

Cheshire East Highways Resilient Network 2020



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 2014 the Department for Transport (DfT) released the Transport Resilience Review as a result of the extreme weather experienced in the winter of 2013/14. The review assessed the resilience of all major modes of transport to extreme weather. The review made key recommendations aimed at improving the resilience of the UK's transport systems. The importance of these findings within the review has been reinforced by the inclusion of the Resilient Highway Network into the DfT Highways Maintenance Funding Incentive Self-Assessment Questionnaire.
- 1.2 The report recommended that Local Highway Authorities review their current resilient network in order to prioritise and identify resilience activities on more critical parts of the highway network which they maintain, with plans in place for the management of events including exceptional heat, industrial action, major incidents and other local risks.
- 1.3 Cheshire East Highways is responsible for 2700km of Carriageways, 1900km of Footways, 1700 highways structures and an array of other network infrastructure which is critical on a national, regional and local level.
- 1.4 The Cheshire East Emergency Response Plan links to the Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) by identifying the critical network, which can then be utilised for maintenance prioritisation.
- 1.5 The Cheshire East Resilient Highway Network has been reviewed and refreshed as part of the Well Managed Highway Infrastructure review. The Cheshire East Resilient Highway Network forms the highest priority tier within the Network Hierarchy.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The process for developing the Resilient Network followed the recommendations of the 2014 Transport Resilience Review.
- 2.2 Good asset management practice requires a Maintenance Hierarchy to be established to support the creation of levels of service and to aid the coordination and regulation of the occupation of the highway network when works are required. In 2016 the Code of Practice for Well-Managed Highway infrastructure reinforced the importance of a network hierarchy as a foundation of a risk-based maintenance strategy.

It is important that the hierarchy adopted reflects the needs, priorities and actual use of each road in the network and plays a key role in a number of Cheshire East activities and services including the resilient network.

- 2.3 In determining the critical points on the network, the following areas were factored in maintaining economic activity:
 - Access to main towns within the Borough and also outside Cheshire East using the principal and trunk road network.
 - Access to town centres in the main towns.
 - Access to principal employment areas.
 - Access to key services.
- 2.4 The Primary and Winter Route Networks are the basis of the new Cheshire East Resilient Highway Network. Certain elements of the Primary Route Network have been replaced in the Cheshire East Resilient Network by more locally critical routes.

- 2.5 Working with partner organisations, further work will be undertaken as part of future reviews to determine additional critical routes that may develop as the network evolves, with particular attention paid to the routes with little or no alternative.
- 2.6 Key asset locations have been received through consultation with emergency services, partner organisations and neighbouring authorities.
- 2.7 Highways England manages the motorway and major trunk road network running through Cheshire East. Cheshire East Council's highway network and that which is managed by Highways England are very much interwoven with regards to resilience. Highways England has provided strategic diversion routes which have been included in the Cheshire East resilient network.
- 2.8 The Major Road Network (MRN) is a proposed classification of local authority roads in England. The creation of the MRN consists of the most strategic local routes in England and the more major local authority controlled A roads. These are defined through a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis in line with the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund report, which first proposed the concept of an MRN. These routes have been considered and included in the Cheshire East resilient network where necessary.
- 2.9 Cheshire East Highways Resilient Network was therefore developed in line with the above and is included in Appendix A.
- 2.10 As a minimum the Cheshire East Resilient Highway Network will be reviewed biennially or after a major event in collaboration with partner organisations and neighbouring authorities.

3. Stakeholder Engagement

- 3.1 In 2018, consultation on the proposed resilient network was distributed to the following interested parties for feedback:
 - Local transport operators
 - Neighbouring authorities (including Highways England)
 - The emergency services
 - Transport for the North
 - The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
 - The local Chamber of Trade
 - Manchester Airport
 - Network Rail
 - Local bus operators
 - The Road Haulage Association
- 3.3 The Resilient Network was adjusted as a result of the consultation to take into consideration the feedback received from interested parties. The feedback played a predominant part in identifying the critical routes of the Borough.
- 3.4 The network was drafted in co-ordination with the Cheshire Emergency Planning Team and the Cheshire East Major Emergency Response Plan.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 By identifying the Resilient Network, Cheshire East Council will be able to prioritise investment to ensure critical routes are protected and identify options for early interventions that will minimise disruption to the network and ensure resilience in extreme weather events. The network will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it is still relevant.

5. Reference

5.1 Reference material:

- Cheshire East Adverse Weather Plan
- Cheshire East Major Emergency Response Plan
- Cheshire East Council Highway Safety Inspections CoP
- Well Managed Highway Infrastructure CoP
- Cheshire East Council Local Transport Plan
- Cheshire East Winter Service Policy
- DfT Transport Resilience Review
- DfT Highways Maintenance Incentive Funding Self-Assessment Questionnaire
- Consultation Strategy

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Road names of the Cheshire East Resilient Network
- 6.2 Cheshire East Resilient Network 2019