

By: Network Planner, Network Performance

To: Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste

Subject: Road Classifications review report

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report seeks approval from the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste, to a revised policy, procedure note and criteria for Road Classifications.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The reason for a classification system of the County network is to provide a functional hierarchy of roads in order to channel traffic along the most appropriate routes. The classified road network, therefore, gives the highway authority more control over where traffic is directed, ensuring that the road network is as free flowing as possible. This is the single purpose of road classification with no influence upon other transport decisions, such as road maintenance or improvements.
- 1.2 Road classification is determined by reference to the road classification criteria set out in Appendix 1 of the policy, procedure notes and criteria. Applications to classify new highways or to alter the classification of existing highways require approval from the Department for Transport (Daft). Applications must be sent to the Government Office for the North East (GONE) which acts on behalf of the Daft and The Secretary of State for Transport.

2. Changes to existing policy

- 2.1 The current road classification criteria uses the most recent Parish Level estimate population figures available from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) These Population estimates make an allowance for the resident population, Hospital Patient numbers, Prison occupancy rates and UK and Foreign Armed Forces.
- 2.2 A recent reclassification application for a road on the Isle of Sheppey highlighted a class of population that is not included in the ONS figures. This is certified holiday parks with occupancy of eight months or more.
- 2.3 Although these parks are mainly concentrated in coastal locations, with a higher than usual proliferation on Sheppey, they generate large amounts of traffic and should be included in the criteria
- 2.4 The data on the size of the parks and any conditions on occupancy can normally be obtained from the District Council and where it is available, an average occupancy of two persons should be assumed and prorated in accordance with the occupancy condition. If the data is not available from the District Council and it is known that the parks are substantial enough to affect

the classification of a particular road, further data should be gathered from the owners of the parks.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 An underestimate of population figures could place a road into a lower classification and thereby rendering that road unsuitable for the potential volumes of traffic that will be channel along that route.
- 3.2 Therefore it is important that an application for a new road classification or re-classifying an existing road takes into account all population in an area and not just those which are registered with the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The reason for this is due to the potential significant differences in overall population (i.e. higher level of population) for the area and therefore placing the road into a different classification than originally thought.
- 3.3 This new criteria will allow KCC to accurately assess the potential traffic that could use the road in question and thereby classifying accordingly.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 As a minor charge with no financial impacts, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste, is asked to approve the revised policy, procedure notes and criteria for dealing with applications for new road classifications and re-classifications of existing roads.

Background Documents:

Application for Road Classification (Policy,
procedure note and criteria)

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