



# Northumberland

## County Council

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

DATE: 20<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018

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PETITION REQUESTING VERGE HARDSTANDING IMPROVEMENTS ON PRINCE EDWARD ROAD, TWEEDMOUTH.

**Report of the Service Director - Local Services Paul Jones**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Glen Sanderson, Environment and Local Services**

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### **Purpose of Report**

To acknowledge the petition recently received by this Committee in relation to a request for surface improvements to verge hardstanding at Prince Edward Road, Tweedmouth and propose the next steps.

### **Background**

1. A petition of 99 signatures has been received requesting surface improvements to the hardened verge strip situated in the west channel of Prince Edward Road, Tweedmouth.
2. The petition states: *"We the undersigned, agree with Mr & Mrs Hartley of 36 Prince Edward Road, Tweedmouth, Berwick upon Tweed that the whole of Prince Edward Road parking area for cars is not fit for purpose. Mrs Hartley fell outside her house on the 18th May whilst getting her grandson out the back of her car, striking her head against a road traffic sign and sustaining some nasty injuries. The complete length of the road has literally hundreds of grasscrete blocks broken or missing, metal posts sticking about 2 or 3 inches from the ground, kerbstones loose and rocking about, manhole rocking and completely loose. Still more accidents waiting to happen and Northumberland County Council are going to patch this up - totally unacceptable - as only a tarmac surface to park on will be adequate."*
3. The road referred to in the petition is the A1167, a primary route for traffic accessing Berwick town centre from the A1 in the south, which carries a significant amount of traffic. The section of the highway in question is highlighted in Figure 1.



**Fig.1. Location Plan.**

4. The properties on Prince Edward Road do not have off-street parking, so residents tend to use the highway verge between the carriageway and the footway on the west side of the highway.
5. The highway verge was originally a grassed area but was adapted some years ago by the Council into a hardstanding using grasscrete concrete blocks. This was carried out in acknowledgement of its local use as an informal parking area.

6. Grasscrete is an environmentally friendly system and had initially worked to provide an effective solution whilst preventing further deterioration of the original grass verge.
7. The petition raises concerns with the general condition of the verge hardstanding and refers to an accident that occurred on 18th May this year. The County Council have received details of this incident and will take these details into account when assessing the overall condition of this verge and what further maintenance is required for this area.
8. The current overall maintenance regime includes carrying out highway safety inspections and responding to reports of safety defects from the public. Any recorded defects are then made safe. With regard to this particular location any safety defects will continue to be made safe whilst any decisions on longer term maintenance are considered. Since being notified of the incident on 18th May work has been carried out to relay kerbs and to fill depressions with tarmac to temporarily improve conditions and ensure there are no actionable defects present.
9. Northumberland has an extensive highway network covering over 5,000km and this inevitably means that decisions on relative priorities for the repairs needed have to be carefully prioritised to make the most effective use of the funds that are available. This is done objectively by taking into account the actual road condition, usage and importance, when determining the priorities of maintenance work to be undertaken. The cost of undertaking any improvement scheme would be significant and therefore would need to be considered when developing next years Local Transport Plan programme for capital investment on highway improvements.
10. It is also understood that Statutory Undertaker apparatus is located in the verge and this will need to be taken into consideration when determining any potential highway improvements.

## **Recommendations**

- 1) The Council will continue to rectify any safety defects that are recorded.
- 2) In recognition of the safety concerns raised within the petition the County Council will consider the integrity of the existing construction and whether it is fit for purpose. This will include identifying the need for future long term maintenance or improvement works.
- 3) Depending on the outcome of point 2, the County Council will consider the appropriate options for improvement in consultation with the local ward member and the Town Council.
- 4) Consider funding any identified improvements from future Local Transport Plan programme proposals

### **Implications**

<b>Policy</b>	The response to the issues raised in this petition is consistent with LTP Policies.
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	Local Transport Plan funding will be required to implement any highway improvements.
<b>Legal</b>	None
<b>Procurement</b>	None
<b>Human Resources</b>	None
<b>Property</b>	None
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	None
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	None
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	None
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	
<b>Carbon reduction</b>	None
<b>Wards</b>	Berwick East

### **Background papers:**

None

### **Report sign off**

	initials
Finance Officer	n/a
Monitoring Officer/Legal	n/a
Human Resources	n/a

Procurement	n/a
I.T.	n/a
Director	PJ
Portfolio Holder(s)	GS

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