

# Sustainable Development and Environment Action Plan

## Roads Period 1

December 2018

### **FOREWORD**

Highways England published its Sustainable Development and Environment Strategies in April 2017. These documents, together, set out the company's vision for delivering a sustainable development approach that ensures our work supports society and the wider national interest, as well as supporting us to minimise our environmental impact and pushing us to achieve an improved environment.

The strategies were designed to communicate to our stakeholders our approach, and to form the basis for collaborative action. We are keen to work with our partners to help protect and improve the environment and national quality of life; and develop and implement sustainable solutions to the transport needs of the country.

This document now builds on this vision. It describes some succinct and key actions (taking us to the end of Roads Period 1 – March 2020) that will enable the company to make a significant change in its effectiveness in delivering sustainable development and doing the right thing for the environment.

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# Sustainable Development and Environment Action Plan

*“The network of the future will be smoother, smarter and more sustainable.”*

(Road Investment Strategy: 2015 to 2020)

Sustainable development is defined in our licence to operate, as *“encouraging economic growth while protecting the environment and improving safety and quality of life for current and future generations”*.

Our environment strategy vision is: *“a strategic road network working more harmoniously with its surroundings to deliver an improved environment”*.

This document describes how we will progress the above aspirations in Roads Period 1, through actions supported by all areas of our business. We will seek to implement them in collaboration with partners, stakeholders and local communities.

## Sustainable Development and Environment Integrated Actions

- **Raise the profile of sustainable development and environmental performance in the business**

*We will establish a strategic leadership group for sustainable development and environment (which will include representation from the company Executive Committee). It will champion the importance of sustainable development and environment, and it will oversee progress against this plan and improve the way that sustainable development and environmental performance is monitored and reported.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Establish a strategic leadership group (SLG) and agree terms of reference</i>	<i>Chief Highway Engineer</i>	<i>Q4 18/19</i>

- **Raising awareness within Highways England, to ensure our people and teams understand the importance of sustainable development and environment to the company and the customers we serve**

*Provide an approach to internal communication (with elements of training), suitable to roles across the company, with the aim of increasing awareness of our sustainable development and environmental responsibilities, and building commitment towards improved performance on our work.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Establish an approach to environment and sustainable development communications, to include establishing a strategic lead for communications and the introduction of a training module for the corporate induction programme</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q4 19/20</i>

- **Incorporate consideration of sustainable development and environmental performance into relevant Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) documents**

*Sustainable development and environmental issues are addressed in many areas of DMRB. In the review and revision of DMRB we will ensure that improved performance is embedded into all requirements relating to assessment, design, construction, management and disposal of our network. This includes updating all DMRB assessment and design documents that specifically relate to sustainable development and the environment, and also ensuring sustainable development and environmental considerations are appropriately handled in all other relevant documents.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Update all environment and sustainable development related guidance documents in relation to the DMRB</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q4 19/20</i>

- **Support the adoption of recommendations from Highways England’s Strategic Design Panel**

*Mechanisms will be developed to ensure the principles of good design are adopted on our schemes.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Agree and implement processes for review of selected schemes by the Design Review Panel</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q1 19/20</i>

## **Environment Specific Actions**

- **Ensure we have an approach to environmental management of the Strategic Road Network that suits our new ways of doing business**

*Our company is changing the way it manages the Strategic Road Network, with management contracts being progressively brought in-house enabling a more hands-on approach. This gives us the challenge of ensuring that network management decision making is supported by an appropriate Environmental Management System. We will undertake an assessment of possible options for achieving better embedded environmental performance within the organisation, including the potential use of a formal Environmental Management System.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Undertake assessment and produce a recommendations report</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q3 19/20</i>

- **Review our environmental asset information system, to ensure it is fit for purpose, and enables effective decision making on a comparable basis to other hard-engineered asset types**

*We will undertake a review of our environmental asset data management, and will identify options for ensuring it remains suitable for supporting the business to achieve improved environmental performance.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Review environmental data and end user requirements, asset management functionality and make recommendations for improvements</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q2 19/20</i>

- **Develop and deliver, in partnership with our stakeholders, a programme of environmental improvements**

*The Environment and Air Quality Designated Funds provide us with the opportunity to deliver significant improvements to the environment across all of our network. We will work with our stakeholders to develop new and innovative projects and delivery mechanisms that support much wider social and environmental benefits.*

<i>Milestones</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Develop and implement a programme of partnership projects that support improved social and environmental outcomes</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q4 2020</i>

- **We will have effective environmental considerations built into all future supply chain contracts**

*Our supply chain undertakes substantial work on our network, and it is important that our contracts place obligations on this supply chain to deliver good environmental performance.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Identify and take opportunities to integrate environmental performance measures into future contract provisions</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q4 19/20</i>

# Sustainable Development Specific Actions

## Our Five Capitals

In our Sustainable Development Strategy we use the concept of five 'capitals' associated with sustainable development:

- **Financial capital**, which is our capacity to invest
- **Human capital**, or the knowledge and capacity of our workforce and stakeholders
- **Natural capital**, or the natural resources and services we benefit from
- **Social capital**, or the relationships, networks and communities that we rely on
- **Manufactured capital**, or the infrastructure and technologies we manage

For each 'capital' we have identified a 'vision' and 'ambition' in our Sustainable Development Strategy. More specific actions to support each capital are set out below:

- **Financial Capital - Climate change adaptation**

*Ensure resilience to climate change is embedded in the activities of our business to reduce whole life costs and increase safety. We will move away from a reliance on historical weather records as a basis for standards and specifications to a position where standards are informed by the latest science on climate change.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Review climate risks to the network following the publication of the UK Climate Projections 2018</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q4 19/20</i>

- **Human Capital - Sustainability leadership**

*We will partner with relevant bodies and organisations to promote a consistent approach to increasing the capability and capacity of the supply chain and our own staff in the delivery of sustainable solutions to the management and development of the Strategic Road Network. This will include continuing our collaborative partnership with the Supply Chain Sustainability School.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Meet with our principle supply chain partners to ensure their commitment to sustainable development, including through engagement with the Strategic Alignment and Review Tool (StART)</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q4 19/20</i>

- **Natural Capital - Carbon management**

*Deliver a meaningful contribution to the UK Government target of an 80% reduction in carbon emissions, against the levels in the 1990s, by 2050. We will investigate and plan for the uptake of low carbon technology across the SRN.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Ensure timely and high-quality supply chain carbon submissions each quarter</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q4 19/20</i>

- **Social Capital - Responsible sourcing**

*Ensure the supply chain evidences responsible sourcing and mitigates against the business risks arising from social, environmental and ethical issues. We will establish clear sustainability goals with suppliers to achieve recognised sustainability standards in procurement.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Develop an agreed approach to ensure responsible sourcing and sustainability goals are reflected in model contracts</i>	<i>Commercial and Procurement</i>	<i>Q4 19/20</i>

- **Manufactured Capital - Circular economy**

*We will work collaboratively with stakeholders to identify and implement opportunities for resource efficiency, which will include development of pathfinder projects to demonstrate the circular economy concept in action and integrate circular economy principles more widely.*

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>Collaborate with our suppliers and partners to demonstrate circular economy principles within pilot projects</i>	<i>Safety Engineering and Standards</i>	<i>Q4 19/20</i>