

**EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL
LEAD MEMBER - TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT
POLICY SUMMARY**

Highway Maintenance - Consideration of Character

Purpose of Policy

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) recognises the impact that the local highway network has on the character of an area.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the approach to the maintenance of historic assets and assets where materials have been used that contribute to the character of an area. It does not cover enhancements.

In carrying out this policy ESCC will meet its statutory obligations and will also support the Council's Priorities, Local Transport Plan and Highway Service Outcomes.

Policy Statement

1. It is recognised that under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act that some structures, and the materials on some streets, have been granted listed status and therefore will always require appropriate consideration.
2. For all other assets, when undertaking highway maintenance on any part of the network, standard materials will generally be used in order to minimise whole life cost and maximise value. However, unique historic materials will be preserved where appropriate, subject to safety considerations and availability of funds.
3. Therefore, prior to any planned works being undertaken:
 - a. A forward maintenance programme will be prepared annually and will be shared with relevant County Councillors and local planning authorities. They will be given the opportunity to comment on the potential impact of the programme on the character of an area, or any items of historical interest, in advance of any works taking place.
 - b. Local planning authorities will be given the opportunity to determine if they wish to meet the additional costs of using preferred alternative materials and/or seek funding for the alternative materials (within reasonable timescales and without detriment to the asset's condition).
 - c. Final decisions on the most appropriate materials will be made following the asset management approach set out in the Highway Asset Management Policy, taking into consideration feedback on historic assets and character from the local planning authority and County Councillor and the available funding.
4. Note section 3 is in reference to long term planned works and does not apply to reactive repairs of safety defects as set out in the Highway Inspection Policy. Reactive repairs of safety defects may be carried out with standard, non-historic materials where it is not possible to re-use existing material.
5. In conservation areas, street lighting columns may be painted an appropriate local colour to help them blend in.

Supporting Information

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Code of Practice 'Well-managed highway infrastructure', 2016

Streets for All, Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places, 2018

Environment Act, 1995

Version control**Date of last review:**