

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

22nd FEBRUARY 2007

UNSURFACED UNCLASSIFIED ROADS – UPDATE

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update with regard to the Unsurfaced Unclassified Roads network

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Mr Doug Huzzard, Highway Asset Manager, NYCC has attended a number of meetings with both the North Yorkshire Moors and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authorities to both discuss and participate in workshops associated with the County Council's network of Unsurfaced Unclassified Roads.
- 1.2 NYCC uses the term "Unsurfaced Unclassified Road" rather than "green lane" a term, which has neither legal standing nor is it 'associated' with a large proportion of the Unsurfaced Unclassified Road network.
- 1.3 In March 2006, the County Council approved its first Highway Maintenance Plan, which documents how the County Council as Highway Authority maintains the publicly maintainable highway. The Plan intentionally omitted the Unsurfaced Unclassified Roads although they are identified as Category 6 within the categorised network hierarchy.
- 1.4 The County had approximately 750 km of Unsurfaced Unclassified Roads for which it receives no funding allocation through either the Revenue or Capital settlements, i.e. they carry a zero weighting within the funding formula and are excluded from the R199b statutory return on road lengths but are included on the List of Streets as highways maintainable at public expense.
- 1.5 The Department for Transport (DfT) has placed a requirement on all Local Highway Authorities to develop a Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and document progress towards its development and implementation during the Local Transport Plan 2 period (2006-2011). NYCC intended to include the PROW network within the TAMP so that its 'value' and derived social benefit was more widely understood and appreciated, development of the RoWIP will assist in this process.

3.0 COUNTY COUNCIL PHILOPHOSY TOWARDS NETWORK MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- 3.1 It is the Council's intention, in conjunction with and following consultation / engagement with all interested parties to identify and manage the Unsurfaced Unclassified Road network in a sustainable and fit for purpose manner using appropriate management and maintenance techniques.
- 3.2 The County Council will seek to achieve a balanced portfolio of routes (viewed in

a wider context, i.e. with the PROW network) in terms of user accessibility and use but accepts however that some restrictions on use will need to be imposed.

- 3.3 The County Council has received a number of offers of assistance in undertaking repair and maintenance works by interested user groups and the intention is, where appropriate, to work in partnership with these groups.
- 3.4 The County Council does not intend to transfer management or maintenance responsibility for the Unsurfaced Unclassified Road network to the National Parks.

4.0 WORKS IN PROGRESS THAT SUPPORT POLICY AND STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 A lot of work needs to be undertaken on Geographical Information Systems to ensure that network records and information are more easily available. The digitisation of publicly maintainable highway records has been identified as a key issue and is currently included in a BES procurement package as part of the BPR process. (This is a major project requiring extensive investigation and a thorough audit trail which would resolve the issue of discrepancies between various copies of records and enable the information to be maintained centrally but viewed by Officers around the County).
- 4.2 The List of Streets, a statutory requirement under Section 36(6) of the Highways Act 1980 is not yet available electronically but is under development with the intention of making the information available on the County Council website.
- 4.3 The Highway Asset Management team have developed a categorised sub-hierarchy for the Unsurfaced Unclassified Road network.
- 4.4 The Highway Asset Management team have developed and implemented a condition monitoring assessment system that takes into consideration width, usage, gradient, surface, drainage issues, links with other routes, status, signage etc.
- 4.5 In conjunction with both National Parks a list of 'Dual Status' routes have been identified (i.e. routes that are included in both the List of Streets and the PROW Definitive Map), work has yet to begin on identifying the dual status routes outside the National Park boundaries. These are all major research projects that will require substantial investigation to resolve any potential anomalies.
- 4.6 The Yorkshire Dales National Park has developed a sensitivity assessment (vulnerability mapping) model for use on routes with possible or proven rights for motor vehicles. The County Council has participated in and supported this work, which may be suitable for use across the whole of the County.
- 4.7 A pilot project is currently being undertaken and that of the ten routes selected by the project group there is one that is solely an unclassified county road. There is also one that is BOAT and unclassified county road, and two very short sections of unclassified county road that form parts of routes. It is anticipated that these assessments and associated condition surveys will be complete by 31st March 2007 prior to evaluation and further discussion. It is the County Council's intention to utilise this model for use across the whole of the Unsurfaced Unclassified Road network.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- a) This report is received for information.

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