



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy

September 2023

HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY	
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Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy

The Policy

The principle of Highway Infrastructure Asset Management is an approved policy within Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan that was adopted by Council on 10th March 2011.

The 3rd Local Transport Plan is set within the framework of:

- National Transport Policy
- Local Transport Policy
- Corporate vision
- Stakeholder Expectations
- Legal constraints
- Financial constraints

The Plan sets out the 21 policies that have been developed to address the outcomes and their associated challenges, with the rationale behind the choices made.

Policy 17 endorses that a structured approach to maintenance of the transport asset as a fundamental principal for national and local economic prosperity and the public's quality of life.

Policy 17 – Maintain the highway network for the safe and convenient movement of people (including pedestrians and cyclists) and freight in accordance with the Transport Asset Management Plan, including strengthening and maintenance of Structures.

Adopting sound asset management principles as set out in the HMEP '*Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance*' maximises the benefits of financial efficiencies, improved accountability and stewardship of the asset, better value for money and improved customer service.

The analysis involved in this process has been used to inform the priorities for the delivery of the policies through implementation plans that are tailored to the funding timescales.

Policy Statement

Roads (and their associated infrastructure) facilitate the transport of people and goods, provide access to homes, businesses and other destinations, and provide public space where people shop, socialise or relax.

Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan, sets out a transport strategy for the next 15 years (2011-2026) to support the delivery of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, Darlington's Community Strategy.

The Plan integrates with the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, which is the spatial expression of the Sustainable Community Strategy, whilst supporting key strategies to:

1. grow the local economy and increase the prosperity of local people; *Our adoption of embedded asset management principals will enable greater value for money to be delivered by taking a long term view on investment decisions. This approach will maximise the benefits for future prosperity and quality of place by ensuring the right investments decisions are made in the transport network.*
2. reduce inequalities, in particular for health outcomes; *Our adoption of embedded asset management principals will ensure highway infrastructure assets achieve better health and longer life expectancy for everyone by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness from transport and by providing travel options to keep people active and independent.*
3. improve the quality of the Place and the physical environment, thus improving the quality of people's lives; Our adoption of embedded asset management principals will achieve a better quality of life for all by improving the journey experience and minimising the negative impacts of transport such as noise, air pollution and accidents on the natural environment, heritage, landscape and people.
4. develop a lower carbon transport system. *Our adoption of embedded asset management principal's will place sustainable solutions that minimise waste, landfill and greenhouse gas emissions at the centre of our approach to highway infrastructure maintenance.*

The Plan sets out the context both in terms of Darlington's position as the Gateway to the Tees Valley, as well as through its significant economic relationships with North Yorkshire and County Durham.

The Plan sets out a number of key outcomes that it seeks to achieve, namely that:

1. Everybody is able to enjoy the Borough's prosperity by providing and maintaining a reliable, predictable, efficient and affordable transport network;
2. Everyone can play their part in reducing the impact of transport on the environment and its contribution to climate change;
3. People live long, healthy and active lives, travelling safely and making active travel choices;
4. Everyone in Darlington can maximise their life chances by being able to access services, activities and facilities; and
5. People in Darlington enjoy a positive journey experience on an attractive, clean, green and sustainable transport system

The Plan also highlights the challenges that Darlington faces and the potential implications of these for transport. One key challenge is to enable the Borough to develop in terms of expanding the local economy, attracting new investment in business, housing, health and leisure facilities, whilst ensuring that this is achieved in an inclusive way. One way to achieve this is to ensure that the transport system is accessible to all, environmentally sustainable and operationally effective.

The implementation plan also includes the detail of how the Plan will be monitored and reviewed over time.

An Equalities Impact Assessment, a Disability Impact Assessment, a Strategic Environment Assessment and a Habitats Regulation Assessment have been carried out for the Plan.

The Plan incorporates a number of existing “daughter” strategies, including many that were developed for, or during, the implementation of the Second Local Transport and which are deemed to be still relevant. These will be formally incorporated, as part of the process for adopting the Third Local Transport Plan.

Policy 17 is one of a number of policies developed recognises the principals adopted in applying asset management to achieve Darlington Borough Councils strategic objectives.

A summary Policy Statement is attached as **Appendix 1**.

Scope

The provisions of this policy will apply to all staff directly employed by Darlington Borough Council responsible in the planning and delivering of highway and transport related services and asset management.

Darlington Borough Council Policy for Highway Asset Management

The Council understands the vital role played by the highway network in supporting the Sustainable Community Strategy, One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, and in delivering its 3 priorities:

Grow the economy
Build Strong Communities....
Spend every pound wisely.....

A well maintained highway network is fundamental to the future economic prosperity of Darlington and the quality of life for its residents. Roads (and their associated infrastructure) facilitate the transport of people and goods, provide access to homes, businesses and other destinations, and provide public space where people shop, socialise or relax. With limited budgets the Council will use its asset management approach to deliver the best long term outcomes for local people, businesses and communities.

Within the context of the SCS the LTP has set 5 objectives:

1. To support employment, economic activity and sustainable development by providing and maintaining a reliable, predictable and efficient transport network.
2. To tackle climate change through reduced quantified reductions in greenhouse emissions from transport.
3. To achieve better health and longer life expectancy for everyone by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness from transport and by providing travel options to keep people active and independent.
4. To achieve a fairer society by enabling people to access jobs, education , training, health, food and green spaces.
5. To achieve a better quality of life for all by improving the journey experience and minimising the negative impacts of transport, such as noise, air pollution and accidents on the natural environment, heritage, landscape and people.

A specific policy for maintenance has been adopted

Policy 17 – Maintain the highway network for the safe and convenient movement of people (including pedestrians and cyclists) and freight in accordance with the Transport Asset Management Plan, including strengthening and maintenance of Structures.

...but it is recognised that maintaining the highway asset underpins all of the policies within the LTP.

In order to develop the implementation plans for the Local Transport Plan the priority order for allocating expenditure will be:

- Maintain the existing highway asset;
- Manage the existing highway network; and
- Improve the highway network.

We will achieve these by developing strategies, plans and processes that will:

- Adopt sound asset management principles as set out in the HMEP *'Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance'*
- Evidence based decision making, utilising data to prioritise
- 'in time' maintenance and whole life cost approach
- Set and achieve standards/targets
- Risk management
- Bid for money for exceptional maintenance
- Reduce revenue costs
- Reduce ongoing liabilities

Our approach to highway asset management will be twofold:

1. to focus on maintenance schemes that support Darlington's economy;
and
2. to reduce or minimise long term maintenance liabilities.