



Appendix 1

East Sussex Freight Strategy 2025 - 2050 December 2025

Version 2

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1 Foreword

We are pleased to introduce East Sussex's Freight Strategy, which looks to connect people to places, providing freight connectivity for all.

This strategy is underpinned by a robust evidence base and has been developed with the public and stakeholders across the county, including representatives from the freight industry, Transport for the South East (TfSE), council officers and local planning authorities, and young people. This engagement has resulted in a strategy that reflects the freight aspirations of a wide range of stakeholders and will foster further partnership working with key stakeholders to help promote and progress freight initiatives and opportunities in the county.

The strategy is coming forward at a time of great change, with the establishment of the Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) for Sussex and Brighton anticipated to be in place from May 2026. This is running in parallel with local government reorganisation, which is expected to see the county, district and borough councils replaced with a new unitary authority from April 2028.

The strategy and its investment priorities have been developed to consider the varying characteristics of the county, including densely populated urban centres and large rural areas, and the differing needs of the users from these significantly different local contexts, and those affected by freight movements.

We are mindful of actual and perceived impacts of freight on local communities, and this has been incorporated into the strategy in respect of better understanding these impacts and the potential for addressing and alleviating these where possible. It is also important to engage and provide information to those affected by freight movements to better understand why particular routes are used, share knowledge on the variety of ways freight can be transported and delivered, and identify opportunities for more sustainable freight transportation.

Implementing the strategy will have its challenges, and we have a responsibility to future generations to help deliver interventions which align with our fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4), to help improve the transportation of freight into, out of, and around East Sussex for all.

Councillor Dowling - Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Rupert Clubb - Director of Communities, Economy and Transport



2 Executive Summary

The ambition for freight in East Sussex is to support the efficient movement of goods as it is critical to both the productivity of our businesses and people's everyday lives through the movement of goods to shops and between business to business, to our homes and local collection points, and in supporting the growing expectation of on-demand deliveries. This aligns with the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and will also align with the other modal strategies being developed or updated.

Significant stakeholder engagement, consultations and evidence gathering has been undertaken which has constructively shaped the East Sussex Freight Strategy, which has been updated to reflect some of the key comments made in response to the public consultation. Four priority areas for investment have been identified as part of this process.

The strategy has been developed to be able to demonstrate our priorities for freight and how we can achieve them, and how progress can be made on these in the short term, and as part of the forthcoming changes to local government reorganisation and thereafter.

Consideration has been given within the strategy to introducing a freight routing network so that Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) be redirected away from villages. However, on balance, this would place additional pressures on the limited A roads in the county, impacting on overall journey times for all road users, increasing journey times for HGV drivers and costs for operators (which in turn may be passed onto customers) due to vehicles having to take a longer distance and timed route. Therefore, the existing freight routing network policy for HGVs to use A and B roads wherever possible remains. However, the draft Freight Strategy includes several policies related to improving relationships with district and borough councils, the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) and communities to gather evidence and a greater understanding of freight-related issues, in particularly affected villages, and identifying whether any alternative measures could be introduced which could potentially reduce or mitigate the negative experiences of HGVs through villages.

The strategy will be a live document, and therefore adaptable to reflect the impending local government changes.

3 Introduction

Our ambition for freight in East Sussex is to support the efficient movement of goods. Freight is critical to people's everyday lives through the movement of goods to shops and businesses, our homes and local collection points, and in supporting the growing expectation of on-demand deliveries.

The East Sussex Freight Strategy 2025 – 2050 builds on the vision outlined in the fourth East Sussex Local Transport Plan (LTP4), which embraces a 'planning for people and places' approach. For freight, this means:

- Improving the operational efficiency and capacity of the freight and logistics sector;
- Reducing the wider environmental impacts of the freight sector, including impacts on people and communities, noise levels, and, informal lorry parking occurring within industrial estates and/or residential areas;
- Reducing safety risks to other road users produced by freight transport, by reducing the likelihood of conflict between strategic freight movements and local, active travel movements;
- Integrating logistics into the development of local plan process by utilising reliable data from the freight sector;
- Growing the size of, and employment within, the freight and logistics sector;
- Improving connectivity to/from the south east's international gateways, including Newhaven Port; and
- Reducing the environmental impact of the freight sector by achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest, as well as reducing air pollution associated with freight transport.

This strategy and action plan specifically focuses on:

- The management of the distribution of goods and services across the county and beyond, and
- The differing roles that East Sussex County Council and key partners have in either influencing or delivering improvements or supporting innovation.

Key partners include freight industry suppliers and customers, private sector freight and logistics operators, local businesses and end-users, National Highways (NH), Network Rail (NR), (and the emerging Great British Railways - GBR), Transport for the South East (TfSE), and other national, local, public and private sector entities.

The strategy recognises the emerging changes in local government, with the establishment of the MCCA for Sussex and Brighton, with elections for a Mayor in May 2026. This is alongside the creation of new unitary authorities across the West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex geography. In East Sussex, this would mean moving away from the current two-tier model of county council (East Sussex County Council) and borough or district councils (Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Rother and Wealden) to a single-tier authority, with the district and boroughs becoming the responsibility of the unitary authority moving forward. The changes to, and reorganisation of, local government, are likely to take place up to 2028.

Purpose of this strategy

The East Sussex Freight Strategy sets out our vision for the delivery of improvements to the movement of freight in East Sussex, and focuses on four priority investment areas:

- Priority Investment Area 1- Strategic freight movements
- Priority Investment Area 2 – Decarbonisation
- Priority Investment Area 3 – Last mile logistics
- Priority Investment Area 4 – Planning & policy

East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4

Local Transport Plans (LTPs) are a requirement of the Transport Act 2000. As part of the fourth East Sussex LTP (LTP4), this (supporting) Freight Strategy for the county has been developed.

As set out in LTP4, the vision for transport in East Sussex is:

“An inclusive transport system that connects people and places, is decarbonised, safer, resilient, and supports our natural environment, communities, and businesses to be healthy, thrive and prosper.”

[Six objectives](#) have been identified in LTP4, each with their own outcomes. These also underpin the Freight Strategy, and are:

- Objective 1: Deliver safer and accessible journeys
- Objective 2: Support healthier lifestyles and communities
- Objective 3: Decarbonise transport and travel
- Objective 4: Conserve and enhance our local environment
- Objective 5: Support sustainable economic growth
- Objective 6: Strengthen the resilience of our transport networks

LTP4 identifies the ambitions for East Sussex and recommends the key policies to achieve these. Each policy is underpinned by one of the above objectives and these are themed in the [LTP4 Investment Plan](#).

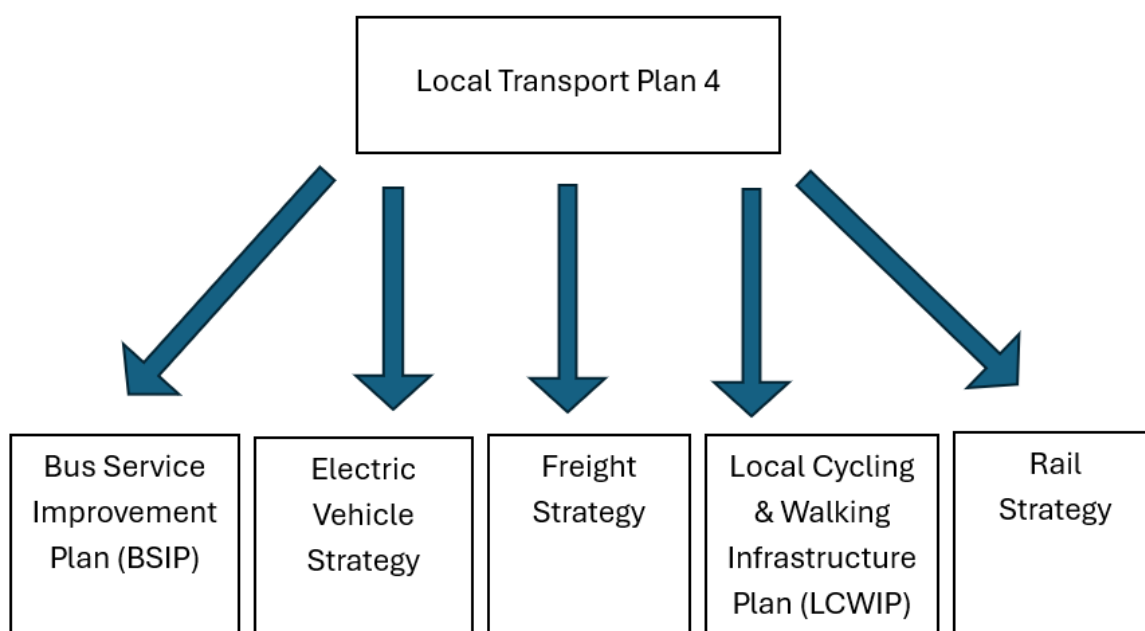
The '[Keeping East Sussex connected](#)' chapter of LTP4 outlines policy ambitions applicable to freight, alongside available evidence. This ambitions include supporting the movement of people and goods, ensuring they get where they need to go, quickly and reliably. The policies included in this section which support objectives 3, 5 and 6, are:

- [Policy D1 – Strategic Connectivity](#)
- [Policy D2 – Freight and International Gateways](#)
- [Policy D3 – The needs of businesses and visitor economy](#)
- [Policy D4 – Supporting sustainable development](#)
- [Policy D5 – Parking](#)
- [Policy D6 – Highways maintenance and asset management](#)

Freight Strategy: Relationship with LTP4 and modal strategies

This Freight Strategy is a supporting document to the overarching East Sussex LTP4 county-wide transport strategy, and complements the other modal strategies which sit alongside it.

Figure 1: Relationship of LTP4 with modal strategies:



3.1 The relationship of, and between, modal strategies are set out below:

- [Bus Service Improvement Plan](#) – buses play an important role in allowing people to access jobs, including those in the freight and logistics industry. They allow people to access drop-off and pick-up locations of goods, including via shops/businesses.
- **Electric Vehicle Strategy** (under development)– focuses on rolling out electric vehicle charging in public locations for smaller vehicles (e.g. cars and LGVs).
- [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#) – concerns active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) aspect of journeys, whether that be the sole mode of transport (i.e. walking to the shops) or as part of an integrated multi-modal journey (i.e. between home and the bus stop, or the railway station and town centre shops). There is an opportunity for cargo bikes and the delivery of goods to be made using active travel modes.
- Rail Strategy – concerns the movement of people and goods via the rail network). Interfaces at freight terminals and the transfer of goods between rail and other modes is also considered.

4 The importance of freight in East Sussex

This chapter sets out the evidence base that supports the aims and aspirations of the Freight Strategy, and should be read in conjunction with the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) [Evidence](#) Base. Where appropriate, later chapters may also introduce evidence in relation to specific investment priorities.

Freight in East Sussex

Freight within, to and from East Sussex is the movement of physical goods using transport networks such as roads, railways, inland waterways and the sea, and for short last-mile journeys by bicycle. Goods can be transported by a range of different vehicles including heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), ordinary goods vehicles (OGVs), light goods vehicles (LGVs), freight trains, shipping, air, cargo bikes and by foot.

International freight gateways

The south coast of England is home to major international freight gateways of national significance. East Sussex (specifically) is home to the port of Newhaven, with ferry passenger and road freight carried to/from Dieppe (France), alongside short sea and coastal shipping. To the east of the county in Kent are the international gateways of Dover (which has a ferry to Calais) and Folkestone (home to the Channel Tunnel to Calais). In the west there are the seaports of Portsmouth (for passenger and road freight) and Southampton (for container shipping).

Newhaven Port has a smaller role in the hierarchy of freight gateways along the south coast, but offers a popular and vital alternative. Shipping freight from Newhaven is moved by both the strategic rail network and the strategic road network. Via the A259 (east-west) and the A26 (to the north). Road freight from Dover and the Channel Tunnel that is destined for elsewhere in the country moves predominantly through Kent via the M20, M26 and M25, bypassing East Sussex. The county's location places us within reach of the European continent by road via the Eurotunnel and/or Dover, and major freight shipping via the container terminal at Southampton.

Rye Harbour, in Rother District, is a small-scale commercial wharf facilitating the imports of aggregates and the exports of grain to mainland Europe. Additionally, Rye Harbour is home to a considerable industrial area with storage and heavy industry (e.g. refining oil).

Further cross-boundary movements are central to the movement of freight in East Sussex. Located north-west of East Sussex is London Gatwick Airport, a significant hub with a dedicated cargo centre and various freight handling services. The expansion and growth of London Gatwick Airport (the Northern Runway Project which will double the volume of cargo handled) provides opportunities for economic and employment growth for East Sussex and the region. East Sussex County Council were involved in the public inquiry to seek assurances and secure

remediation that expansion of the airport be balanced against the impacts that such growth will have on the environment and local communities (e.g. noise, air quality) in the county.

Changing freight vehicle fleet on the East Sussex road network

Similar to other parts of the country, there has been an increase in the number of light and HGV's on some roads on the network. The reasons for these include:

- Many rural farms/premises now being used for commercial and leisure purposes as part of the diversification of the local economy, which results in increased HGV movements at these sites,
- The use of in-vehicle Satellite Navigation (satnav) systems or mobile phone mapping often misdirecting HGV drivers down unsuitable routes,
- Centralised deliveries by many businesses, resulting in one large HGV making many deliveries across a wide area instead of smaller commercial vehicles delivering from local depots, and
- A significant movement to e-commerce, increasing the level of online orders and parcel deliveries.

East Sussex highway network constraints on freight movements

The strategic and major road network around East Sussex falls short of the standard needed to fulfil the role of carrying long distance and strategic traffic. Therefore, the major roads in East Sussex carry both strategic (longer distance) and local traffic. This combination can cause considerable delays in and around urban areas where speeds and/or volumes of traffic are constrained. The A21 and A27, which form part of the strategic road network managed by National Highways, and the A22, A259 and A26 sections of the Major Road Network (the most economically important A class roads managed by the county council as the local highway authority), all pass through several villages or large towns (e.g. the A259 through Bexhill and A259 through Newhaven). This causes severance, noise, vibration, and air quality issues for local residents, as well as to visitors travelling to/from the south coast and across the wider county.

In consideration of the constraints of the existing road network in the county, our policy for the control and routing of freight vehicles (East Sussex County Council - Control of HGV's policy [PS4/5](#)) highlights the need for the use of both A & B roads in the county being available to carry heavy lorries, with some exceptions based on environmental grounds. Therefore, this approach allows freight movements to disperse over the available road network rather than to concentrate them on selected roads.

Whilst environmental and weight restrictions are and can be put in place on some roads across the network, freight vehicles will be able to use these roads for 'access' purposes. For example, deliveries to/from businesses or to residential properties.

Road freight links between East Sussex and the rest of the country can be impacted by disruption caused by congestion on strategic road corridors, notably the M25. Such disruption can increase journey times of freight vehicles (often HGVs). There is also a lack of resilience for regional freight routes when disruption does occur. In particular, there is a lack of alternative or diversionary road routes for HGVs and rail infrastructure constraints for rail freight services. This is alongside limited freight services and lorry parking in the county.

Devolution

The establishment of the MCCA for Sussex and Brighton and reorganisation of local government across West Sussex, Brighton and Hove and East Sussex resulting in the creation of unitary authorities across the geography will result in changes in strategic planning with Spatial Development Strategies (SDS) being prepared by Strategic Planning Authorities (SPA). SDS's will provide a framework for how land will be used for housing, employment, infrastructure, and other purposes, ensuring that development occurs in a way that supports economic, social, and environmental goals. Development of the SDS will include the MCCA for Sussex and Brighton working with the County Council, and, following local government re-organisation, the unitary authorities across Sussex and Brighton. The reorganisation of local government will enhance opportunities to work collaboratively over a wider geographical area and to integrate the needs of freight and logistics within the policies and delivery of an SDS. The MCCA for Sussex and Brighton will be responsible for Local Transport Plans.

Freight logistics in town centres

East Sussex County Council is currently undertaking several projects to re-design town centres that prioritise people using active travel and public transport, for example in Eastbourne and Hastings. These provide opportunities to integrate improved last mile logistics, such as through the development of micro-consolidation centres which support the uptake of smaller zero-emission vehicles such as e-cargo bicycles.

Further evidence that supports this document can be found in the East Sussex LTP4, Section 8 - [‘Keeping East Sussex connected’](#).

Other policies and strategies

There are a number of other strategies and policies that will support the successful delivery of the freight strategy, and vice versa. Some of the strategies and policies are identified within this sub-section, grouped by geographical coverage, this list is not exhaustive.

Local

Strategy	Importance
Local Plans (district and borough Local Plans are under development, South Downs National Park (2019)	<p>Local planning authorities (district and borough councils and the South Downs National Park Authority have recently or are reviewing their local plans. These involve planning for and identifying sites for housing and employment.</p> <p>The Freight Strategy will consider employment sites development by connecting business to business and business to customer. It will also support the growth of business across all sectors in the UK, through effective spatial planning.</p>
East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 (2024-2050)	<p>The creation of “an inclusive transport system that connects people and places, is decarbonised, safer, resilient, and supports our natural environment, communities, and businesses to be healthy, thrive and prosper.”</p> <p>This freight strategy provides an opportunity to improve the movement of freight around the county supporting people (deliveries and access to a workforce) and businesses (business to business and business to customer), alongside the objectives and outcomes of LTP4.</p>
East Sussex Prosperity (2024)	<p>The strategy seeks to secure inclusive and sustainable economic growth, setting out how over the next generation, East Sussex can secure better opportunities and living standards for people who live in the county, and how businesses can develop new routes to value creation.</p> <p>The freight strategy will be vital in connecting business to business and business to customers to support a thriving economy and meeting the needs of our residents and visitors..</p>

Regional

Strategy	Importance
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Transport for the South East's Transport Strategy (2025)	<p>It sets out the vision for region and the strategic economic, social, and environmental goals and priorities that underpin it. These include net-zero, improved productivity, health and wellbeing, quality of life, accessibility, and protection of the south-east unique natural and historic environment.</p> <p>The East Sussex Freight Strategy supports the wider ambition for freight across the south east region, given Newhaven Port in the county and the unique road network challenges faced.</p>
Transport for the South East's Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) (2023)	<p>The Strategic Investment Plan, adopted in March 2023, provides a framework for investment in strategic transport infrastructure, services, and regulatory interventions for the next thirty years. This document is in the process of being reviewed.</p> <p>The freight strategy supports the identified freight improvements across the county supporting business to business and business to customer movements</p>
Transport for the South East's Intermodal Freight Study	<p>The study sought to identify the potential for intermodal freight and identify potential rail freight interchange locations in the south east.</p> <p>The Freight Strategy considers rail freight and supporting existing opportunities in the county.</p>

National

Strategy	Importance
Industrial Strategy (2025)	A strategy to support eight sectors of the UK industry, that will support the growth of existing companies and for new ones to successful emerge in the UK. Despite not naming it as one of the eight sectors if the UK industry, the strategy acknowledges the freight and logistics sector's vital contribution to the economy and includes

	<p>specific links and supporting strategies for its development.</p> <p>The Freight Strategy will support the industrial strategy by connecting people (business to customers and access to a workforce) and business (business to business) together, thereby, enabling the ambitions of the industrial strategy to be realised through connected businesses and freight and logistics networks.</p>
Carbon Budget and Growth Delivery Plan (2025)	<p>A target pathway to reducing carbon emissions and reach net zero by 2050 and looking at how we can met our carbon budgets to met the net zero ambition.</p> <p>Transport has an important role to play, and the strategy includes a priority area on decarbonisation across both business to business and business to customer operations.</p>
Decarbonising Transport: A Green Britain (2021)	<p>Sets out path to achieving a net zero transportation system in the UK.</p> <p>The decarbonisation of freight is an investment priority area for the East Sussex Freight Strategy, thereby assisting the journey towards achieving net-zero across all freight operations.</p>
Inclusive Transport Strategy (2018)	<p>This Strategy sets out the Government's plans to make our transport system more inclusive, and to make travel easier for disabled people.</p> <p>The freight strategy acknowledges the role that home (business to customer) deliveries have in helping people who are less able to leave their homes have access to shopping and retail offers. It also explores opportunities to reduce the number of vehicles on the highway, helping promote safer walking, wheeling and cycling.</p>
Clean Growth Strategy (2017)	<p>The Clean Growth Strategy aims to balance the UK's economic growth with reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Accelerating the shift to low carbon transport is identified as one of the key policy priority areas, with fixed targets and</p>

	<p>funding set out to carry out decarbonisation across a range of transport modes.</p> <p>The freight strategy sets decarbonisation opportunities and aspirations for the freight industry. Thereby supporting the clean growth strategy.</p>
Climate Change Act (2008)	<p>Sets targets for UK greenhouse gas emission reductions of at least 100% by 2050, against a 1990 baseline (this was previously 80% but was updated to a net zero target in June 2019). The Act also provides a system of carbon budgeting and the development of a National Adaptation Programme.</p> <p>Supporting the Climate Change Act is demonstrated by the investment priority on decarbonisation within this freight strategy.</p>

5 Roles and responsibilities

No single organisation will be solely responsible for delivering the East Sussex Freight Strategy. Across the county, multiple organisations have different responsibilities for the provision of transport infrastructure and services and spatial planning and economic development, all of which shape the county's communities, and influence how goods are moved to, from, within, and through the county. Successful implementation of the Freight Strategy will depend on collaboration among key stakeholders, who must work transparently, cooperatively, and proactively to evaluate and execute identified options.

Key organisations

East Sussex County Council

Where East Sussex County Council does not take a lead role, we will play an advocacy role on all schemes, supporting pre-feasibility work, identifying funding and likely appropriate delivery partners and other key stakeholders. We will work with partners for onward business case and scheme development, and support applications and bids to secure funding. With the creation of the MCCA for Sussex and Brighton and the proposed local government reorganisation across the Sussex and Brighton to create new unitary authorities across the geography, the roles in relation to freight currently undertaken by the County Council will move across to these new organisations.

The County Council are also members of the Wider South East Freight Forum. This forum was developed by Transport for the South East (TfSE), England's Economic Heartland (EEH) and Transport East (TE) and brings together freight and logistics industry representatives such as Logistics UK, the Road Haulage Association, local authorities, business representatives, and ports and airports, with recognition that the movement of goods does not stop at borders. The County Council was invited to present at the June 2025 meeting to share their learning on the development of the East Sussex Freight strategy.

With proposed local government reorganisation across Sussex and Brighton, the local planning functions will revert to the newly created unitary authorities (see paragraph 5.7 below).

Any updates or changes that arise in relation to the MCCA or local government reorganisation that take place after the Freight Strategy is adopted will be updated as appropriate.

Local planning authorities

At present, the district and borough councils of Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Rother, Wealden, and the South Downs National Park Authority, as local planning authorities (LPAs), have a role to play in delivering the Freight Strategy. Their role is around securing and safeguarding sites for freight related activity including, but not limited to, rest stops and lorry parking (including vehicle charging), consolidation

centres, depots, and intermodal goods terminals. They will also help identify any required infrastructure associated with these sites. As set out in paragraph 5.7 below, with proposed local government reorganisation across Sussex and Brighton, the local planning functions will revert to the newly created unitary authorities.

Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) for Sussex and Brighton and new unitary authorities - emerging

The establishment of the MCCA for Sussex and Brighton with an elected Mayor from May 2026, and local government reorganisation across West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex will change the powers and funding for strategic planning, transport and economic growth from central government. Focusing this strategy on the types of freight related measures that the County Council, and in the near future the Mayor and new unitary authorities (alongside partners), can develop and deliver, will ensure that we are in a stronger position to either respond to any changes to local powers. It will also enable us to confidently lobby or apply for future funding from the MCCA and government.

Central Government

Central government will play a significant role in delivering many of the packages of interventions and investment priorities in this plan. This includes the Department for Transport (DfT), but also other government departments and their agencies (e.g. HM Treasury, National Highways, Network Rail and the emerging Great British Railways, and Active Travel England). Central Government's role will include:

- Setting national policy for wide-ranging topics including climate change and new technology regulation,
- Setting investment and business case development frameworks to guide the planning and delivery of interventions (e.g. Green Book appraisal),
- Guiding the development and delivery of nationally significant infrastructure and networks (e.g. through setting National Policy Statements),
- Regulating the transport system (including economic and safety regulation), and
- In some cases, funding interventions.

The DfT, in their 2022 [‘Future of Freight: A Long Term Plan’](#), highlight that the most pressing national priorities - from building back after the pandemic and levelling up, to reducing our greenhouse emissions - all rely on the freight sector. Freight contributes £127 billion to the UK economy each year and supports £400 billion in manufacturing sales (National Infrastructure Commission, Better Delivery the Challenge for Freight, P5 and P10). With growth in the number of freight and logistics jobs and the significance of freight in its impact on the UK's overall carbon emissions, it is imperative that new technology is adopted to help reduce carbon emissions.

Network Rail, Great British Railways and freight operators

The British rail industry is currently undergoing one of the most significant periods of structural reform of the last three decades. The Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport will set the rail strategy, and it will be delivered through Great British Railways (GBR).

It is planned that GBR will lead the future development of the rail network in Great Britain and specify future infrastructure and service needs. It will lead delivery of the strategic rail schemes identified to deliver service enhancements which will improve connectivity within, to and from East Sussex and to other regions. However, this is all still subject to the publication of the consultation response and passing of the Parliamentary Bill for Rail Reform.

Freight operating companies operate the freight train services on the rail network. Government is backing the shift of freight from road to rail – with a 75% growth target carried by rail by 2050 (DfT, [Rail Freight Growth Target Policy Paper](#)). Each freight train removes 76 lorries from our roads, which could result in around 1 billion fewer HGV miles every year.

National Highways

National Highways (NH) lead the development and delivery of highway interventions on the strategic road network (SRN), which in East Sussex includes:

- A21 north of Hastings to the border with Kent (A21 in Hastings Borough is the responsibility of East Sussex County Council).
- A26 between Lewes and Newhaven.
- A27 between Falmer and Pevensey (Pevensey Bay roundabout).
- A259 from Pevensey (Pevensey Bay roundabout) to the east of Rye (except through Hastings Borough which is the responsibility of East Sussex County Council).

NH's will support interventions where the SRN interfaces with local transport authority highways. They will utilise their internal project control framework to develop the business cases for highways interventions.

For National Highways, the Road Investment Strategy (RIS) forms the basis of their funding and work programmes in five-year periods, the next starting in April 2026 and running to March 2031. Most monies are pre-committed, and for a project to secure funding, inclusion within a RIS is strongly desirable.

Transport for the South East

Transport for the South East (TfSE) are the sub-national transport body for the South East of England. Their purpose is to determine what investment is needed to transform our region's transport system and drive economic growth. In respect of freight, TfSE has published a [Freight Logistics and International Gateways Strategy](#) (2022) which identifies where and what level of investment is needed to better connect the region's cities, towns, villages, ports, airports and international rail links,

supporting sustainable economic growth in the South East and across the UK, which is supported by their recently adopted 2025 Transport Strategy. It also provides an action plan to deliver the strategy.

The [TfSE Intermodal Freight Strategy](#) aims to improve the sustainability, efficiency, and capacity of freight movement in the region, with a key focus on increasing rail-based intermodal transport. Recent studies highlight the region's lack of suitable sites for intermodal rail interchanges, which could constrain efforts to meet rail freight growth targets. The strategy's overall goals include decarbonisation, reducing road congestion, and improving connectivity at/to international gateways, notably ports and airports.

TfSE has also produced a [lorry parking study](#) (2024) which identifies the need for more lorry parking across their geography. TfSE are also developing an Intermodal Rail Freight Strategy, the aim of which is to support the Government's 75% rail freight growth target by identifying potential opportunities for increasing the volume of intermodal freight that can be transferred from road to rail networks across the TfSE area.

Other local authorities

It is important to work closely with those authorities who adjoin East Sussex, since freight movements are not contained within the county. Strategic consideration of freight for longer journeys most likely to be made by road and rail are therefore of importance. Whilst much of this will be covered by TfSE, separate discussions with the counties, unitary authorities and potentially the district and borough councils adjoining East Sussex will need to be undertaken. The other authorities that the County Council liaise with will change over time with the wider local government reorganisation proposals in these adjacent areas.

Business partnerships

Many businesses are responsible for the transportation of goods into, out of, around and through the county for deliveries to both the business(es) itself, and the customers they serve. It is important for businesses to consider how they contribute to the volume of freight movements on the transport network, and how this can be minimised, or made more sustainable – including by reducing the number and frequency of movements, and the mode of transportation utilised, i.e. how many emissions are generated.

Industry bodies

Logistics UK represent their Members from the UK's road, rail, air and sea industry, as well as buyers and manufacturers of the freight service. They lobby Government, representing the business needs of logistics, with a unified voice.

The Road Haulage Association (RHA) represent road haulage businesses to manage their operations and protect their commercial interests. They work with Government and local authorities on national and local policy.

The United Road Transport Union (URTU) represents drivers and other distribution and logistics workers in the UK. They represent the workforce by campaigning, negotiating and lobbying for fair pay and improved working conditions including safety, and the conditions to support equal opportunities in the industry.

Freight operators

These companies transport goods from one location to another by road, rail, sea or air. They can be represented and advised by Logistics UK or (in respect of roads specifically) the Road Haulage Association. The operators are responsible for the transport and logistic activities relating to the movement of goods, as well as fleet management and route optimisation. Examples of freight hauliers include supermarkets, removal firms, logistics firms (e.g. Stobart) and smaller independent hauliers. There are also goods delivery firms such as Amazon, DPD, DHL etc. who transport goods over long distances to regional centres for delivery in the county.

Freight decarbonisation

Decarbonisation of the region's freight networks will require the involvement of a range of specialist organisations. Examples include

- National Energy System Operator (NESO) and UK Power Networks as the areas Distribution Network Operator (DNO),
- the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ),
- the National Highways Climate and Carbon Team,
- Zero Emission Heavy Goods Vehicles and Infrastructure (ZEHID), and
- the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV).

Governance

East Sussex County Council will establish appropriate governance to oversee the development, delivery and benefits realisation arising from schemes and policies included in this strategy.

This approach will utilise the stakeholder groups established as part of the development of LTP4 and this Freight Strategy, which will support the monitoring of the strategy.

The County Council is a member of TfSE's Partnership Board, and has the ability to guide the development and approval of regional strategies and policies. East Sussex County Council will also continue to engage with central government departments associated with the delivery of transport policy, such as the Department for Transport (DfT), and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Other national agencies such as NH and NR (alongside the emerging GBR) have responsibilities for freight and logistics within East Sussex. As such, the County Council will advocate for policy and investment that delivers on the objectives of this strategy.

LTP4 sets a range of [objectives](#) guiding the management and continued development to local transport across the county. This freight strategy will constitute a vital element of LTP4. The County Council will work collaboratively with its Local Planning Authorities to integrate the needs of freight and logistics within the delivery of their statutory Local Plans and ensure they prioritise the infrastructure required.

The nature of freight and logistics means industry and business, alongside members of the public, influence freight demand and movements. The County Council and partners will engage effectively with these stakeholders to facilitate behavioural change and mitigate impacts. It is important that the vision of the County Council and the stakeholders align to strengthen the future of the freight routeing network in, out of, through and around East Sussex.

This strategy, much like LTP4, will not be 'owned' or be the sole responsibility of the County Council, but by all those who are affected by freight operations in the county. Therefore, it is important to understand what our stakeholders can bring to the table which supports their and our aspirations for freight. We recognise that this will not, and cannot be, a one size fits all approach, and must therefore be adaptable to different scenarios and localities.

6 Investment priority areas

This section firstly sets out the policy context, evidence and opportunities under each of the identified investment priority areas that partners will seek funding for to enable these to be studied, developed and delivered over the life of the strategy.

Secondly, a list of priorities is presented under each of the priority area showing those that the County Council and their partners seek to study, develop and/or deliver in the short-term (over the next five years to 2030).

The areas and details of investment priorities outlined in this plan are not exhaustive. As the East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and this freight strategy are live documents, other investment priorities will and are likely to emerge. These will be supported through the development and delivery process as appropriate.

Investment priorities detailed within this section are intentionally presented at a high-level. It is important to note that as these investment priority areas progress through the study, develop and deliver stages the level of available detail will increase, priorities will become more defined through the consideration of options, and a preferred and deliverable option confirmed.

Where appropriate, priorities signpost to modal strategies and other locations where further information on scheme types are outlined. These signposted locations include, and are not limited to, the following:

- [Transport for the South East](#) Strategic Investment Plan, Transport Strategy, and modal strategies,
- [East Sussex Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#),
- Rail Strategy,
- Electric Vehicle Strategy (under development),
- Current local planning authority Local Plans and Infrastructure Delivery Plans ([Eastbourne](#), [Hastings](#), [Lewes](#), [Rother](#), [South Downs National Park](#) and [Wealden](#)), and
- [Newhaven Port Masterplan](#).

In their co-ordination role for the delivery of LTP4, the County Council will maintain a schedule of identified investment priorities, as well as a schedule of the options that are being progressed through the study, develop and deliver stages. These schedules will be updated in collaboration with key development and delivery partners for both the East Sussex LTP4 and freight strategy, as well as the other modal strategies. These will be summarised within future LTP4 monitoring reports as appropriate.

Investment Priority Area 1: Strategic freight movements

Freight and logistics activities rely on efficient and integrated road, railway, and short-sea and coastal networks to support the reliable movement of goods between

international gateways, manufacturing centres, distribution centres and end-users (businesses, shops or individual residential properties).

Policy Context

The [National Highways Long-term Strategic Plan to 2050](#) (published 2023), recognises how England's motorways and major A-roads support freight and logistics activities. Vehicle charging and fuelling infrastructure, HGV parking and overnight rest areas are required to support these activities. These need to be accessible from motorways and A roads.

The Department for Transport (DfT) supports modal shift to rail and inland water by its [Mode Shift Revenue Support scheme](#), which assists operators with the additional operating costs associated with using these modes instead of road.

The DfT [Future for Freight: a Long Term Plan](#) (2022) sets out government and the freight sector's joint response to the challenges of planning and land allocation, securing the future of the sector, and harnessing technology and data to meet future rising demand.

To achieve this, it will look at a National Freight Network, future energy and fuel needs for the sector, alongside exploring planning reform opportunities, increasing awareness of career opportunities in the freight sector, and, with a £7m Freight Innovation Fund, maximise the use of technology and data across freight and logistics. All this will be overseen by the Freight Council which will hold government and the freight sector to account. The DfT is in the process of developing a new freight plan, and once this is available further detail can be provided in future iterations of this strategy.

The [Government's National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) – paragraph 114 (published 2024) - states that Planning policies and decisions should recognise the importance of providing adequate overnight lorry parking facilities, taking into account any local shortages, to reduce the risk of parking in locations that lack proper facilities or could cause a nuisance. Proposals for new or expanded distribution centres should make provision for sufficient lorry parking to cater for their anticipated use.

Regionally, the [Transport for the South East's Freight, Logistics and Gateways Strategy](#) (FLAGS) (2022) presents the importance of the South East's infrastructure in national supply chains. This infrastructure includes busy motorways, major A-road, and rail networks, alongside a variety of rail and port-based international gateways.

TfSE has also recently published a [Lorry Parking Study](#), and a [Warehousing Provision Study](#). TfSE's FLAGS identifies a number of issues in relation to the freight infrastructure in the TfSE area and presents a variety of strategic actions to address them by TfSE and their constituent local authorities and national delivery partners'. TfSE have also recently published their [Intermodal Freight Strategy](#).

Rail freight currently accounts for around [10% of surface freight moved across Britain](#), providing extensive environmental, economic, and social benefits in comparison to using the road network. In 2023, the DfT announced a [target to grow rail freight \(tonne kilometres\) by 75% by 2050](#).

Transport for the South East are also studying opportunities for intermodal freight. In East Sussex existing rail freight movements are limited due in part to relatively few sites where freight rail can access (e.g. Mountfield Freight Depot for gypsum, Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility for the removal of bottom ash and Newhaven Port), largely due to gauging and pathing challenges. Additionally, there are limited fewer rail paths available to freight due to passenger train demand on the rail network in the south east including in East Sussex.

Evidence

While data is not available at an East Sussex level, due to the limited availability of rail freight in the county it is likely that the road freight share is similar to if not higher than the UK road freight share. Consequently, future freight and logistics activities are likely to continue to rely heavily on the strategic road network, including motorways and major A-roads.

A range of major A-roads cross East Sussex, including:

- The **A259** (Havant/Emsworth (Hampshire) to Folkestone (Kent) via Chichester, Bognor Regis, Worthing, Brighton, Eastbourne, Hastings & Rye). Connections are available to the A27/M27 in the west and M20 in the east, along with north-south corridors of the A21 (Hastings), A26 (Newhaven) and A23 (Brighton) (in addition to other key north-south corridors in West Sussex and Hampshire).
- The A27 (Polegate/Pevensey (East Sussex) to Whiteparish (Wiltshire) via Lewes, Brighton, Worthing, Chichester, Portsmouth and Southampton). Connections are available to the A259 at Pevensey in the east and the M27 in the west at Havant/Emsworth along with north-south corridors of the A26 (Beddingham/Lewes) and A23 (Brighton) (in addition to other key north-south corridors in West Sussex and Hampshire),
- The A21 connecting Hastings to Lewisham (London) via the M25 junction 5 (M25/M26 interchange near Sevenoaks).
- The A22 connecting Eastbourne/Polegate to Purley (London) via Hailsham & Uckfield and the M25 at junction 6 (Godstone).
- The A26 connecting Newhaven to the A27 at Beddingham near Lewes, and continuing north-east towards Maidstone in Kent via Uckfield and Tunbridge Wells

Within East Sussex, these strategic and major A-roads are mostly single carriageway exhibiting low levels of resilience towards congestion, with consequential impacts on strategic freight movement. The lack of dedicated HGV

parking along these roads, such as the A27/A259, mean lorries are often parked in lay-bys or industrial estates with limited or no welfare facilities, or within residential urban areas where they may cause disruption or safety issues to the public.

Several key freight routes within, into and out of East Sussex run through town and local centres and residential streets, such as the A26 through Crowborough, and the A259 through Bexhill and Hastings. These routes get congested at peak times as strategic and local highway movements conflict, and present severance and road safety risks within these communities.

Newhaven Port rail terminal was reactivated in 2020 and has seen growth in supporting the movement of aggregates and other bulk materials, with freight movements extending nationally and replacing a large number of HGV trips which may have happened otherwise. The Port handled 1,011 thousand tonnes of freight in 2024, up from 689 tonnes in 2018 ([DfT Port annual freight statistics](#)- table port0101).

[Transport for the South East's Lorry Parking Study](#) concludes that there is currently a shortage of an estimated 1,528 HGV parking spaces on the SRN and non-SRN across the TfSE area. This shortage in provision is forecast to increase to 4,019 HGV parking spaces by 2040.

Opportunities

LTP4 identifies targeted improvements to road, rail, and port infrastructure to optimise the efficient flow of strategic freight movements.

These improvements will help maximise the economic benefits of strategic freight movement, boosting local economies through job creation, business attraction, and supporting supply chain efficiency, which reduces freight costs for businesses. whilst minimising congestion and emissions and also improve road safety and driver welfare. Local planning authorities and other partners can lead in delivering appropriate infrastructure, such as vehicle charging and fuelling infrastructure, alongside HGV rest stops and parking areas on the strategic road network.

The County Council can work alongside local planning authorities to identify and protect rail heads and other infrastructure required to support mode shift from road to rail or water.

The freight and logistics industry can work with partners to support the delivery of infrastructure such as consolidation hubs or rail freight interchanges to optimise the efficiency of movements.

East Sussex Routing Network

East Sussex County Council recognises the constraints of the strategic and major road network in the county, meaning that they have to carry both strategic (longer distance) and local traffic.

We also recognise that some of the routes, specifically the A21 and A27 on the SRN (managed by NH's) and sections of the A22, A259 and A26 as part of the MRN (which are the most economically important A class roads managed by the County

Council as the local highway authority) pass through several villages and/or larger towns (for example, the A259 through Newhaven and the A259 through Bexhill and Hastings). This can have impacts on people living within these areas in terms of severance, increased noise, and air quality issues.

East Sussex County Council has introduced restrictions on a small number of especially unsuitable roads for the movement of freight within the County, in accordance with the East Sussex County Council policy - Control of Heavy Goods Vehicles' policy PS4/5. These restrictions prohibit HGV's using certain routes and have been applied using a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

In considering a potential prohibition for HGV movements, the following issues are considered:

- Is there a more suitable alternative route available?
- Can this route be adequately signed?
- What level of enforcement is available by the Police who have to follow the offending vehicle through the entry and terminal point of the restriction in order to enforce?
- What is the real extent of the problem – where is the evidence to support the claims of increased HGV use?
- How many of these HGVs would be impacted by a prohibition (origin/destination or number plate surveys would be required for each road under consideration)?
- What are the economic impacts – how would any prohibition affect local businesses which form part of our rural economy?
- What is the environmental impact of additional signage, the cost of implementing the necessary TRO and the whole life cost of maintaining the signs both at the restriction as well as the alternative route signing?

However, it is important to note that HGVs are still able to use these roads where HGV restrictions are in place for legitimate access reasons, for example deliveries to residential properties as well as access to local businesses.

As part of the development of the freight strategy we have reviewed whether we are able to amend our policy 'Control of HGV's policy PS4/5' which highlights the need for the use of both A & B roads in the county being available to carry heavy lorries.

Whilst consideration has been given to introduce a freight routing network so that HGVs be redirected away from B class roads through villages, this would place additional pressures on the limited A roads in the county, impacting on overall journey times for all road users, increasing journey times for HGV drivers and costs for operators (which in turn may be passed onto customers) due to vehicles having to take a longer distance and timed route.

Given these impacts, and the current limited and inconsistent quality of the A road network in the county, on balance that the County Council propose that the

approach to the routing of freight vehicles in the county remains unchanged. Therefore heavy goods vehicles will continue to be allowed to use and disperse over the available A and B class road network, rather than to concentrate HGVs on selected roads. The County Council appreciate the impacts that this may have on some communities in the county. Accordingly, we recognise that further work needs to be undertaken to get a deeper understanding of the impacts on local communities, as these will vary depending on location and characteristics of the locality.

The strategy therefore highlights opportunities – in the short-term - that could begin to alleviate some of the issues that this policy has on affected communities. By working with local communities and partners, the County Council will explore:

More strategic measures - such as improving the consideration of freight and logistics through the development of spatial development strategies and local plans, and

At a more localised level - opportunities for the development of small freight consolidation centres, combined with, or through, standalone sustainable last mile freight movement(s) (i.e. cargo bikes) within town and village centres.

Further measures to support this are highlighted in investment priority areas 3 & 4.

We propose that as the delivery of this strategy evolves, this policy will be reviewed periodically.

Investment priorities

Ongoing initiatives

The following activities to improve the efficiency of strategic freight movements are being undertaken:

- Inputting into national and regional consultations pertinent to facilitating efficient strategic freight movements, and
- Working with local planning authorities (district, boroughs and South Downs National Park Authority) to ensure the needs of the freight and logistics industry are integrated within their local plans.

New initiatives

A key outcome of investment is to effectively manage the routing of HGV traffic to ensure that such movements remain on the SRN network for as much of its journey as possible, such that they are fast, reliable, safe, and minimise their impact and disruption to our communities and our natural and historic environments. East Sussex has existing policies in place to support management of HGV routing. The current policy is for A and B roads to be used as the preferred freight routing network. The agreed recommendation in the 25 September 2023 Lead Member for Transport and Environment report was for the freight routing network to be reviewed as part of LTP4 development.

This Freight Strategy has been developed subsequent to the adoption of LTP4, and the preferred freight routing network has been considered as part of this process. As highlighted above, it is proposed as part of this consultation on the draft strategy to continue with the policy of allowing freight to use to disperse over the available A and B class road network across the county, unless there are environment or weight restrictions in place, rather than to concentrate HGVs on selected roads. Even with any such environment or weight restrictions in place, freight vehicles will be able to use these roads for access purposes (e.g. to businesses or residential properties for deliveries).

Despite ongoing initiatives, there are several capability and knowledge gaps preventing the identification, business case development and delivery of strategic freight schemes in East Sussex. Gaps include knowledge between freight, the freight sector, local planning authorities, and local transport authorities.

To help address these gaps, the tables below present an action plan that highlights the short-term initiatives that could be progressed to help identify and facilitate the delivery of longer-term schemes which facilitate strategic multi-modal freight movements. These are presented by the level of influence East Sussex County Council has.

(Please note that this section is likely to require further updates following the emergence of the MCCA for Sussex and Brighton and creation of new unitary authorities across the West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex geography through local government reorganisation)

Led by East Sussex County Council

These are schemes where East Sussex County Council has greater influence and can help directly develop and/or deliver the intervention, subject to securing funding.

Name	FS02 - Mapping of strategic freight and logistics infrastructure in East Sussex
Initiative	Identify opportunities for optimising movements, through targeted delivery of infrastructure, such as rail freight interchanges, or highway enhancements, and identification of land for potential use.
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – Short-term (up to 2030) • Develop – Short-term (up to 2030) • Deliver– Short-term (up to 2030)
Key partners	Lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • Transport for the South East • Local Authorities • Freight and logistics industry • Businesses

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freight industry suppliers and customers
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LP15: Logistics

Name	FS03 - Mapping and impact analysis of freight activity hotspots and safety issues.
Initiative	Identify opportunities for improving safety, such as through reconfiguration of highways (which could segregate freight and local traffic), modal shift and retiming to smooth flows.
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study – Short-term (up to 2030) Develop – Short-term (up to 2030) Deliver– Short-term (up to 2030)
Key partners	<p>Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Sussex County Council Transport for the South East Freight and logistics industry Local Authorities <p>Supporting partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses Parish/ town councils Road safety groups Sussex Police Freight industry suppliers and customers
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LP15: Logistics

Name	FS04 -Route signage and wayfinding strategy
Initiative	Review existing movements, signage, identify optimal routing and deliver changes to ensure appropriate freight routes are adhered to by operators
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study – short-term (up to 2030) Develop – To be confirmed Deliver - To be confirmed
Key partners	<p>Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Sussex County Council Transport for the South East Freight and logistics industry Local Authorities <p>Supporting partners</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses • Freight industry suppliers and customers
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP15: Logistics • CP02: Signage and wayfinding

Advocated by East Sussex County Council

These are schemes where East Sussex County Council does not lead on development and/or delivery but is a key partner to successful delivery.

Name	FS01 - Enhanced freight connectivity to Gatwick
Initiative	Work with partners to promote and, as appropriate, implement freight network improvements to/from Gatwick Airport.
Indicative cost	£10m to £100m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – Short-term (up to 2030) • Develop – To be confirmed • Deliver - To be confirmed
Key partners	<p>Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gatwick Airport • Transport for the South East • Network Rail <p>Supporting partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • West Sussex County Council • Freight industry suppliers and customers
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP15: Logistics

Name	FS05 - Work with partners to determine and safeguard potential location of lorry parking facilities (including alternative fuelling)
Initiative	<p>Identify need for lorry parking to understand need to control the flow of goods in and out of nearby centres, ensuring that local businesses receive timely deliveries based on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) surveys identifying where parking is already taking place, 2) surveys capturing driver's needs and welfare facilities, and 3) surveys from Local Authorities and businesses 4) potential sites for lorry parking to be included in Local Plans
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – short -term (up to 2030)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop – To be confirmed • Deliver - To be confirmed
Key partners	Lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Highways • Freight and logistics industry • Local planning authorities • Transport for the South East Supporting partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • Freight industry suppliers and customers • Businesses • Landowners
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP13: Local planning • LP15: Logistics

Name	FS07 - Assess rail routes and infrastructure for freight capacity
Potential investment	Ensure that existing and potential rail routes and supporting infrastructure can enable growing freight operations (bulk and intermodal rail freight)
Indicative cost	£10 to £100m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – short -term (up to 2030) • Develop – To be confirmed • Deliver - To be confirmed
Key partners	Lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network Rail • Rail freight operators Supporting partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • Train operating companies
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP06: Multimodal opportunities (freight)

Supported by East Sussex County Council

These are schemes where East Sussex County Council is not leading or a partner on the development and/or delivery. We will remain supportive of the lead and key partners in the delivery of the intervention. Whilst we may have a limited role in delivery, these interventions are part of the wider picture to improve travelling by for all users.

Name	FS06 - Increase the capability and capacity of rail freight terminal at Newhaven Port
Potential investment	Ensure rail freight is the primary mode of onward travel for freight to/from the port to minimise adverse impacts on local environment

Indicative cost	£10 to £100m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – short -term (up to 2030) • Develop – To be confirmed • Deliver - To be confirmed
Key partners	<p>Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port of Newhaven • Network Rail <p>Supporting partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • Rail Freight Operators • Transport for the South East • Freight and logistics industry
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP06: Multimodal opportunities (freight)

Investment Priority area 2: Decarbonisation

The decarbonisation of the region's freight networks is vital for East Sussex in meeting its carbon emissions commitments. The release and uptake of low and zero-emission Large Goods Vehicle's (LGV's) and HGVs is slow in comparison to smaller vehicles. East Sussex County Council and other partners with the responsibility of managing highway infrastructure or operating fleet vehicles regularly on the network (NH, Newhaven Port, Borough and Districts) have the opportunity to enable the delivery of low and zero-emission vehicle charging and fuelling infrastructure, enabling operators and other partners to decarbonise.

Policy Context

The Government has an obligation to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050 through the Climate Change Act 2008, updated in 2019. The County Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, with a commitment to reach net zero emissions from their own operations as soon as possible, and in any event by 2050. East Sussex borough and district councils have made commitments to become net zero by 2030 (Hastings, Eastbourne, Rother and Lewes) or 2050 (Wealden). Transport remains the largest contributor to carbon emissions, with HGVs comprising a growing proportion of emissions as smaller, lighter on-road vehicles decarbonise at a faster rate.

The Government's [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) (published 2024) states that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and decarbonisation.

The DfT's [Decarbonising Transport Plan](#) (published 2021) sets out the broad strategy for transport nationally. The [Future of Freight Plan](#) (published 2022) sets out a strategy for decarbonising freight which includes an emphasis on the uptake of battery electric vehicles, as well as the use of low carbon fuels and hydrogen. New HGVs under 26 tonnes bought from 2035 must be zero-emission, and new HGVs over 26 tonnes bought from 2040 must be zero-emission.

TfSE has committed to reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, with its [Freight, Logistics and Gateways Strategy](#) (published 2022) considering freight-specific regional opportunities and challenges for decarbonisation. TfSE will be developing the Alternative Fuels for Freight Infrastructure (ALFFI) tool to support with the identification of potential areas to place publicly accessible goods vehicle charging and refuelling hubs, including alternatives like hydrogen and biomethane.

Further to a UK-France summit held 9-10 July 2025, the United Kingdom and France agreed to deepen their collaboration on transport. A [declaration](#) was agreed between the two countries which includes co-operation on transport decarbonisation, including maritime decarbonisation and zero emission vehicles. Shared goals include

reducing maritime emissions to zero by 2050, as well as reducing the impacts of shipping on the wider environment.

Developing a strong framework for maritime decarbonisation on both sides of the Channel will enable the industry to introduce projects, such as green corridors, to demonstrate how new fuels, technologies and approaches will define the industry in the future. Both countries will share best practice on port and maritime decarbonisation policy as it develops, as well as the impacts of shipping on the wider environment.

Evidence

Freight vehicles make up a disproportionately high share of overall transport emissions relative to other vehicles moving on East Sussex's Road networks. In 2022, HGVs and LGVs accounted for [7% and 16% of vehicle miles travelled](#), but [26% and 16% of emissions](#) respectively.

In 2023, only around [0.5% of new UK HGV registrations, or 234 vehicles, were zero-emission](#). Almost all of these were battery electric, given hydrogen fuel cell HGVs remain in their infancy and have currently only seen extremely limited use globally within highly specific operating models. Low carbon fuels, such as biofuels, are only seen as a stopgap for operators to make use of existing vehicle fleets. Although other fuel types will be effective in delivering decarbonisation, there is a developing consensus that the main policy focus will be on the uptake of battery-electric vehicles.

Opportunities

The approach to decarbonising freight movements will look very different depending on the length of the haul (trip), i.e. whether it is a longer haul, strategic goods movement, or if it is a shorter haul, urban last-mile goods movement.

For longer trips, the accelerated uptake of electric, hydrogen and low-carbon fuelled freight vehicles is necessary. However, technological innovation and adoption is slower and is likely to take several years before electric HGVs are the norm. This is unlike cars and LGVs where the technology is maturing faster and there is a clearer trajectory for decarbonisation.

[The Seventh Carbon Budget - Climate Change Committee](#) Section 7.1 - Surface Transport states that the Government should work with major van fleet operators to better understand the barriers to electric van take-up, which is lagging, and quickly implement policies to overcome this. The Green Finance Institute, [Delivering Net Zero: Unlocking Public and Private Capital for Zero Emission Trucks](#), 2023 focuses on unlocking the barriers to financing decarbonisation of the HGV sector.

Shifting to rail freight is an opportunity which may only be applicable for a select proportion of freight flows where rail can also be commercially competitive, and the existing network can facilitate the flow (i.e. available rail gauge and train paths).

Where appropriate, rail can be a more efficient way of moving a large quantity of goods over longer distances, with a [freight train being able to carry up to the same load as 129 HGVs](#), with one tonne of freight by rail producing a quarter of emissions than via road. This can reduce carbon footprint for environmentally conscious consumers and remove HGV movements off our roads potentially creating faster and reliable journeys for road users.

Rail freight is commonly used for the transport of bulk materials or containerised goods – and often for less time sensitive deliveries, although emerging operators have been re-purposing passenger trains for courier-type purposes. Where suitable port infrastructure and waterways exist, large amounts of freight could be transported by short-sea shipping and can be much more carbon efficient than by road. However, financial support is often needed for operators to shift to rail or water in the form of the DfT's Mode Shift Revenue Support scheme.

In urban areas, the [development of consolidation centres](#) and [uptake of e-cargo bikes](#) and similar electric vehicles shifting from fossil fuel powered cars and vans has the potential to be particularly impactful. However, [regional electricity grid capacity](#) remains a considerable constraint for charging infrastructure, particularly when considering other electricity requirements, such as charging for electric vehicles, heating via domestic heat pumps, and servicing intermittent generation.

Investment priorities

Ongoing initiatives

The following activities to accelerate the transition to net-zero freight are:

- East Sussex County Council's engagement with TfSE and their Wider South East Freight Forum,
- Inputting into the TfSE's Inland Waterway and Coastal Shipping Freight studies, and
- Inputting into national and regional consultations pertinent to facilitating the roll-out of zero emission freight vehicles.

New initiatives

Whilst appreciating much of the national policy and technology evolution governing the decarbonisation of freight is outside the direct control of the County Council, there are several scenarios where they can play a pivotal role in the development and delivery.

For decarbonising strategic freight trips, suggestions include the promotion of innovative new ideas through identifying opportunities for pilot projects within the region, such as those that increase the use of rail and waterborne freight. Also, the County Council can support partners in the delivery of freight-specific alternative fuelling and EV charging infrastructure.

For decarbonising local freight trips, the County Council can also support the decarbonisation of last mile journeys. This can be done through the development of

logistics hubs and micro-consolidation centres, utilising low or zero-emission vehicles for last-mile delivery into urban centres, the actions for which are captured under the urban logistics action plan. Such actions will also require the support of local planning authorities in allocating locations for such hubs or consolidation centres in their Local Plans.

The County Council can directly support the decarbonisation of freight through its procurement function, encouraging the uptake of zero-emission freight vehicles used in contracts such as for waste and street-cleansing, servicing and delivery. For example, the East Sussex highways contractor – Balfour Beatty Living Places – has a bank of electric charge points at its main depot at Ringmer, and a fleet of electric vehicles available for its day to day operations.

The County Council can work with borough and district councils in making the case for strategic charging and fuelling infrastructure, alongside working with Transport for the South East, national forums and the private sector, to support the accelerated rollout of zero-emission vehicles and supporting infrastructure. By providing reliable infrastructure, partners can play a pivotal role in influencing freight and logistics businesses to transition their fleets faster.

The tables below present an action plan which highlights the short-term initiatives that could support the development and delivery of freight decarbonisation. These are presented by the level of influence East Sussex County Council has.

(Please note that this section is likely to require further updates following the emergence of the MCCA for Sussex and Brighton and creation of new unitary authorities across the West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex geography through local government reorganisation)

Led by East Sussex County Council

These are schemes where East Sussex County Council has greater influence and can help directly develop and/or deliver the intervention.

Name	FD03 - Zero-emission freight vehicles used for council operations
Initiative	Develop and stipulate a set of zero-emission targets for vehicles within direct control of, or can be influenced by East Sussex County Council, and identify a roadmap for delivery
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – Short-term (up to 2030) • Develop – Short-term (up to 2030) • Deliver - To be confirmed
Key partners	Lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • Local Authorities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balfour Beattie and other companies contracted to deliver council services
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LP15: Logistics CP04: Fuels and air quality

Advocated by East Sussex County Council

These are schemes where East Sussex County Council does not lead on development and/or delivery but is a key partner to successful delivery.

Name	FD02 - Zero-emission freight pilot projects
Initiative	Research and identify opportunities to deliver decarbonisation-specific freight and logistics pilot projects across East Sussex. Examples include Green Freight Corridor, zero emissions last mile zone, and supporting smaller local / industry operations
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study – Short-term Develop – Short-term Deliver– Short-term
Key partners	<p>Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport for the South East Freight and logistics industry <p>Supporting partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Sussex County Council Local Authorities Private sector electric charge point operators Strategic transport hubs – e.g. Gatwick Airport Vehicle providers Local businesses
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LP15: Logistics CP04: Fuels and air quality

Supported by East Sussex County Council

These are schemes where East Sussex County Council is not leading or a partner on the development and/or delivery. We will remain supportive of the lead and key partners in the delivery of the intervention. Whilst we may have a limited role in delivery, these interventions are part of the wider picture to improve travelling for all users.

Name	FD01 - Roll-out of freight electric vehicle charging infrastructure (Commercial van and HGV charging)
Initiative	Undertake a gap analysis of charging and fuelling infrastructure to support the uptake of zero-emission

	freight vehicles. These could co-locate with existing and new consolidation centres. This can include the site, planning and energy requirements.
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – Short-term (up to 2030) • Develop – Short-term (up to 2030) • Deliver - To be confirmed
Key partners	<p>Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local businesses • Private sector EV charging providers • Freight and logistics industry • Transport for the South East <p>Supporting partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local planning authorities • East Sussex County Council
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP15: Logistics • CP05: Electric vehicle charging infrastructure

Investment Priority Area 3: Last mile logistics

Traditionally ‘last-mile’ logistics are characterised by the use of diesel fuelled LGVs and vans which impact on air quality and carbon emissions, alongside road safety and quality of the public realm. Modal shift, typically to smaller decarbonised modes, can be facilitated through the use of consolidation centres and e-cargo bikes or other sustainable last mile option.

Policy Context

Policy points towards both the impact of freight and logistics on urban and rural environments, and potential methods to alleviate its impact. This is presented within [the Department for Transport’s Future of Freight Plan](#) (published 2022) which particularly identifies the direct impacts of larger freight vehicles, ranging from increased carbon emissions and congestion, alongside poorer road safety and air quality.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) - Air quality strategy: framework for local authority delivery (2023) sets out how county councils are expected to contribute to district council air quality plans and strategies. In particular, where local authorities are preparing Air Quality Action Plans, and to deliver for communities and contribute to long-term air quality goals.

The primary solutions to the challenges faced by last-mile logistics largely comes down to increasing its efficiency. Through reducing the number of larger vehicles and shifting to smaller, low and zero-emission vehicles, this will help increase safety and health, as well as positive impacts on climate change and air quality, in both rural and urban environments.

The DfT’s [Decarbonising Transport Plan](#) (published 2021) identifies solutions for decarbonisation resulting from improved last-mile logistics efficiencies. For example, through micro-consolidation centres which support the uptake of smaller zero-emission vehicles, such as e-cargo bicycles, or even no vehicle at all with pedestrian couriers making deliveries on foot.

The [Transport for the South East’s Freight, Logistics and Gateways Strategy](#) (published 2022) identifies regional solutions towards improving the efficiency of last mile logistics, such as better local freight and logistics planning, development of micro-consolidation centres, and uptake of e-cargo bicycles.

Evidence

Last mile logistics activities have seen considerable increases in recent years, resulting largely from changes to retail logistics approaches and “just-in-time” deliveries, to increased immediacy for the goods that residents and businesses order. [New van registrations in 2023 saw a 21% year-on-year change compared to 2022](#), whilst other vehicle types generally saw smaller growth, reflecting the multi-purpose nature of vans, but importantly also growing last mile logistics demands.

Historic towns such as Lewes, Battle and Rye are at particular risk from freight traffic due to their unique built environments, narrow carriageways and footways. Freight vehicles can impact vulnerable historic assets directly through vibration, collisions and worsened air quality. The re-timing of delivery activities across the day and week could be effective in improving the efficiency of urban logistics whilst reducing conflicts with others using urban centres.

Lewes District Council has an [Air Quality Action Plan](#) which looks at identifying ways to reduce air pollution, including in Newhaven which has an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Reducing vehicular emissions by introducing last-mile deliveries would contribute towards achieving this and is reflected in Measure 3 of Table 5.1 (page 45) which is to 'Target long-distance freight management & heavy traffic through town'.

Opportunities

There are a range of challenges regarding HGV and LGV operations, including congestion and slow traffic speeds, challenging driving conditions, road safety and collision concerns, and the increased costs associated with road user charging.

Market led micro-consolidation centres can be effective in reducing HGV and LGV trips in urban centres, with research indicating that their use [reduces trips. For example, this approach in Bristol City Centre suggests that over 75% of](#) HGV movements were avoided .

Micro consolidation centres support the movement of everyday deliveries by smaller zero-emission modes such as cargo bicycles, e-cargo bicycles, and on-foot. E-cargo bicycles are particularly effective in large urban centres, with evidence suggesting that they [can drop ten parcels an hour, in comparison to six by vans](#), whilst cutting carbon emissions by 90%. This is primarily due both to their ability in circumnavigating congestion, and ease in finding suitable parking/stopping places.

Micro-consolidation centres can also be set up in car parks, and by repurposing underutilised public and private-operated car parking spaces. Companies such as Ikea have already established such arrangements with supermarkets to use their car parks for the local collection of larger bulkier goods (furniture), rather than individual deliveries to households or people travelling to the store for collection. Consolidation centres located outside of urban areas can improve construction logistics efficiencies in urban environments through either combining deliveries into larger vehicles or decanting deliveries into smaller vehicles, when appropriate.

There are opportunities for people to pick-up their ordered goods from lockers and collection points (e.g. from local shops, supermarkets, train station), rather than having a delivery to their door.

Investment priorities

Ongoing initiatives

There is current engagement in the following activities to optimise last mile logistics whilst minimising the impact it is having on the local environment:

- Engaging with the TfSE, and
- Inputting into and facilitating the communication of TfSE's guidance on re-timing of deliveries once developed.

New initiatives

Support proposals for new logistics hubs (a central location where goods are collected, sorted, stored, and redistributed to their final destinations) at strategic locations defined and allocated by borough and district councils through their local plans. These new logistics hubs could optimise longer-distance freight movements to and from East Sussex by consolidating strategic freight volumes on a fewer number of vehicles and facilitating the use of alternative modes such as rail and water, the latter for example on HGVs coming to Newhaven Port for the Newhaven-Dieppe ferry service.

Logistics hubs could also create the opportunity to consolidate and re-mode last-mile movements to homes and businesses such that they require fewer trips, can be optimised for distance, and use zero emission vehicles. The logistics hub could also include driver welfare facilities and electric charging points.

Support the business case development for specific market led micro-consolidation hubs to more effectively serve denser urban areas such as Lewes, which attracts high footfall in the summer months making it difficult to service shops and businesses with larger freight vehicles during the day.

These micro-consolidation hubs could be designed in under-utilised car parks on the outskirts of the town. In combination, the County Council and other partners should seek to identify opportunities to undertake pilot projects, such as e-cargo bike 'lending' schemes or similar for town centres and high-streets, in collaboration with businesses. Partners can also support boroughs and districts in retiming their deliveries to quieter times of the day.

East Sussex County Council can also directly reduce the impact of its supply chain activity on its local urban environment through the uptake of smaller zero-emission transport modes for council operations. It can also support borough & district councils to uptake these vehicles for their responsibilities, such as street cleaning, servicing, and delivery contracts.

The tables below present an action plan which highlights the short and longer-term initiatives that could develop, deliver and optimise freight movements in urban areas. These are presented by the level of influence East Sussex County Council has.

(Please note that this section is likely to require further updates following the emergence of the MCCA for Sussex and Brighton and creation of new unitary authorities across the West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex geography through local government reorganisation)

Advocated by East Sussex County Council

These are schemes where East Sussex County Council does not lead on development and/or delivery but is a key partner to successful delivery.

Name	FL02 - Air quality and noise mapping
Initiative	Identify areas where air and noise pollution are worst and identify actions to improve, in alignment with existing Air Quality Management Plans (AQMAs)
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – Short-term (up to 2030) • Develop – Short-term (up to 2030) • Deliver– Short-term (up to 2030)
Key partners	Lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council, • Local Authorities
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP04: Fuels and air quality

Name	FL01 - Development of strategic last mile logistics hubs
Initiative	Identify suitable locations for strategic last mile logistics hubs to support market led micro consolidation and modal shift to zero emission vehicles, identify requirements from the site, infrastructure required and private sector partners to support delivery and operation Consider the site, planning and energy requirements as part of suitable locations
Indicative cost	£10m to £100m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – Short-term (up to 2030) • Develop – To be confirmed • Deliver – To be confirmed
Key partners	Leads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport for the South East • Local planning authorities • Freight and logistics industry Supporting partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • Freight industry suppliers and customers • Private sector electric vehicle charging providers • Local businesses
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP13: Local planning • LP15: Logistics

Investment Priority Area 4: Planning and policy

The inter-relationship between land-use and transport planning has a direct impact on freight and servicing activities. Consequently, partners involved in spatial planning need to consider the needs of freight and servicing when developing local plans and planning new developments.

Policy Context

The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (updated 2024) requires planning authorities to plan for the specific locational requirements of different sectors through Local Plans, which includes the freight and logistics. Recognising their role in facilitating the needs of a modern economy, means local authorities allocating suitable and sufficient land for warehousing and storage facilities, as well as the safeguarding of freight-specific infrastructure such as wharves and rail heads. Conversely the NPPF stipulates the integral need to forecast and consider the role of delivery & servicing vehicles when designing and operating new developments, through construction logistics, and delivery and servicing plans, mitigating the impact of freight and logistics activity.

The [Department for Transport's National Networks National Policy Statement](#) (2024) recognises the need for long-term strategic action through government and industry collaboration to bolster the operation of the freight network as a whole, through improvements to infrastructure with multi-modal impacts.

NH's also use [DfT Circular 1/2022](#), the government's policy for the SRN as the basis of their engagement and assessment of Local Plans and applications.

[The Transport for the South East's Freight, Logistics and Gateway Strategy](#) (published 2022) identifies the challenge of acquiring relevant data to support more efficient freight movements, drive innovation and deliver the right infrastructure. It identifies a primary solution to this challenge through improving relationships and knowledge sharing between stakeholders in the public and private sectors.

Evidence

East Sussex has relatively few large warehousing or distribution sites in comparison to the South East, and other UK regions. The ability of new sites and infrastructure to be developed is challenging given both high land values and other spatial planning priorities of stakeholders. Through the development of local plans, local authority transport planners and planning officers alongside councillors/decision makers will be able to identify and allocate sites for freight warehousing and distribution, as well as lorry parking.

Opportunities

Borough and district councils - as the local planning authorities - have a responsibility to plan and manage construction, freight and servicing traffic for development through local plans, planning policy and the planning system. The County Council and other partners will work collaboratively with boroughs and

districts to ensure freight and servicing plays a greater role within local plans, specifically through the inclusion of policies which support this within local plans and the proposed Spatial Development Strategy for the Sussex and Brighton area. Similarly, the County Council also has a similar role to play in relation to waste and minerals planning, and the associated efficient movement of freight related movements.

There is a need and an opportunity to raise the profile of freight, and to increase awareness around the role and importance of planning effectively for freight. It is important that this takes place within local authorities, for officers and councillors, as well as for decision-makers and the general public.

Through the Wider South East Freight Forum, the County Council will seek to better understand the position and challenges of the freight sector in East Sussex, working collaboratively to acquire data and insight from industry stakeholders and sub-national transport bodies.

Investment priorities

Ongoing initiatives

Engagement in the following activities is currently ongoing:

- Engaging with regional freight user forums, the Wider South East Freight Forum, and TfSE's proposed rail freight working group,
- Stipulate the use of freight and logistics contractors which are part of best-practice schemes such as the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) or similar, and
- Advocate for stakeholders to develop national freight data standards.

New initiatives

Work with TfSE, neighbouring Local Transport Authorities and district and borough councils, via a Wider South East Freight Forum which shares best practice and investigates what support the freight and logistics sector needs to optimise strategic movements. Freight forums will help to raise the profile and awareness of freight for all types of stakeholders and help facilitate innovative trial data collection at strategic freight interchanges (such as Newhaven Port), using this to guide and inform future investment in infrastructure.

Work with district and borough stakeholders to safeguard against the loss of viable freight and logistics infrastructure, and also to identify and protect sites within local plans for rail freight infrastructure and network capacity, lorry parking, freight warehouses and distribution centres, HGV recharging, and alternative fuel refuelling sites.

The development of a strategic assessment tool which provides a transparent process of equitably assessing HGV issues from the public and other stakeholders can support the prioritisation of actions with clear communication of process and

change, and develop processes to deliver local enhancements easily which will ensure schemes and interventions are timely delivered and benefits realised.

The tables below present an action plan which highlights the planning, policy, and data initiatives that could develop and deliver optimal freight movements across the area, and deliver other ambitions such as improving safety and minimising adverse impacts on the local historic and natural environment.

(Please note that this section is likely to require further updates following the emergence of the MCCA for Sussex and Brighton and creation of new unitary authorities across the West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex geography through local government reorganisation)

Led by East Sussex County Council

These are schemes where East Sussex County Council has greater influence and can help directly develop and/or deliver the intervention.

Name	FP01 - Develop a strategic assessment and priority framework
Initiative	Provides a transparent process of equitably assessing HGV issues from the public and other stakeholders. Prioritising actions could be used to ensure clear communication of process and change
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – Short-term (up to 2030) • Develop – Short-term (up to 2030) • Deliver– Short-term (up to 2030)
Key partners	<p>Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • Transport for the South East • Local Authorities <p>Supporting partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freight and logistics industry • Private sector electric vehicle charging providers • Freight industry suppliers and customers • Local businesses
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP13: Local planning • LP15: Logistics
How East Sussex County Council can help deliver	Lead on developing the strategic and assessment framework, providing an opportunity for freight related concerns and problems to be raised and assessed. Work with the freight industry and partners in completing any emerging actions.

Name	FP03 - Mandate the use of construction logistics and delivery and servicing plans
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Initiative	Mandate within the planning process where developments are of a certain size to reduce construction disruption and improve sustainability of new developments
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – Short-term (up to 2030) • Develop – To be confirmed • Deliver – To be confirmed
Key partners	Leads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • Local planning authorities Supporting partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freight industry suppliers and customers • Developers and businesses
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP15: Logistics

Name	FP04 -Private business freight delivery plans
Initiative	Encourage sustainable development practices in businesses through the development of travel plans and delivery plans.
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – Short-term (up to 2030) • Develop – To be confirmed • Deliver – To be confirmed
Key partners	Leads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • Local planning authorities Supporting partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freight industry suppliers and customers • Developers and businesses
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP15: Logistics

Advocated by East Sussex County Council

These are schemes where East Sussex County Council does not lead on development and/or delivery but is a key partner to successful delivery.

Name	FP02 - Freight awareness workshops
Initiative	Plan and deliver freight knowledge and understanding workshops with different stakeholders to overcome 'freight blindness' and improve knowledge and importance of implementing initiatives
Indicative cost	Less than £10m
Development timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study – Short-term (up to 2030) • Develop – Short-term (up to 2030)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver– Short-term (up to 2030)
Key partners	<p>Lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freight and logistics industry <p>Supporting partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Sussex County Council • Range of public and private stakeholders • Freight industry suppliers and customers
LTP4 Investment Priority(ies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP15: Logistics
How East Sussex County Council can help deliver	Support the freight industry improve freight awareness through workshops and other initiatives with local and other user groups to improve the knowledge about and the needs of the freight industry.

7 Delivering the strategy

Investment priorities - development stages

Under the stages of development of the investment priority areas, the following three stages have been identified. It is important to note that these stages and their timing will be dependent on East Sussex County Council and their partners securing funding to bring investment and/or intervention priorities forward.

1. Study

- Where there is no, or limited, existing evidence which explores the potential feasibility of the intervention, including the benefits.
- Key stakeholder engagement can play a key role in advancing the strategic case for investment, identifying objectives, desired outputs and outcomes, and working with key delivery partners to explore the idea further to advance the scheme to development stage. This stage is similar to the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for larger scale schemes. SOBC is the first stage in developing a comprehensive business case, outlining the "case for change" and identifying potential options before moving to more detailed planning.

2. Develop

- Feasibility studies have been undertaken into the potential benefits of the scheme.
- There is a need for greater development of the business case of the scheme or intervention.
- Developing a scheme may include further stages of design (preliminary, detailed design) supported by appropriate engagement and consultation, analytical work to strengthen the strategic case, economic case, identifying funding opportunities and conducting greater technical assessment of the scheme (assessing deliverability risks and environmental impacts), such that the scheme is ready for delivery.
- This stage is like the contents of an Outline Business Case (OBC) for larger scale schemes. An OBC outlines a proposed project, justifies its need, and explores potential options. It helps to assess the project's viability, value for money, and strategic alignment before a detailed stage.

3. Deliver

- Business case evidence has already been developed with strong stakeholder support.
- Setting up of a delivery group with key stakeholders to increase opportunities for delivery.
- There is an identified funding route for delivery.
- A few risks have been identified which have yet to be mitigated.

- This stage is like the contents of a Full Business Case (FBC) for larger scale schemes. A FBC details the benefits, costs, risks, and management plans, and is used to secure final approval and funding. It provides the detailed information needed to proceed with a project, including final design, procurement, and implementation plans.

Scheme/policy progression through development stages

There will be investment priorities which can be studied, developed and/or delivered within the short term (up to 2030).

Likewise, there are priorities where partners can only study and/or sufficiently develop a pipeline of schemes that are ready for delivery. Given timescales and other deliverability constraints, some schemes or initiatives are unlikely to commence or be fully delivered in the short-term. For example, schemes could include railway schemes where the nature of industry funding cycles mean enhancements presented in the strategy are unlikely to be considered for delivery in the next Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline Period (or equivalent) and, therefore, at earliest, are likely to be delivered in Control Period 8 (2029-2034) or later.

Also, some schemes are unlikely to involve any short-term actions (e.g. by 2030). This could be for any one of several reasons, including: because they will rely on other schemes to be delivered; they are reliant on national policy or technological advances; or, significant funding is required to be made available before a scheme can be studied or developed.

Section 4 of this strategy sets out the action plans for the respective investment priority areas.

Engagement - next steps

The establishment of the MCCA for Sussex and Brighton in May 2026 and local re-organisation resulting in the creation of the new unitary authorities across the West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex geography by April 2028, will change the powers and funding for strategic planning, transport and economic growth from central government. This section will be updated as further information and detail on devolution and local government reorganisation proposals become available.

In order to progress the schemes contained within the strategy, it is important for the County Council and partners to engage with the freight industry and other partners to:

- Identify whether their aspirations align with our own,
- Establish where partnership and collaborative working is achievable,
- Assess which of the schemes within the strategy are freight industry priorities,
- Identify where funding opportunities are available,
- Come up with a plan of action for progressing the schemes,

- Implement regular meetings with key stakeholders to review and progress the aspirations contained within the strategy, and
- Review whether schemes are relevant and if priorities have changed.

Freight partners include, but are not limited to:

- Logistics UK
- Road Haulage Association
- Network Rail
- Freight industry suppliers and customers
- East Sussex County Council
- Local planning authorities
- Other public and private stakeholders – including those related to electric vehicle charging, freight distribution, e-cargo bikes etc

8 Funding and financing

It is important to note that the East Sussex Freight Strategy and its investment and intervention priorities are not currently funded. This section sets out the potential funding and financing opportunities for the proposed interventions identified in the strategy.

The availability of funding, with consideration to the costs of development, construction, maintenance and renewals, alongside operational costs, will be a key challenge in delivering the strategy. Additionally, routes for financing, as well as how and from whom the funding is secured to meet the costs of delivery as they arise, may change over the life of this strategy, Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), and its Investment Plan.

As the Strategy is made up of several diverse schemes or initiatives, there is not going to be a 'one size fits all' funding and financing solution that applies across the programme. Over the life of the plan, this strategy will provide East Sussex County Council (and in the near future, the Sussex & Brighton Mayor and newly created unitary authorities across the Sussex & Brighton geography), their partners and communities, the opportunities to explore and innovate how funding can be secured and combined to study, develop and deliver transport infrastructure interventions and initiatives.

Types of funding

Both the delivery of this strategy and constituent interventions require financial support, whether as part of capital investment, or through continued operation. Consequently, partners with responsibilities in the delivery of this strategy will also have a responsibility to help identify and respond to funding and financial opportunities.

Financing mechanisms can be used to fund both the capital and operating requirements of transport networks, and are particularly useful for interventions which provide repayment, or are assets that are likely to increase in value. However, there are considerable risks regarding investment undertaken in this manner, most notably due to fluctuations in loan interest rates, and the appetite for financial institutions and private sector to invest in transport infrastructure.

Funding sources

Central government bodies such as the DfT, Office for Zero Emission Vehicles, and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, both provide capital funding for freight and logistics interventions and schemes. This funding varies due to a range of factors, such as uncertainty in the national economy, alongside other political priorities.

The establishment of the **MCCA for Sussex and Brighton, and local government reorganisation** - resulting in the creation of new unitary authorities across the West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex geography - will change the powers and funding for strategic planning, transport, and economic growth from central government. As part of this it is expected that local authorities will be allocated longer term transport settlements for funding local transport infrastructure for delivery and studying of schemes that can lead to economic growth. This section will be updated as further information and detail becomes available.

The existing two-tier model for **local authorities** has resulted in significant limitations to generate revenue outside of what is required for general operations.

Consequently, local authorities are often limited to funding small-scale freight and logistics interventions funded by mechanisms such as scheme specific council allocated funding, government grant funding, and (S106) development contributions/Community Infrastructure Levy charges.

Match funding can be provided by public or private sector organisations to deliver specific interventions, such as the [Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund](#) (2018) which is used to accelerate electric vehicle charging infrastructure to support the electrification of vehicles.

Private sector organisations invest in their own operations and supply chains to maintain their competitiveness within the sector they operate in. Private investment can be seen at SRN electric vehicle charging points which are operated by private operators. There is a need for private sector organisations to collaborate and help support and contribute towards growth in East Sussex.

9 Measuring success

This strategy requires continuous monitoring to secure its effectiveness. Measuring success can be achieved through the implementation of a monitoring framework which identifies the indicators, direction of travel, data source, frequency of collection and owner of data, ensuring accountability is met across all levels.

Evaluation commonly involves a deeper dive into the outcomes of a strategy, and helps provide insight and lessons learnt to help guide continued freight, logistics and gateways, planning and operations, across the county.

So far as possible, the monitoring and evaluation aspect of the Freight Strategy will utilise the approaches and methodologies implemented for LTP4, which will include monitoring metrics aligned with the LTP4 vision, objectives, and outcomes.