



Permit Scheme

For Road Works and Street Works

Evaluation Report Year 2

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Executive Summary

In July 2018 the Secretary of State for Transport wrote to all councils that had not yet done so asking them to consider adopting a system of permits for utility street works & highway authority road works. The main reason behind the request is that it will give the Council, as Highway Authority, greater control over works on our highway network.

At the time of receiving this letter only North Tyneside and North Yorkshire had introduced a Permit scheme in the North East. The remaining ten North East Highway Authorities worked collaboratively to develop and implement Permit Schemes. The Darlington Permit Scheme went live on 2nd March 2020.

The scheme will be evaluated after each of the first 3 years and then 3-yearly after that. These evaluation reports will include measurement of success against the key objectives of the Permit Scheme using performance monitoring as detailed below and also to demonstrate parity of treatment between Highway Authority and Utility works.

The first year of the Permit Scheme had the added difficulty of managing the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. The difficulties encountered applied to both Utilities and the Highway Authority so it was more important than ever to work together, building on existing good working relationships, in order to resolve any issues so we were able to manage and maintain the local highway network whilst allowing promoters access to maintain their services and assets.

The second year of the scheme was still impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic but to a much lesser degree to the first year.

The key headlines from this review are :

- A total of 5475 permit applications and variations were received with only 137 (2.5%) being refused
- 5475 permit applications and variations were received with 99.96% being assessed within the permitted timescales.
- The permit scheme has a surplus in year 2 of £46.93, with a combined year 1 and 2 deficit of £102.99. The scheme should be cost neutral on allowable costs that can be recovered through permit fees.

Performance Monitoring

TPI Measures

A set of Key Performance Indicators has been developed by the HAUC (England) Permit Forum to demonstrate the effectiveness of the scheme in meeting the stated objectives. Such TPI's may be redeveloped by the DfT and/or HAUC (England) and may be subject to change from time to time. Darlington Borough Council will always follow the latest TPI requirements.

The data for TPI's and KPI's is over the 12 month period from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022.

The figures included in the performance monitoring can be compared to future reports to measure the impact and performance of the Permit Scheme against its set objectives and to drive improvements where necessary.

- TPI 1 – Work Phases Started
- TPI 2 – Works Phases Completed
- TPI 3 – Days of Occupancy Phases Completed
- TPI 4 – Average Duration of Works
- TPI 5 – Phases Completed Involving Overrun
- TPI 6 - Number of Overrun Days
- TPI 7 – Number of Phase One Registrations
- TPI 8 – Number of Phase One Permanent Registrations
- TPI 9 - Incorrectly Timed Notices

- TPI 13 - Early Start Agreements



Performance Indicators

	TPI 1 – Work Phases Started	TPI 2 – Works Phases Completed	TPI 3 – Days of Occupancy Phases Completed	TPI 4 – Average Duration of Works	TPI 5 – Phases Completed Involving Overrun	TPI 6 - Number of Overrun Days	TPI 7 – Number of Phase One Registrations	TPI 8 – Number of Phase One Permanent Registrations	TPI 9 - Incorrectly Timed Notices	TPI 13 - Early Start Agreements
Highways England	42	42	200	4.76	0	0	1	0	112	1
BT	389	398	1,472	2.82	4	26	295	282	91	18
Darlington	894	885	7,745	9.07	4	959	569	15	304	769
Northern Powergrid (Northeast) Limited	375	386	4,006	10.03	4	4	335	325	107	28
NETWORK RAIL - PROMOTERS NATIONAL	33	31	1,173	2.26	0	0	0	0	3	8
VIRGIN MEDIA	134	134	3,198	2.08	1	3	111	103	2	17
Telefonica (O2 (UK) Limited)	3	3	3	1.00	0	0	3	3	0	0
Romec	3	3	3	1.00	0	0	2	2	0	0
GTC	6	1	31	3.00	0	0	1	1	0	3
T-Mobile (UK) Limited	13	13	13	1.00	0	0	11	11	2	0
Northern Gas Networks	248	240	2,738	10.89	0	0	210	210	34	73
Quickline Communications Ltd	13	13	17	1.31	0	0	3	2	0	0
Netomnia Ltd	67	65	179	2.72	0	0	64	63	2	9
NORTHUMBRIAN WATER	679	673	4,891	5.04	16	57	472	451	136	75
ALL ORGANISATIONS	2,899	2,887	25,669	6.86	29	1,049	2,077	1,468	793	1,001

Darlington Borough Council as Permit Authority will demonstrate parity of treatment for all activity promoters, particularly between undertakers and its own activities as highway authority. To demonstrate this a series of performance indicators will be used to capture this information for analysis.

We encourage discussions of works/variations/early start details with our street works section to improve co-ordination and planning. We appreciate this is easier for our internal works sections than it may be for public utilities but we will try and work with every works promoter to facilitate their request whenever possible, this is reflected in the low level of permit refusals and high percentage of early entry agreements.

KPI 1 - The number of applications for Permits and variations received, the number granted and the number refused.

	Permit Applications/Variations	Permit Applications Granted		Permit Applications Refused	
Utilities	3871	3043	79%	122	3%
Darlington	1604	1391	87%	15	1%
Total	5475	4434	81%	137	3%

KPI 2 - The number of conditions applied by condition type

		Utilities	Darlington	Total
NCT02a	Limit the days and times of day	1709	0	1,709
NCT02b	Working hours	403	0	403
NCT04a	Removal of surplus material/plant	209	2	211
NCT04b	Storage of surplus materials/plant	416	2	418
NCT05a	Width and/or length of road space that can be occupied	57	1	58
NCT06a	Road space to be available to traffic/pedestrians at certain times of day	371	7	378
NCT07a	Road closed to traffic	190	289	479
NCT08a	Traffic management request	573	527	1,100
NCT08b	Manual control of traffic management	254	3	257
NCT09a	Changes to traffic management arrangements	20	0	20
NCT09b	Traffic management arrangements to be in place	132	0	132
NCT09c	Signal removal from operation when no longer required	262	0	262
NCT10a	Employment of appropriate methodology	449	4	453
NCT11b	Publicity for proposed works	536	11	547
NCT12a	Limit timing of certain events	9	0	9
NCT13	Exceptional circumstance	0	0	0

KPI 3 - The number of approved variations (extensions)

	Duration Variation Applications	Duration Variation Applications Approved		Duration Variation Applications Refused	
Utilities	311	297	95%	14	5%
Darlington	245	241	98%	4	2%
Total	556	538	97%	18	3%

KPI 4 – The number of deemed permits

	Permit Applications/Variations	Permit Applications Deemed	
Utilities	3871	2	0%
Darlington	1604	0	0%
Total	5475	2	0%

KPI 5 - The number of early entries applied for

	Early Entries Applied for	Early Entries Agreed	
Utilities	320	232	73%
Darlington	770	769	100%
Total	1090	1001	92%

Financial Information

The permit scheme should be cost neutral on allowable costs that can be recovered through permit fees. If there is a surplus or deficit then the permit fees can be adjusted provided it can be justified and still within the capped levels set Nationally. It is generally accepted that permit schemes can take up to three years to become financially stable, set up costs are not expected to be recovered until after 3 years of operation.

The first 2 years of financial information indicate the fee levels are set correctly at the moment, there was small deficit in the year 1 and a small surplus in year 2.

	Operational Costs	Permit Income	Total Surplus/Deficit
Year 1	£162,773.72	£162,623.80	-149.92
Year 2	£176,505.77	£176,552.70	46.93
Total to date	£339,279.49	£339,176.50	-102.99

Recommendations

Despite the additional challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic the permit scheme has been successful in its 1st year, as the COVID-19 restrictions eased the amount of works increased in the 2nd year to the expected levels.

The recommendation for the year ahead are -

Maintain current fee levels for the next year.

Continue to work closely with works promoters both internal and public utilities to maintain low levels of permit refusals.

Maintain good levels of collaboration and information sharing with the other North East Highway Authorities.