Bus stops should not be located where a waiting bus may partially or fully obstruct an access, particularly on heavily trafficked roads.

• Where low-floor buses operate, kerb heights can be raised above normal and the pavement re-levelled to further reduce the gap between the step of the bus and the pavement. Care should be taken to ensure that these works do not create drainage problems for either adjoining properties or the highway itself.

• A technical audit will be carried out on the designs for all new works to ensure that facilities for those with disabilities are included in accordance with policies and standards.

• Where there are steep slopes or drops at the rear of bus stops, a 100mm kerb up-stand will be provided and consideration given to the provision of a handrail or protective fence.

• Link footways will be provided at locations where a demand is identified and their provision is justified by the ranking system.

• Where footways are narrow, consideration will be given to placing the pole or post at the rear of the footway and cantilevering the sign.

Procedure for bus-stop works requested to or by Northamptonshire County Council

• The process commences when a request or complaint is received by the Northamptonshire County Council from a customer. This could be in a number of forms, e.g. a complaint about an existing stop with a request to relocate it, an operator request for a bus-stop move, a request for a new stop, or a request for additional facilities or repairs to an existing stop.

• Northamptonshire County Council will liaise with the customer, in private, to obtain all the details and their views on what they want to see, meeting on site if appropriate.
Northamptonshire County Council will convene a meeting on site with the highways service provider, bus operator(s), Police, but without the customer present, to discuss what is technically possible and acceptable for all parties.

Northamptonshire County Council will assess the options, and make any decisions, based on the outcome of the site meeting, and availability of funding.

Northamptonshire County Council will consult with the customer over the chosen option/s and outline reasons for the decision. They will also consult with any nearby residents and/or business owners who may be affected by the possible work, along with parish and ward members, by letter or e-mail.

In light of the comments received from these consultations, the chosen options will be reassessed and a final decision on what works, if any, should be carried out.

Northamptonshire County Council will inform the customer, the parish and ward members and any affected residents as to the final decision; ensuring justification for the final decision is included, along with estimated timescales for completion of any work.

In the event of the customer not accepting the decision, but indicating that they wish to take the matter further, then the complaints procedure will be outlined to them.

**Procedure for bus stop works required as a result of planned highway works**

- Where it is necessary to relocate a bus stop as a result of highway works, the scheme promoter will discuss the requirements with the Bus, Rail and Accessibility Team.

- If necessary Northamptonshire County Council will meet the scheme promoter on site with, as appropriate, the highways service provider, bus operators, Police, Community Liaison Officer, etc., to discuss potential solutions that are acceptable to all parties.

- Northamptonshire County Council will assess the options and make decisions, agreed with all parties, based on the outcome of the above consultations and, where applicable, the site meeting.

- Once the scheme has been agreed, the scheme promoter will consult any affected residents and/or business owners, the ward councillor and the town/parish council with the chosen option(s) and outline the reasons for the decision.

- The scheme promoter, with Northamptonshire County Council, will re-assess the chosen options in light of comments arising from the consultations and a final decision will be made on what works, if any, are to be carried out.

- The scheme promoter will then inform the affected residents and/or businesses, ward councillor and local town/parish council of the final decision together with the justification for the decision and estimated timescales for the completion of the work.

- In the event of any party not accepting the decision, but indicating that they wish to take the matter further, then the complaints procedure will be outlined to them by the scheme promoter.
Standards

- Compliance with national policies and specifications for facilities for those with disabilities.
- All works to be in accordance with Northamptonshire County Council’s specifications and standard details.
- The footway hierarchy.

18.7.5 Subways

Once seen as a safe and convenient means of crossing busy roads without the need to delay traffic, subways are now to be avoided if at all possible as they can become centres for threatening and anti-social behaviour.

Where subways exist and are in use it is essential that they be maintained to a high standard and that the lighting is kept fully operational. Frequent visual inspections will therefore be scheduled. Offensive graffiti will be removed immediately by the respective borough or district council.

Subways that become major problem areas should be considered for closure and surface pedestrian crossing facilities provided as a substitute.

Policy

- Subways will only be provided where there is no acceptable alternative.
- There will be a high level of vandal proof/resistant lighting.
- Entrances and exits will be designed to incorporate as much open space as possible.
- Materials used will be vandal proof/resistant.
- Where appropriate, subways will be designed to accommodate cyclists.

Officer Guidance

- Prior to incorporating a subway, all other alternatives must be fully explored.
- The length of subways will be kept to a minimum.
- All lighting to be vandal proof/resistant and recessed into the structure.
- Any drainage pumps to be easily accessible by maintaining contractors.
- All surfaces to allow for the easy removal of graffiti.
- A frequent and regular system of inspections will be scheduled to ensure that the subway is maintained to an acceptable level.
- Arrangements to be in place with borough and district councils for the immediate removal of offensive graffiti.
• Drainage pumps to be maintained on a regular basis and after flooding.

Standards

• Northamptonshire County Council local standards and specifications
• DfT Manual for Streets
• DfT Manual for Streets 2