

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT - CCC660554848

Directorate: Place and Sustainability

Service: Asset Management

Team: Highway Records and Definitive Map Team

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Proposal being assessed: The introduction of maintenance hierarchies for active travel routes on Cambridgeshire's highway network.

Business plan proposal number: n/a

Key service delivery objectives and outcomes : The introduction of the Active Travel Hierarchy will be an important contributor towards the achievement of Cambridgeshire's Active Travel Strategy, through its delivery of an enhanced approach to the maintenance of active travel routes. Active Travel means the use of non-motorised transport methods (for example, walking, cycling or using mobility aids) to access services, workplaces and utilities. The intention of the Hierarchy is to enable the County Council to better understand which active travel routes are most important to our communities, and therefore which ones require prioritisation for maintenance purposes. By prioritising maintenance on the most valuable and well-used active travel routes, we can maintain a highway network that is better suited to the needs of our stakeholders, thereby improving opportunities for, and the attractiveness of, active travel. This in turn will help to reduce road congestion and carbon emissions. The introduction of the Active Travel Hierarchy will support the Council's ambitions for sustainable transport and carbon reduction, as well as contributing towards the EDI Strategy 2023-27.

What is the proposal: The principle change will be in terms of the criteria that are used to define our planned and reactive maintenance for active travel routes on the highway network. The Active Travel Hierarchy (ATH) will codify an approach to prioritising these activities. This will feed into: (i) how we plan our capital maintenance schemes (for example, routes that are ranked higher in the ATH will be scored more highly when considering which maintenance schemes are to be prioritised) (ii) how the council responds to defects within the highway (for example, routes with a higher ranking in the ATH may have lower thresholds for intervention or faster response times for repairs). The precise alterations to our reactive maintenance standards have not yet been defined

and will be determined during 2025.

What information did you use to assess who would be affected by this proposal?:The Active Travel Hierarchy has been developed via a two-stage approach. The first stage is through statistical analysis of the locality in which each highway is situated, to identify a data-based ranking for routes that are considered to be of the most value. The statistical analysis makes use of pre-existing hierarchies employed by CCC (for example, the LCWIP), and overlays this with further data to develop a refined model of routes that are likely to be of higher usage or greater value to non-motorised users. The sort of data that has been used includes population density, indices of multiple deprivation, and proximity to local facilities. This has allowed a ranking score to be developed for each highway, forming the basis for a draft hierarchy. The second stage is public consultation. Once the data-driven hierarchies had been created, a public consultation exercise was undertaken. The consultation was publicised on the Council's website and social media. Numerous stakeholder bodies were directly invited to contribute feedback. This included Public Right of Way user groups, parish councils, County Cllrs, other active travel interest groups, other transport organisations and public health bodies. The consultation was conducted online for 10 weeks and involved publication of the draft hierarchies with an invitation for respondents to tell us if they thought the ranking of highways in their locality or their area of interest was appropriate. We also sought general comments on the principles behind an Active Travel Hierarchy. At the time of completing this EqlA, the consultation feedback is still being assessed. Over 1200 responses were received from across our stakeholders and communities.

Are there any gaps in the information you used to assess who would be affected by this proposal?: No

Does the proposal cover: All service users/customers/service provision countywide

Which particular employee groups/service user groups will be affected by this proposal?: Anyone who uses a highway in Cambridgeshire for any purpose, but particularly for active travel, will potentially be impacted by this proposal.

Does the proposal relate to the equality objectives set by the Council's EDI Strategy?:Yes

Will people with particular protected characteristics or people experiencing socio-economic inequalities be over/under represented in affected groups: Mixture of over/under represented and in line with population, depending on the group

Does the proposal relate to services that have been identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics/who are experiencing socio-economic inequalities?: Yes

Does the proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?: Yes

What is the significance of the impact on affected persons?:The built environment can be both a facilitator and a barrier to those who wish to participate in society. Active Travel provisions are no different. For example: a footway that is insufficiently wide or obstructed may prevent people using mobility aids from reaching an essential service; trip hazards such as broken or uneven surfaces might discourage use by the elderly; and high speed roads might present a barrier for young children to access schools. While the Active Travel Hierarchy does not set out to change the physical layout of the highway network, it can have an impact on issues such as the examples above by helping to ensure that existing active travel routes are maintained to a standard that is appropriate to their importance. For example, repairing a trip hazard on a high

priority active travel route might improve accessibility for elderly or disabled users. By recognising the value of our most important active travel routes, the Active Travel Hierarchy will contribute to making decisions about proactive maintenance schemes, which could help to remove barriers to certain protected groups - such as resurfacing a cycle path leading to a school. There is a cumulative impact of improving accessibility by promoting well-maintained active travel infrastructure. There are benefits both to health and wellbeing, but also for access to employment and local facilities and services, which can bring benefits to all highway users.

Category of the work being planned: Policy

Is it foreseeable that people from any protected characteristic group(s) or people experiencing socio-economic inequalities will be impacted by the implementation of this proposal (including during the change management process)?: Yes

Please select: Age, Disability, Socio-economic inequalities

Research, data and /or statistical evidence: A number of datasets were considered by our consultant when developing the Active Travel Hierarchy. I have appended a document outlining the datasets that were used, but in summary they include: - Population density at LSOA level - Existing road hierarchy categories - Growth areas identified by the Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) - Population growth at LSOA level - Census data: banded mean age at LSOA level - Indices of Multiple Deprivation at LSOA level - LCWIP zones (eg, central walking areas, employment, retail) - Significant site proximity from Ordnance Survey open datasets - Strategic route mapping from LCWIP, National Cycle Network, etc - Infrastructure type information: eg, protected facility, shared surfaces, on-carriageway provision The datasets used did not generally target specific groups with protected characteristics but are used to develop an overall picture of how individual highways might present risks to, or be valued by, communities and stakeholders more broadly. We also considered the County Council's Active Travel Strategy and the aims and ambitions it has embedded, alongside the Council's strategic objectives for net zero, safe and sustainable travel, and healthier lives.

Consultation evidence: A 10-week public consultation was undertaken between 22 July and 30 September, which garnered over 1200 responses. The consultation sought general comments on the principle of an Active Travel Hierarchy, as were location-specific comments on the way in which highways had been ranked in the draft hierarchy. The consultation was promoted on the Council's social media channels to the general public, but we also wrote directly to all County Councillors and Parish Councils, as well as PROW user groups, other active travel stakeholder groups, public health bodies and the Local Access Forum. We requested that these groups made their communities aware of the opportunity to respond to the consultation. The responses to the consultation are still being assessed but it is intended that, where appropriate, they will be used to either (i) help determine the prioritised maintenance activities the Council carries out when the Active Travel Hierarchy is implemented, and/or (ii) adjust the way in which individual highways are ranked in the hierarchy in order to reflect the importance or risks highlighted by stakeholders. The assessment of responses is ongoing and to be carried out during Q3 and Q4 of 2025-26. The outcomes will be part of the considerations made by the Executive Director of Place and Sustainability when determining the adoption of the Active Travel Hierarchy.

Based on all the evidence you have reviewed/gathered, what positive impacts are anticipated from this proposal?: PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC – AGE - IMPACT: POSITIVE
The Active Travel Strategy identifies that the younger demographic in particular is less likely to have access to a private car: “active travel can improve social mobility and equality of access to

services for those people". The Joint Specific Needs Assessment also highlights that 33% of all 10 and 11 year old children in Cambridgeshire are obese. It is therefore important that we offer improved non-motorised access AND opportunities for physical activity for younger age groups. The Active Travel Strategy targets journeys to school as an area where improving our rates of active travel can make a positive impact. The Active Travel Hierarchy will help to promote more active travel journeys to school by supporting higher standards of maintenance for important routes, such as those leading to services like schools. The Active Travel Strategy also identifies that safe and accessible non-motorised user routes are important in encouraging all age groups, including the elderly, in being mobile and travelling independently of their cars. The Active Travel Hierarchy will contribute towards this by prioritising maintenance on important routes that connect to community services, making these routes a more accommodating environment for everybody.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC – DISABILITY - IMPACT: POSITIVE The Active Travel Strategy outlines that "there is a wide range of physical and mental disability which impacts on how people can travel". The Active Travel Hierarchy will help to reduce the effect of people being disabled by their environment, by prioritising maintenance of the most well-used non-motorised user routes. A broad network of well-maintained active travel routes will also facilitate improved access to the countryside, so supporting mental wellbeing by providing better opportunities to interact with the natural environment.

OTHER GROUPS - IMPACT: POSITIVE LOWER INCOME GROUPS are less likely to have access to a private car and are therefore more reliant upon public transport and active travel methods to reach services or places of employment. When considering how to prioritise routes on a statistical basis, the Active Travel Hierarchy focuses on routes that provide access to key destinations, and also takes into account indices of deprivation at the Lower Super Output Area level. This ensures that routes can be prioritised in areas where access to high quality non-motorised user routes could be more beneficial.

RURALITY is identified as a form of geographic inequality. The Active Travel Hierarchy recognises the importance of village high streets and connections between communities, and will enable us to identify where maintenance on such routes could be prioritised, therefore helping to improve opportunities for non-motorised journeys within and between rural communities.

Based on consultation evidence or similar, what negative impacts are anticipated from this proposal?: No negative impacts have been identified. The Active Travel Hierarchy does not seek to change the highway network; rather, it will introduce a framework for prioritising maintenance of existing routes that are used for active travel. This will support the County Council in reducing barriers to accessibility by seeking to ensure that the most important routes are maintained suitably to the demand and type of use they attract, thereby contributing to the achievement of the equality objectives outlined above. For example, the Walking and Wheeling Hierarchy prioritises routes which are most valuable to those who walk or use mobility aids. Prioritising maintenance on the most important routes will reduce discrimination against groups with protected characteristics who use these routes, by ensuring they are safe and accessible to all users. In turn this will make the highway network a more equal environment, without the need to implement mitigations which may adversely impact highway users who do not share the same protected characteristics.

How will the process of change be managed?: Members of the public will notice little immediate change. The Active Travel Hierarchy will be integrated into the Council's prioritisation schema for its capital maintenance programme from 2025-26. This means that when the Council approaches the task of considering which planned highway maintenance schemes it should prioritise, routes with greater Active Travel needs will be assessed more favourably. This is a managed process that is approved by Committee and will not introduce any sudden or dramatic changes to the highway network. The Active Travel Hierarchy will also be used to help identify how our reactive maintenance standards can be prioritised to ensure that well-used or more valuable active travel

routes are maintained to an appropriate standard. The assignment of reactive maintenance standards to the ATH will take place during 2025 and will be the subject of a further report to Committee. Again, this means that the direct impact on highway users will not be felt immediately. In any case, the impact of the Hierarchy should result in improved maintenance of highways that are well-used for active travel and therefore the change felt by individuals should not be negative.

How will the impacts during the change process be monitored and improvements made (where required)?: It is not anticipated that the implementation of the Hierarchy will lead to any excessive distress for any group. That said, CCC has the ability to monitor complaints, reports of defects on our highway network, or requests for improvements, through our ordinary channels of communication with the public (ie, contact centre, reporting tools, complaints monitoring processes, applications for Local Highway Improvements, etc). This enables us to identify where the condition or management of a particular highway might be causing undue stress to the public or a particular group of people. If we become aware that the condition of highways is not meeting the requirements of the affected community, the Council can consider amending the prioritisation of an affected route in the Active Travel Hierarchy, which may then result in a higher standard of maintenance being assigned to that route.

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan:

Details of negative impact (e.g. worse treatment/outcomes)	Groups affected	Severity of impact	Action to mitigate impact with reasons/evidence to support this or justification for retaining negative impact	Who by	When by
<p>No negative impacts have been identified at this time. However, it is recognised that there are a number of potential positive impacts on groups with protected characteristics which could be maximised over time. Actions have been identified which could be taken to further extend the benefits of the Active Travel Hierarchy. These are outlined below. It is proposed that these actions are</p>	<p>Age, Disability, Socio-economic inequalities</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Positive impact – younger people Action to enhance: Work with Road Safety Education Team and Public Health service to identify key school routes that could be considered for additional prioritisation Lead service areas: Active Travel Team / Road Safety Education Team / Public Health / Highway Records & Definitive Map Team</p> <p>Positive impact – elderly people Action to enhance: Work with Cambridgeshire Insights to identify areas with elderly demographic and consider prioritised maintenance for key active travel routes in these locations, eg, routes to GP surgeries or local shops Lead service areas: Active Travel Team / Cambridgeshire Insights / Highway Records & Definitive Map Team</p> <p>Positive impact – disabilities Action to enhance: Identify key stakeholders such as representative groups, charities or service providers to understand key maintenance requirements to support mobility for disabled groups Lead service areas: Active Travel Team / Public Health</p> <p>Positive impact – low income groups Action to enhance: Work with Cambridgeshire Insights to</p>	<p>Daniel Ashman to co-ordinate uptake of these actions across P&S Directorate</p>	<p>01/04/2028</p>

<p>undertaken as Details of negative impact (e.g. worse treatment/outcomes) Travel</p>	<p>Groups affected</p>	<p>Severity of impact</p>	<p>Action to mitigate impact with reasons/evidence to support this or justification for retaining negative impact</p>	<p>Who by</p>	<p>When by</p>
<p>Hierarchy. In line with Well Managed Highways Infrastructure guidelines, the ATH will be reviewed on a three-yearly cycle.</p>			<p>Identify areas with lower income&nbsp; / demographic support this or justification for retaining negative impact in these locations. Consider engagement with social housing providers Lead service areas: Active Travel Team / Cambridgeshire Insights / Highway Records & Definitive Map Team Positive impact &nbsp; rurality Action to enhance: Work with parish councils to identify priority routes in rural areas and consider whether they are appropriately prioritised Lead service areas: Active Travel Team / Asset Data Team / Asset Strategy Team / Highway Records & Definitive Map Team Positive impact &nbsp; all groups Action to enhance: Use condition and/or survey data for active travel routes held by the Asset Data Team to highlight prioritised routes that require enhanced intervention Lead service areas: Asset Data Team / Asset Strategy Team</p>		

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Confirmation: I confirm that this HoS is correct

Status: Approved