

Staffordshire County Council

West and Shires Permit Scheme Performance & Evaluation Report

Years 1 & 2: 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2022



Contents

1 Executive Summary	2
2 Introduction	3
3 Objectives of the West and Shires Permit scheme	3
4 Fee Structure, costs and benefits	4
5 Performance Indicators	5
5.1 KPI 1 The number of permit and permit variation applications	5
5.2 KPI 2 The number of conditions applied by condition type	14
5.3 KPI 3 The number of approved revised durations	18
5.4 KPI 4 the number of occurrences of reducing the application period	20
6 TPI Measures	23
7 Operational Performance Measures	24
7.1 Number of overrun incidents	24
7.2a Average road occupancy	26
7.2b Number of days of reduced occupation	28
7.3 Number of refused permits by refusal reason	30
7.4 Number of cancellations as a percentage of granted permits	32
7.5 First time permanent reinstatements	34
7.6 Category A “in progress” inspection results	36
7.7 Permit condition inspection results	38
8 Conclusion	40
9 Glossary	41
10 Appendix A	42

1. Executive Summary

Staffordshire County Council joined the already established West and Shires Permit Scheme on 1st April 2020, the scheme has now been operating for 2 years and we are soon to complete our third year of operation.

The WaSP scheme replaces the current 'noticing' system under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 ("NRSWA") for works taking place on the highway. The WaSP scheme allows those participating authorities ("Permit Authority") to better manage activities on the highway and minimise disruption and inconvenience.

The scheme is intended to be used as a tool to improve network management through more proactive control of roadworks.

The data displayed in this report may not depict an accurate picture of the usual highway activity on the Staffordshire County Council Highways Network due to the Coronavirus pandemic affecting the volumes and type of activities that could be carried out due to the various restrictions and lockdowns that were implemented by Central Government at the time.

The restrictions and lockdowns that were observed during the reporting period covered in this report are available to view here and in Appendix A: [timeline-lockdown-social \(instituteforgovernment.org.uk\)](https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/timeline-lockdown-social)

During the first year of operation (1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021) the council received 66,496 applications for permits, of which 53,943 were granted. 28,726 of these works were our own highway works.

In year 2 (1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022) a total of 65,428 permit applications were received, of which 52,108 were granted. 19,971 of these were highway works.

There is a consistent spread of permits being granted across the various industry sectors with all promoter types having over 80% of their permit applications granted.

On average over the first 2 years the number of works that have overrun has been around 5% with 93% of all extension requests being granted which has prevented a second period of disruption occurring by instructing the works promoter to clear site and come back at a later date when the works will cause less disruption.

Requests for early starts from works promoters reduced from 5% to 3% in year 2, Staffordshire County Council continue to assess these on a case-by-case basis; these are never refused without good cause.

Staffordshire will continue to review the performance of the permit scheme and the benefits and control of the network this brings over Noticing.

2. Introduction

The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA), Part 3 Sections 32 to 39, and the Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) Regulations 2007 make provision for Permit Schemes to be introduced in England. The West and Shires Permit Scheme (WaSP) was adopted by Staffordshire County Council on 1st April 2020 and has been revised to reflect the requirements introduced in the 2015 Permit Scheme Regulation amendments¹.

This report sets out an overview of the scheme's operational performance in its first two years. The report provides analysis of the available data in relation to street works and road works activities in Staffordshire for the primary purpose of:

- Demonstrating the introduction of the WaSP scheme has and will continue to provide the benefits stated in the objectives; and
- Outlining any changes required by Staffordshire County Council to improve the operation of the scheme.

Data has been collected, collated and presented in either graphical or tabulated format for each of the defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or Operational Measures. Commentary is also provided to expand on noteworthy trends in the data.

¹ The Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, 2015/958

3. Objectives of the West and Shires Permit Scheme

The scheme's primary objectives are:

- to increase the efficient running of the highway network by minimising the disruption and inconvenience caused by road works and other highway events and activities through proactive management of activities on the highway
- to improve the quality and timeliness of information received from all activity promoters to increase and improve the publicly available data for integration into the Council-wide travel information
- to encourage a proactive approach to planning and undertaking of works on the highway from promoters and thus lessen the impact of activities on road users
- to protect the structure of the street and the integrity of the apparatus in it
- to ensure safety of those using the street and those working on activities that fall under the Scheme, with particular emphasis on people with disabilities
- to ensure parity of treatment for all activity promoters particularly between statutory undertakers and highway authority works and activities

The successful performance of the Scheme has brought a number of subsidiary benefits. These include:

- maximising the safe and efficient use of road space
- providing reliable journey times
- improving the resilience of the network

- minimising inconvenience to all road users
- improving public satisfaction

4. Fee Structure, costs and benefits

The Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 require that the permit authority shall give consideration to whether the fee structure needs to be adjusted in light of any surplus or deficit.

Staffordshire County Council have set the fee levels in accordance with the Department for Transport guidance and within the maximum fee levels specified in Regulation 30. Current fee levels are given in the table below.

Table 1.0

Activity Type	Category 0-2 roads or Traffic Sensitive Streets	Category 3-4 roads or non-Traffic Sensitive Streets
Provisional Advance Authorisation (PAA)	£105	£75
Major Activities greater than 11 days or TTRO*	£196	£150
Major Activities (4-10 days duration)	£130	£75
Major Activities (up to 3 days duration)	£65	£45
Standard Activities	£51	£45
Minor Activities	£36	£28
Immediate Activities	£50	£40
Permit Variation	£45	£35

***TTRO – Temporary traffic Regulation Order**

The fee levels set by Staffordshire County Council ensure that the permit scheme is able to be operated in a robust and effective manner by ensuring we have the resource levels to assess all permit applications in a timely manner to minimise the disruption activities on the network are causing. The fees set also allow us to invest in innovation and explore new ways of working with works promoters.

The Traffic & Network Management team within Staffordshire County Council have recently undergone a large restructure in order to ensure a robust & resilient service is being provided to works promoters, residents, businesses and road users of the Staffordshire highway network. Due to this change and the fact the first year of the permit scheme was operated mostly under national coronavirus lockdowns we are not currently in a position to assess whether the permit fees need to be adjusted.

Staffordshire County Council propose to monitor this over the next 2-3 years to build up an accurate and detailed understanding of the volumes of permit applications being received against the demands on the network and the operational impact this will have on the Traffic & Network Management Team. It is our intention to revisit this topic as part of subsequent annual reports.

5. Performance Indicators

5.1 KPI 1 - The number of permit and permit variation applications

KPI 1 provides the number of permits and permit variation applications received, the number granted and the number refused.

- The total number of permit and permit variation applications received
- The number of applications granted as a percentage of the total applications made
- The number of applications refused as a percentage of the total applications made
- Split of applications, grants and refusals between statutory Undertakers and Highway Authority

5.1.1 Results

The data provided in this section has been obtained from running the Confirm Permits KPI #1: Permit Response Report and is available in its original format upon individual request.

The table below shows a breakdown of permit applications received, granted and refused for the first two years of operation in Staffordshire County Council. This data includes any applications that were subsequently cancelled.

Table 2.0

	Year 1 2020-21	Year 2 2021-22
Total of all applications Received	66,496	65,428
Total Permit Applications received	50,298	47,998
Total Permit Variations Received	16,198	17,340
Total permits with status that cannot be determined	7,179 (11%)	6,497 (10%)
Total permits granted or refused	59,317 (89%)	58,931 (90%)
Granted	53,943 (81%)	52,108 (80%)
Refused	5,374 (8%)	6,823 (10%)

The charts below show a breakdown of the data regarding applications received in relation to highway authority works for road purposes and works by utility promoters in Staffordshire County Council for the same periods. The data covers year one (2020/21) and year two (2021/22).

On average, the highway authority generated 43% and utility promoters 57% of the applications received in year one. In year two the highway authority generated 31% and utility promoters 69% of all applications received.

Chart 2.1 (2020/21)

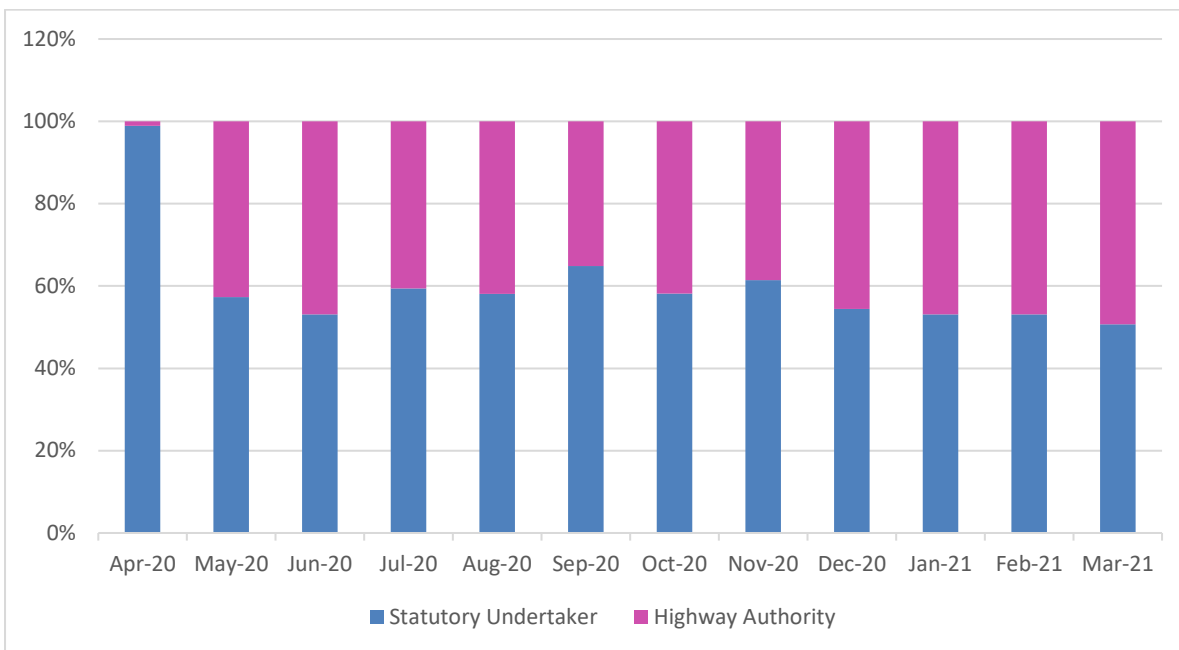
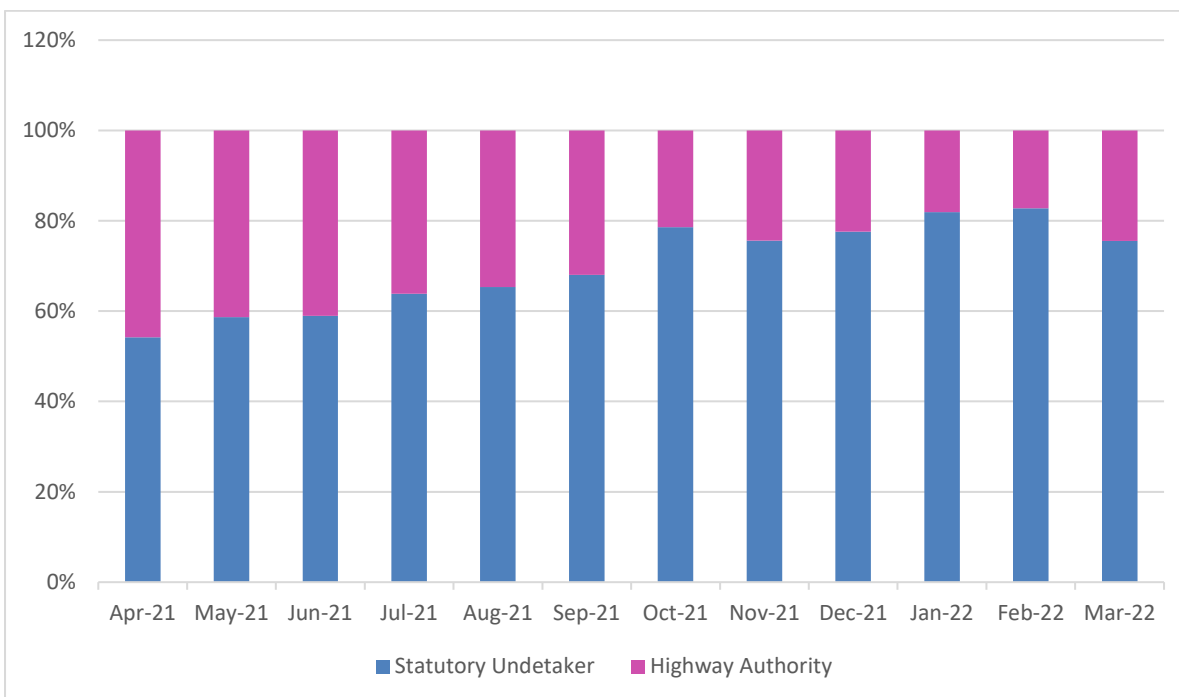


Chart 2.2 (2021/22)



The charts below show the percentage of granted and refused permits for all Statutory Undertakers and Staffordshire County Council Highway Authority works for both year one (2020/21) and year two (2021/22). Also, the data is further broken down by activity type into applications granted and refused.

Chart 2.3 (2020/21)

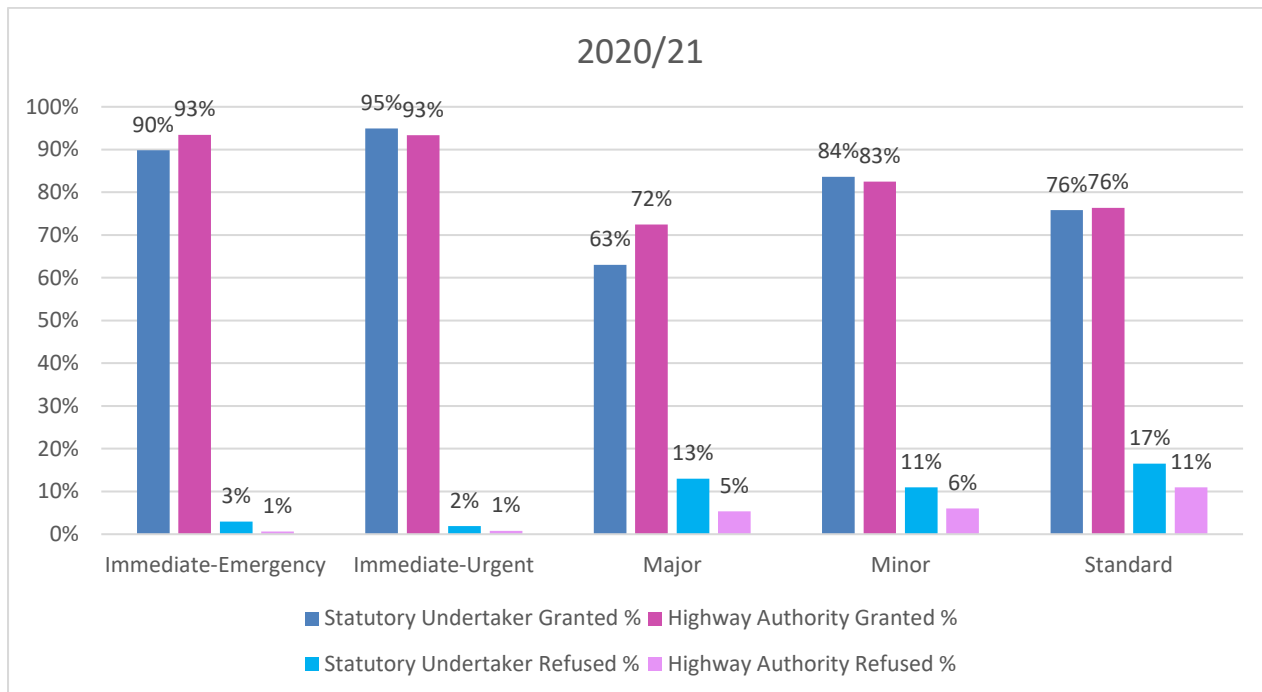
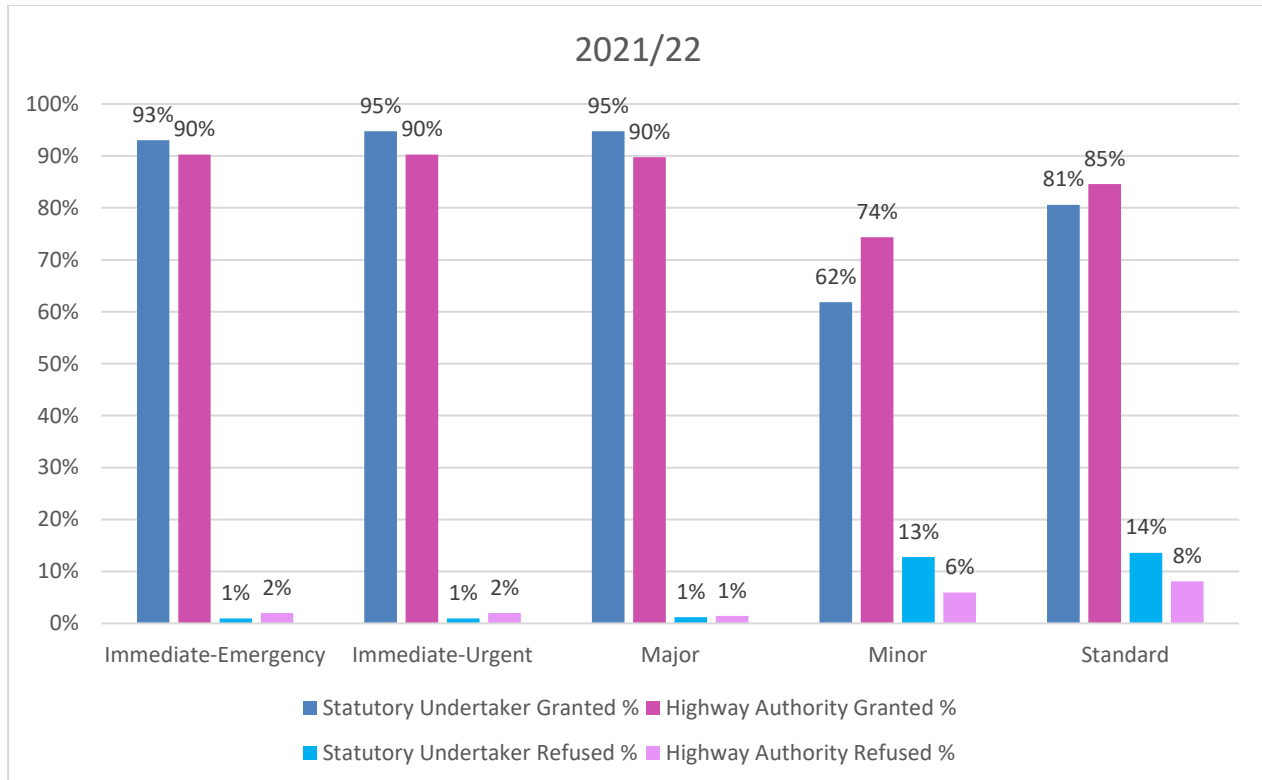


Chart 2.4 (2021/22)



This data has been further interrogated and broken down into different industry types as shown in the charts below. These have been separated into the following industries: Water, Gas, Electric, Telecoms and Highway Authority.

Chart 2.5 (2020/21)

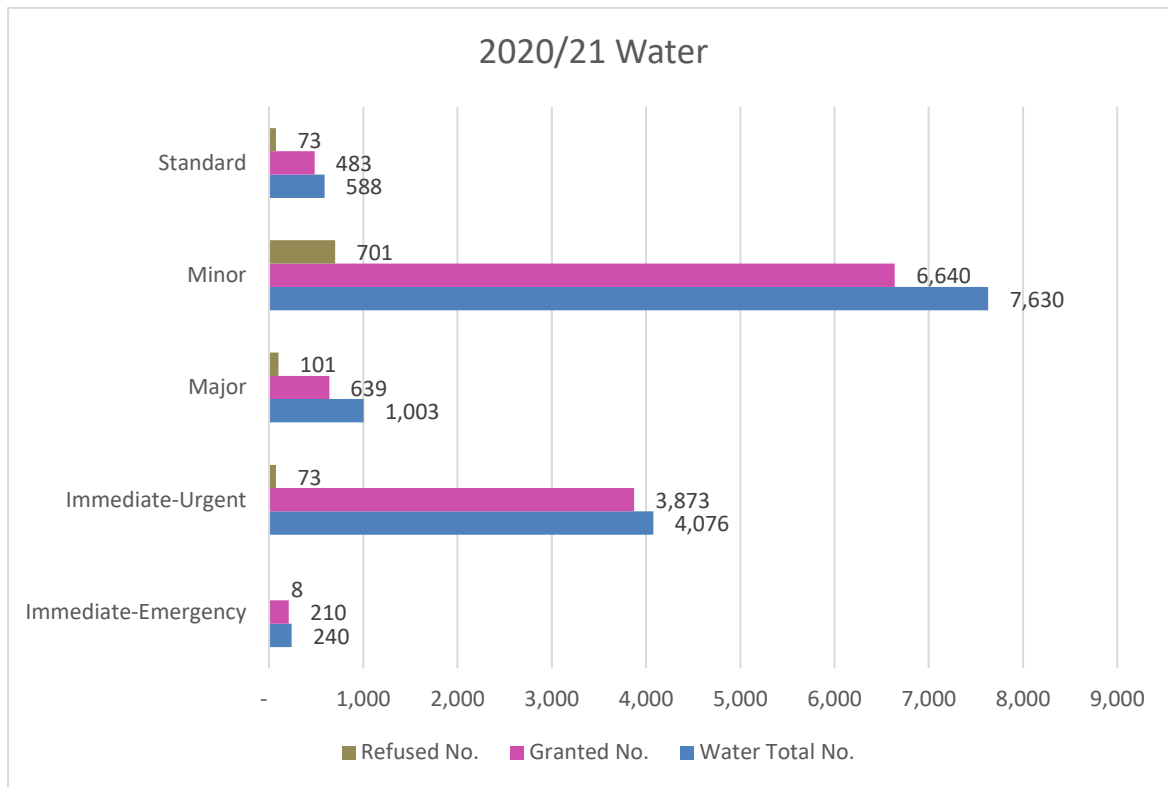


Chart 2.6 (2021/22)

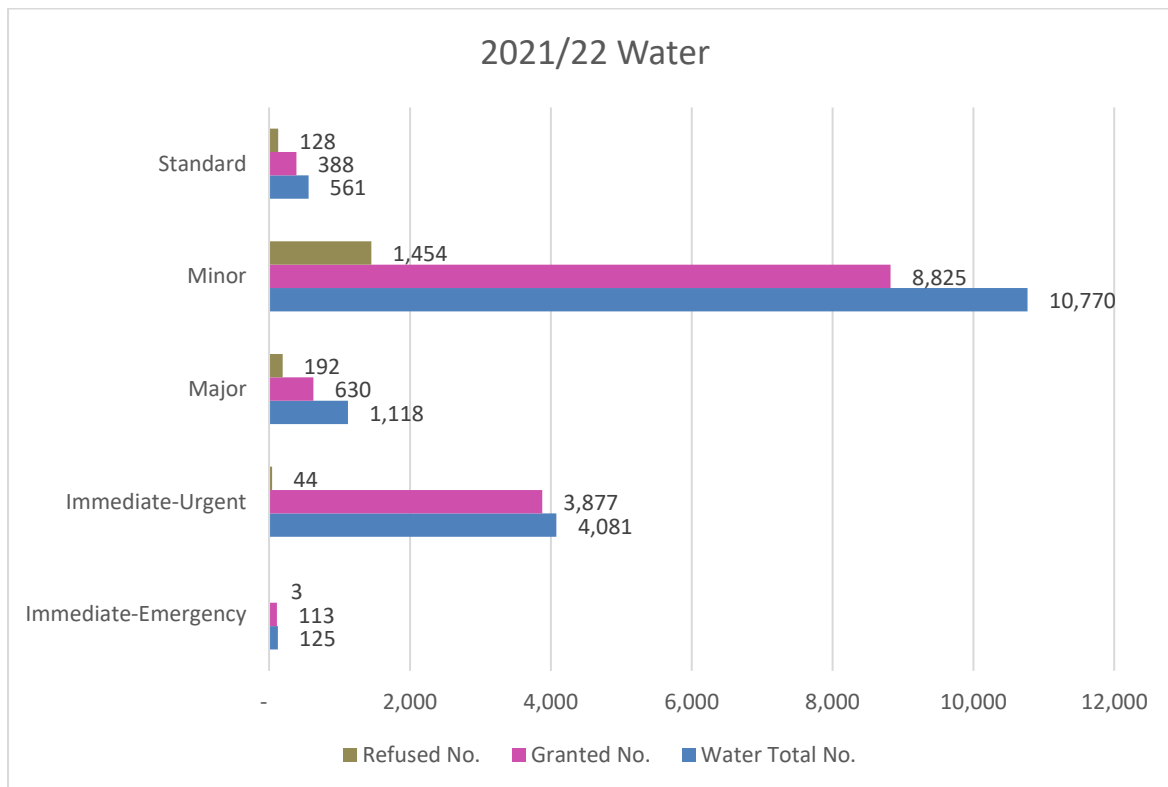


Chart 2.7 (2020/21)

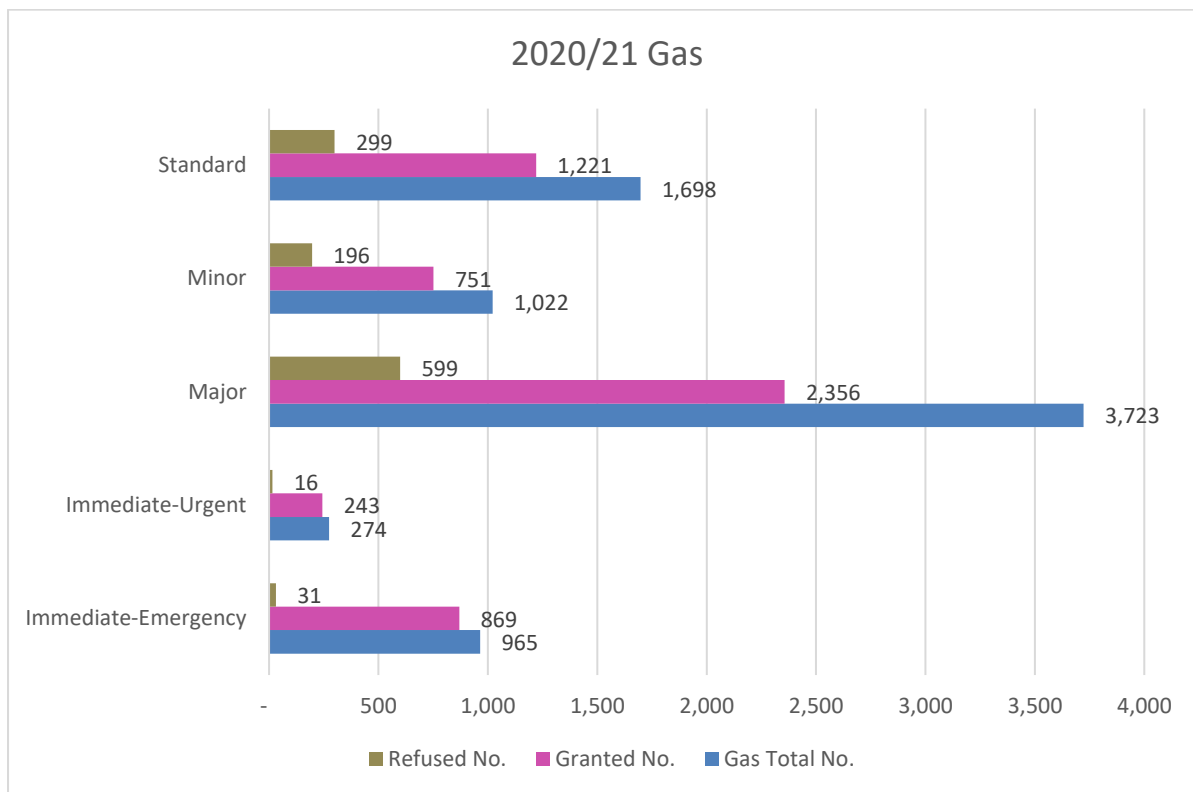


Chart 2.8 (2021/22)

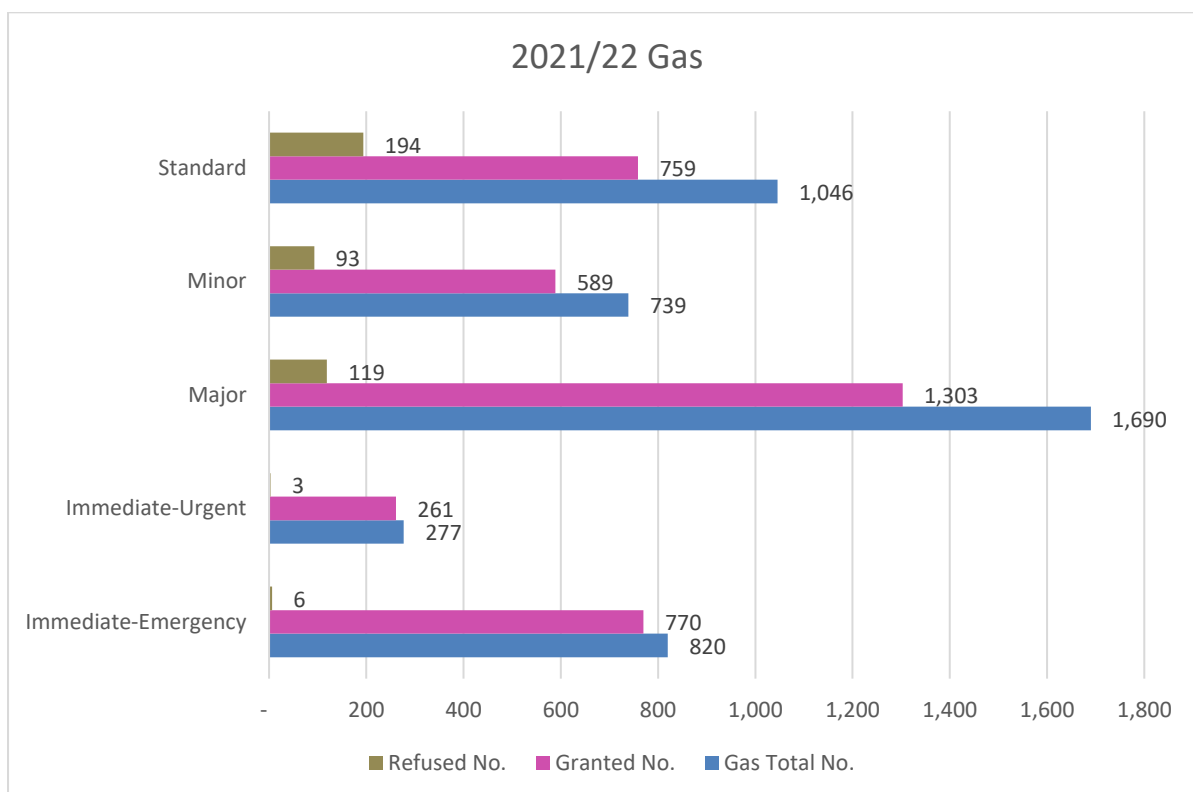


Chart 2.9 (2020/21)

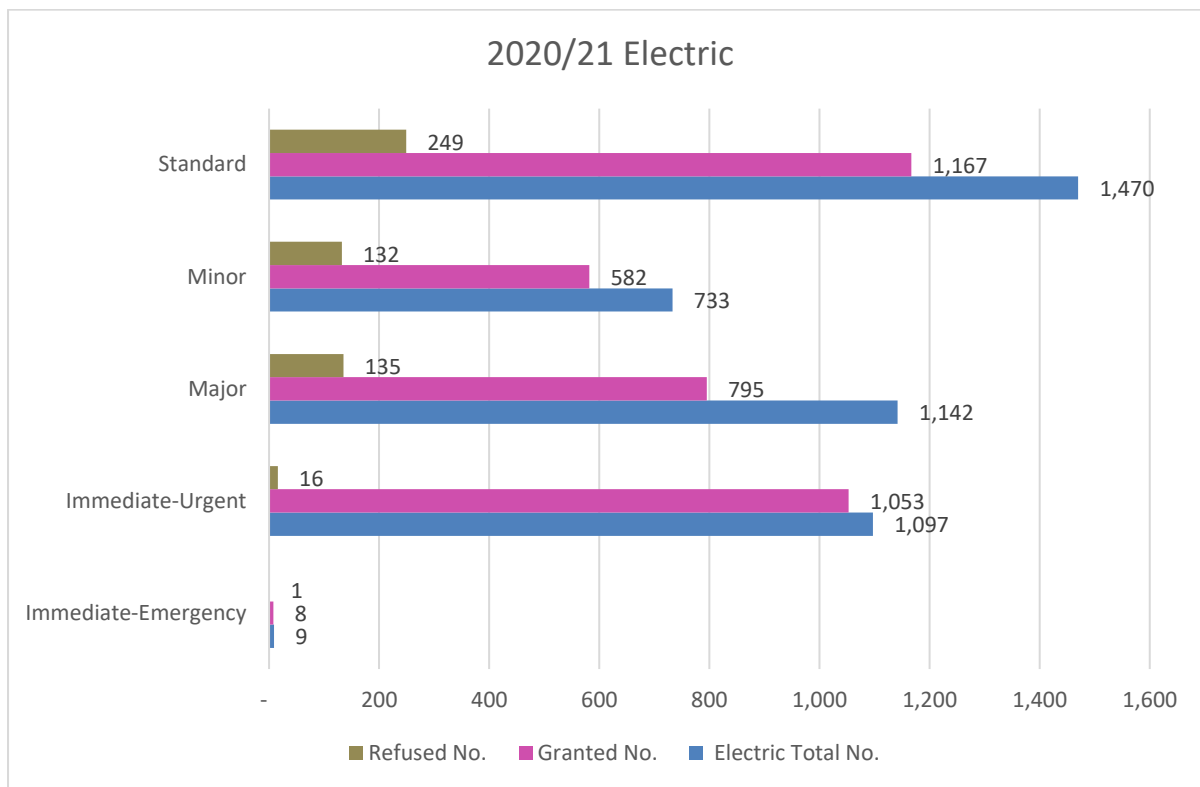


Chart 2.10 (2021/22)

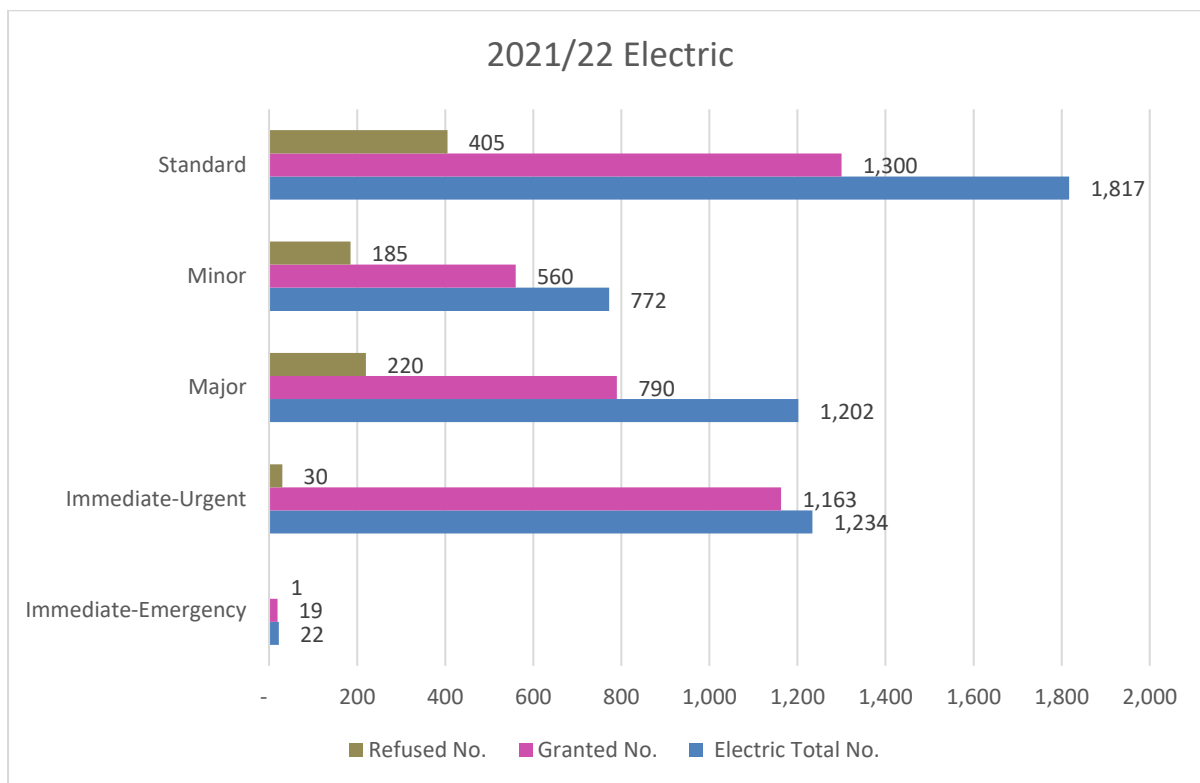


Chart 2.11 (2020/21)

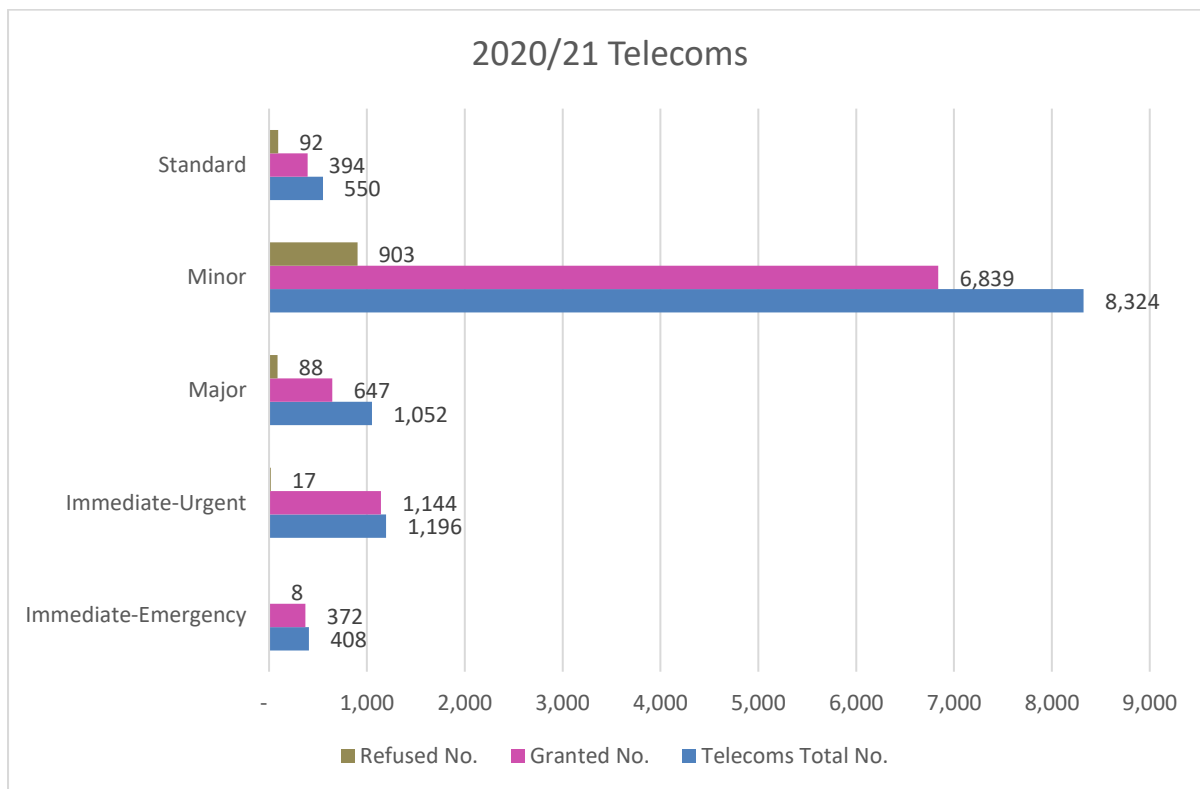


Chart 2.12 (2021/22)

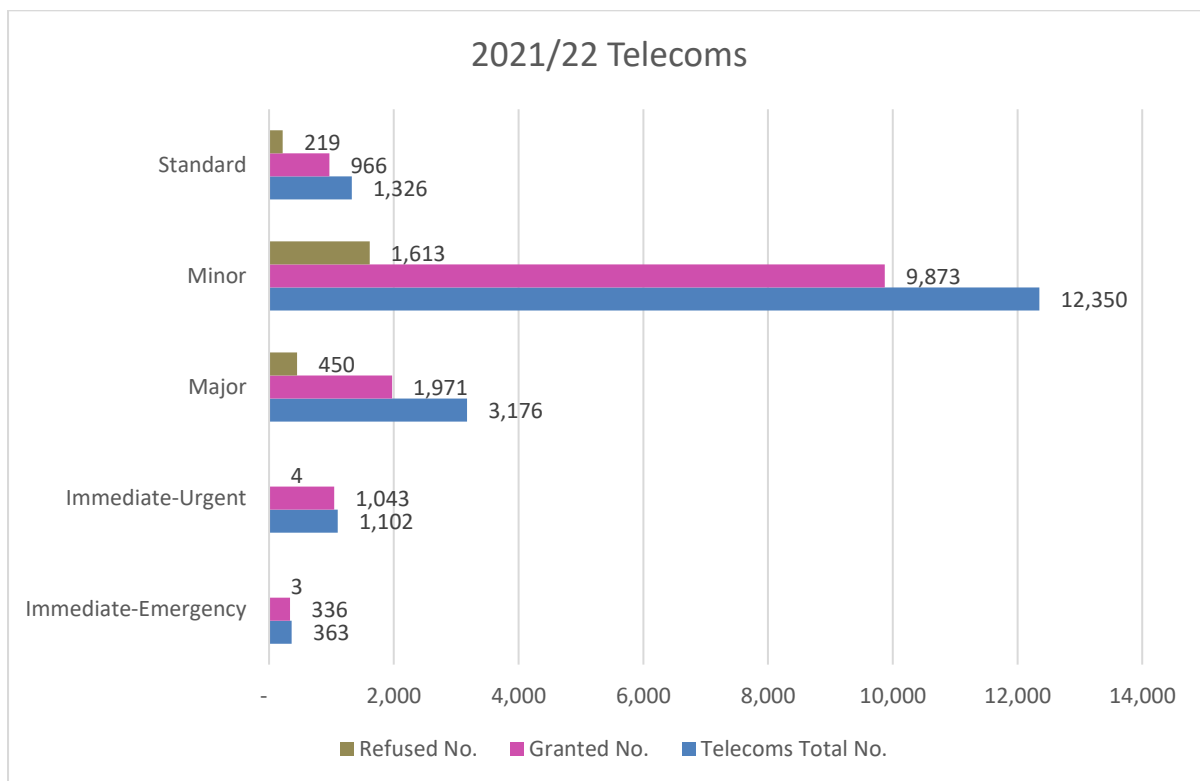


Chart 2.13 (2020/21) Highways

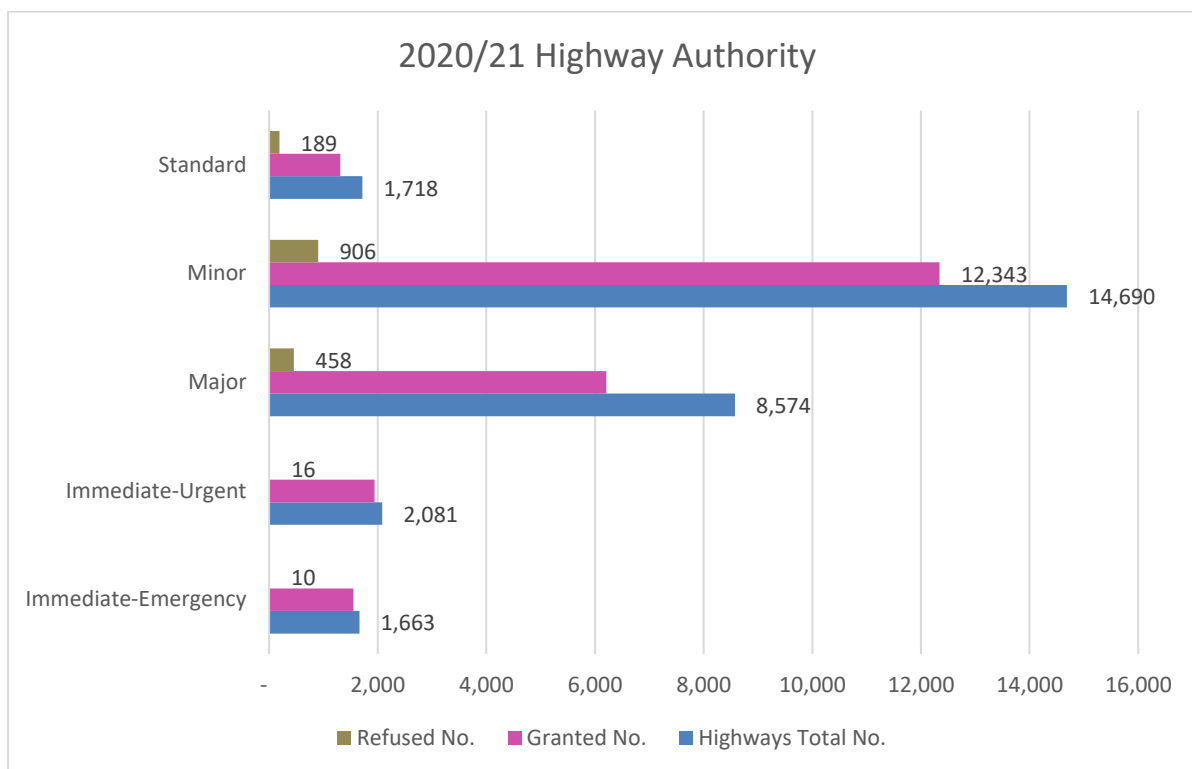
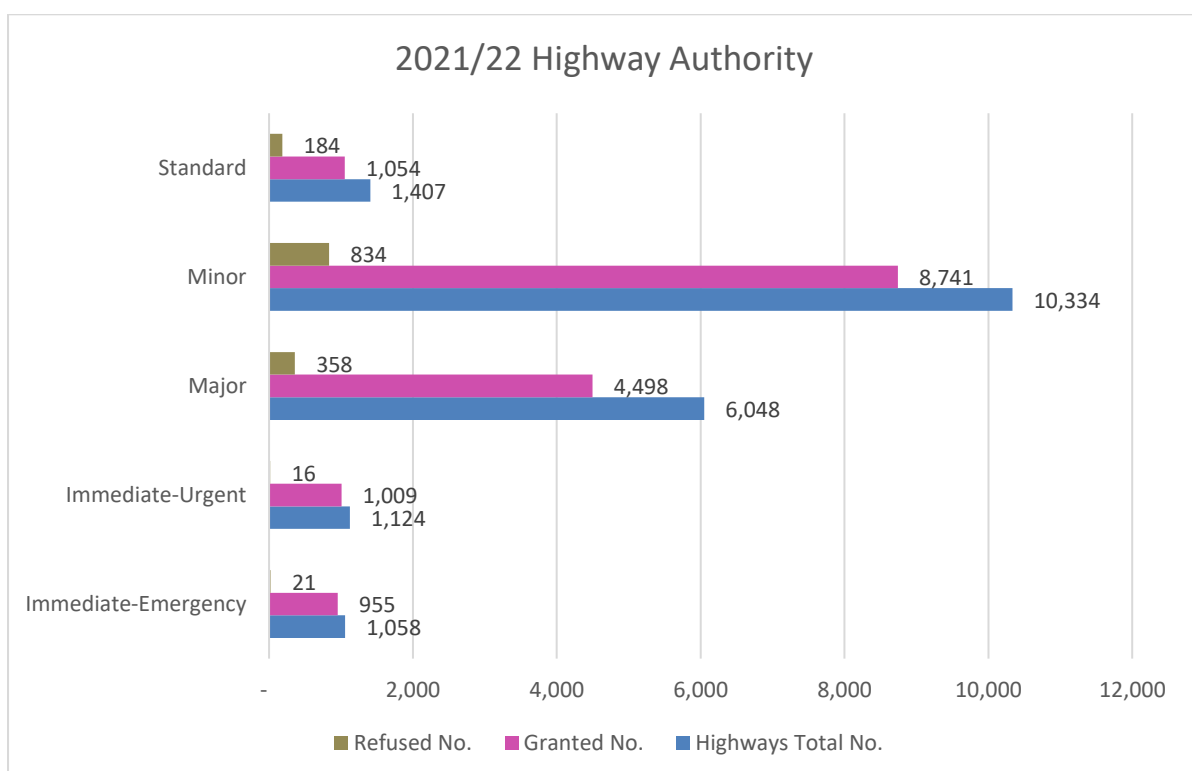


Chart 2.14 (2021/22) Highways



The following considerations must be noted in relation to this data:

1. Each application has an appropriate response period which means that the number of applications received in any one period does not correspond to the permits granted and refused within that same period. In other words, a permit application received in one period may be responded to within the next reporting period.
2. The permitting software used by Staffordshire County Council did not allow the authority to grant or refuse Immediate permit applications where a works stop was received before an

authority could respond to the initial application. This was particularly prevalent where works were undertaken at weekends or out of normal working hours.

These issues mean that there are a number of permit applications, the status of which, cannot be determined.

5.1.2 Analysis

Permits Granted and Refused

Average grant and refusal rates for the two-year period appear to be fairly consistent across all industry types as demonstrated below. There is a slightly higher percentage of Highway Authority permits being granted which is believed to be due to the permit assessors having a better understanding of the work being undertaken by the operational department and a proportion of the work being low impact which ties in with the reduction of permit applications for highways work seen in year two.

There were slightly fewer permits granted in year two than in year one which is believed to be attributed to the knowledge of the Highway Authority Officers assessing the permit applications increasing coupled with network demand increasing again as the coronavirus lockdowns were lifted, which were present for most of year one of the permit scheme; this also had the effect of seeing a slight increase in refusals.

53,943 permits were granted overall in year one with this reducing to 52,108 in year two, in comparison 5,374 permits were refused in year one with an increase to 6,823 in year two.

Table 2.15

Average % over 2 years	Granted	Refused
Water	81%	9%
Gas	80%	10%
Electric	81%	13%
Telecoms	80%	9%
Highway Authority	84%	6%

Number of Permit Applications

The volume of permit applications was slightly lower in year two than in year one, but a significant increase was seen in permits received from the telecoms industry of over 6,700, this was offset by a reduction of over 8,700 Highway Authority permits and over 3,100 gas industry permits.

The telecoms industry is currently growing at a rapid rate and with a list of new providers set to enter the Staffordshire County Council network over the next 8 years we expect this trend in permit volumes to continue as the demand from existing works promoters to install and maintain their apparatus will remain.

The significant reduction in highway Authority permits is due to a proportion of the works being carried out being identified as non-permittable and adjustments to permitting criteria being agreed following a very strong start in issuing permits for work that were not required.

5.2 KPI 2 - The number of conditions applied by condition type

This will be shown as:

- The number of permits granted
- The number of conditions applied, broken down into condition types. The number of each type being shown as a percentage of the total permits issued

5.2.1 Results

The data provided in this section has been obtained from running the Confirm Permits KPI #2: Permit Conditions Report and is available in its original format upon individual request.

The charts below show the percentage of permit conditions applied against permit applications in relation to works for road purposes and streets works undertaken by statutory undertakers on the basis of the 13 standard EToN conditions. This has been split into two charts, one for Year 1 (2020/21) and one for Year 2 (2021/22)

Table 3.0

Year 1 - Condition Type	Statutory Undertaker	Highway Authority
NCT01 – Date Constraints	10%	85%
NCT02 – Time Constraints	54%	94%
NCT03 – Out of Hours Work	1%	1%
NCT04 – Material & Plant storage	9%	4%
NCT05 – Road Occupation Dimensions	24%	29%
NCT06 – Traffic Space Dimensions	43%	86%
NCT07 – Road Closures	7%	35%
NCT08 – Light Signals and Shuttle Working	30%	84%
NCT09 – Traffic Management Changes	20%	5%
NCT10 – Work Methodology	52%	87%
NCT11 – Consultation & Publicity	21%	84%
NCT12 – Environmental	1%	0.1%
NCT13 - Local	0.01%	0%

Table 3.1

Year 2 - Condition Type	Statutory Undertaker	Highway Authority
NCT01 - Date Constraints	45%	75%
NCT02 - Time Constraints	50%	90%
NCT03 - Out of Hours Work	0%	0%
NCT04 - Material & Plant storage	10%	7%
NCT05 - Road Occupation Dimensions	23%	19%
NCT06 - Traffic Space Dimensions	47%	77%
NCT07 - Road Closures	6%	37%
NCT08 - Light Signals and Shuttle Working	30%	68%
NCT09 - Traffic Management Changes	23%	9%
NCT10 - Work Methodology	49%	81%
NCT11 - Consultation & Publicity	55%	78%
NCT12 - Environmental	1%	0%
NCT13 - Local	0%	0%

Chart 3.2

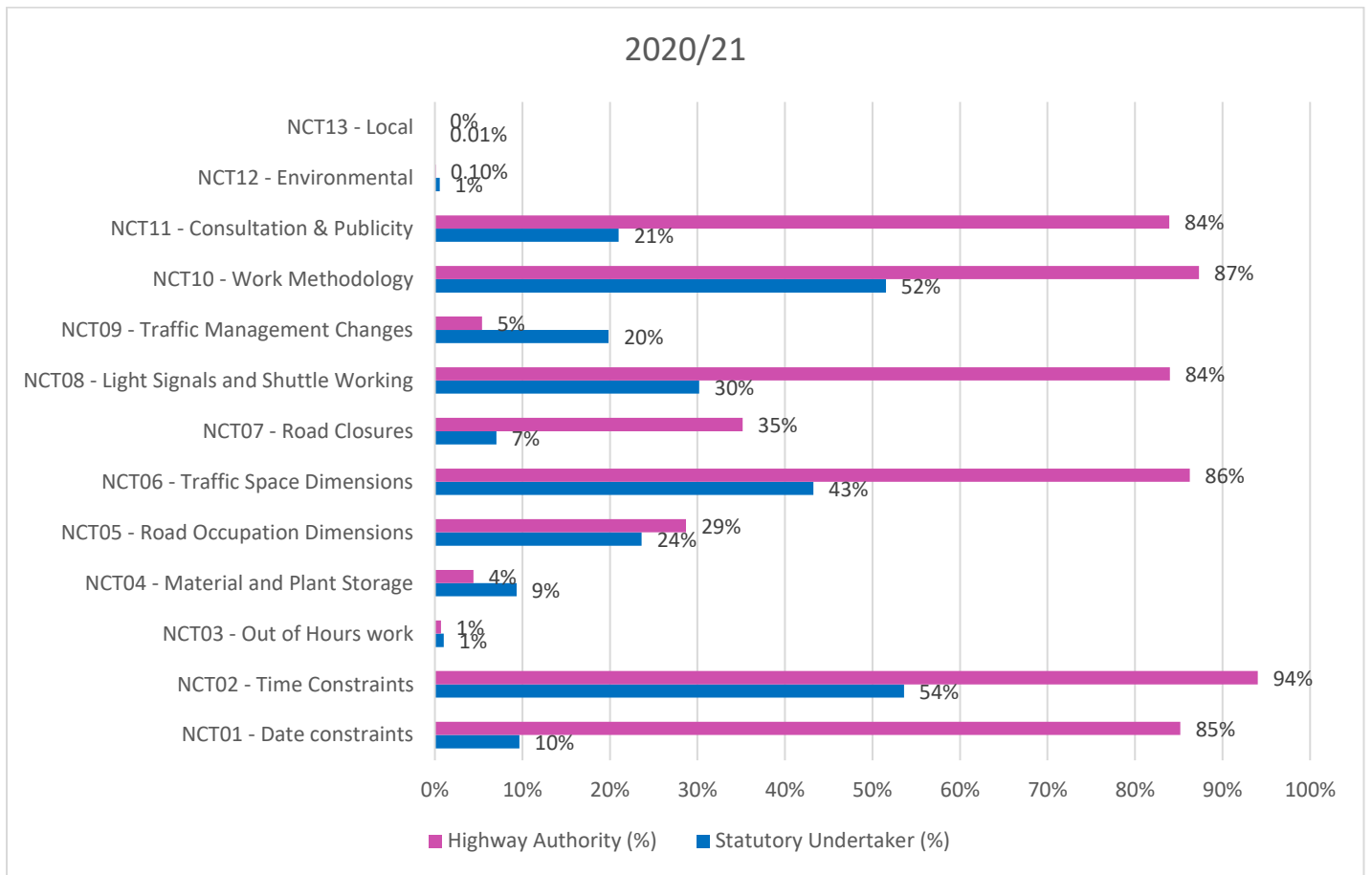
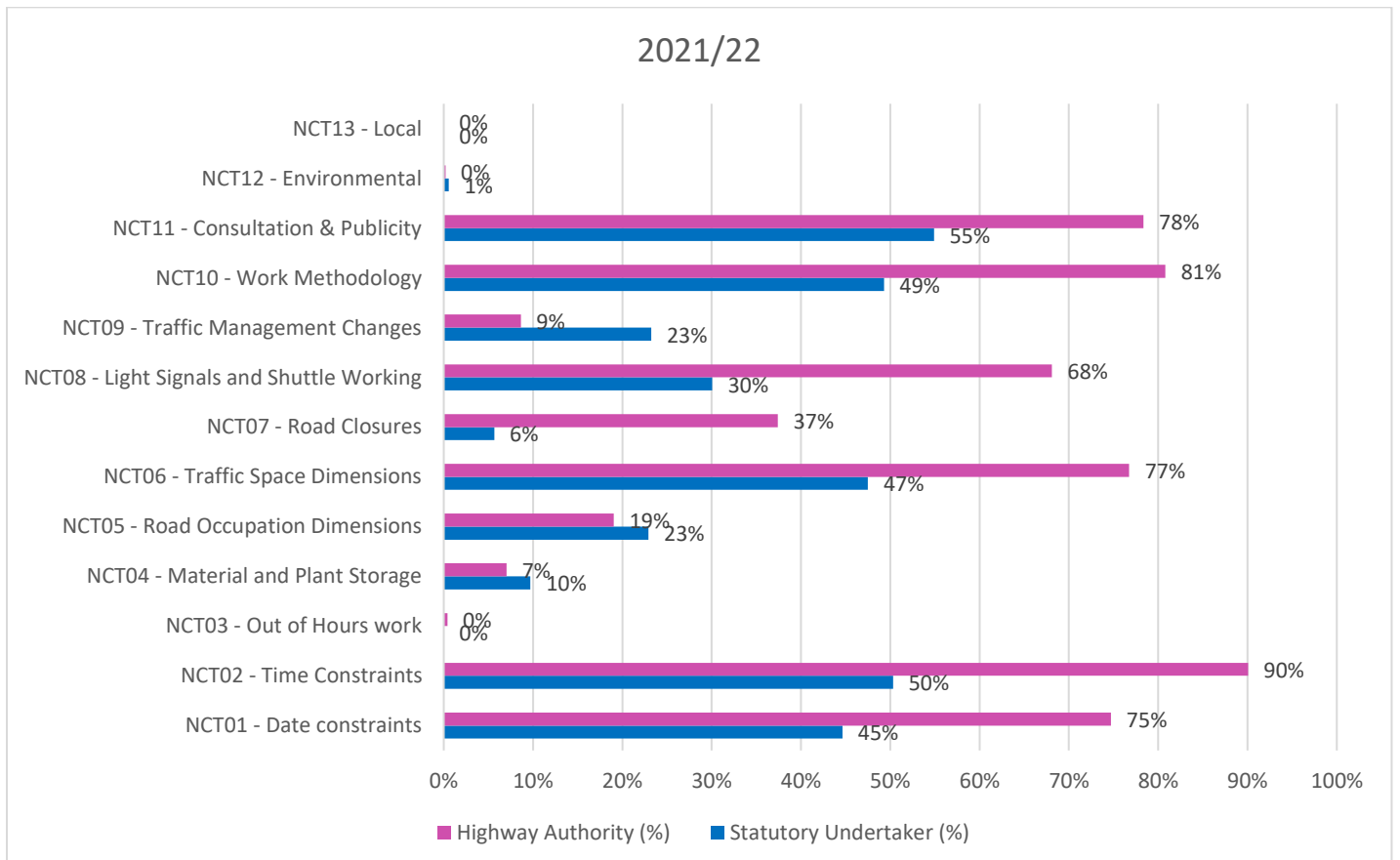


Chart 3.3



5.2.2 Analysis

The data for NCT01 can be disregarded as this is a nationally applied condition that is mandatory on all permits. NCT11 will include the mandatory condition for NCT11a which is to display a permit board on site. Having interrogated this data further we have established that in Year 1 (2020/21) there were 27 instances of NCT11b being applied to permits for Statutory Undertakers and 66 on highway Authority permits. In year 2 these figures were 2760 for Statutory Undertaker permits and 297 for Highway Authority permits.

In Year 1 the top 3 permit condition types added were:

- NCT02 – Time Constraints
- NCT06 – Traffic Space Dimensions
- NCT10 – Works Methodology

In Year 2 the top 3 permit condition types had shifted slightly to the following:

- NCT02 – Time Constraints
- NCT10 – Works Methodology
- NCT11 – Consultation & Publicity

We believe the above is due to the Highway Authority Officers who are assessing the permit applications received becoming more experienced in assessing and understanding the scope of the work being carried out by undertakers, then taking into consideration the impact this work has on communities and applying conditions to ensure that communities, businesses and residents are being kept informed about disruptive work in their areas via letter drops and advance warning signs.

NCT10 is a particularly important condition as the works methodology can drastically affect the traffic management used and duration of the work on site, therefore this is commonly requested and applied to permits where it is deemed appropriate to do so.

The high percentage of permits with condition NCT02 from the Highway Authority can be attributed to the close working relationship between the SCC Highways Operational Control Room who plan in the majority of highway repair work and the Traffic & Network Management Team with regards their understanding the need, wherever possible, to work outside of Traffic Sensitive times to minimise disruption to the network.

The higher percentages of permits with conditions NCT07 and NCT08 for Highway authority works will be due to a higher percentage of the work they are required to submit permits for having a larger impact on the network and traffic flow, meaning higher forms of traffic management are required over the majority of Statutory Undertaker work.

Due to the work carried out by the Highway Authority typically being better understood with regards to the remaining carriageway widths required and due to good internal communication lines, there is less need for condition NCT09 to be applied whereas this is slightly more unknown with Statutory Undertaker work depending on the industry and permit type and what work is being undertaken on site.

5.3 KPI 3 - The number of approved revised durations

This will be shown as:

- the total number of unique permits granted
- the number of requests for revised durations shown as a percentage of permits issued
- the number of agreed revised durations as a percentage of revised durations applied for

5.3.1 Results

The data provided in this section has been obtained from running the Confirm Permits KPI #3: Approved Extensions Report and is available in its original format upon individual request.

Table 4.0 – Year 1 2020/21

Month	Permits Issued	Extension Requests	Approved Extensions
Apr-20	1,714	72	60
May-20	2,534	152	137
Jun-20	3,377	329	233
Jul-20	4,532	149	140
Aug-20	3,551	147	136
Sep-20	4,449	163	158
Oct-20	3,837	115	104
Nov-20	4,424	181	174
Dec-20	4,018	148	137
Jan-21	4,370	247	230
Feb-21	4,845	288	264
Mar-21	5,114	271	250
Total	46,765	2,262	2,023

Table 4.1 – Year 2 2021/22

Month	Permits Issued	Extension Requests	Approved Extensions
Apr-21	4,145	183	171
May-21	4,133	161	147
Jun-21	4,977	159	156
Jul-21	4,354	166	160
Aug-21	4,031	212	205
Sep-21	3,972	175	168
Oct-21	3,149	149	147

Nov-21	3,512	160	155
Dec-21	3,199	153	149
Jan-22	3,412	156	151
Feb-22	3,521	197	193
Mar-22	4,493	220	202
Total	46,898	2,091	2,004

Chart 4.2

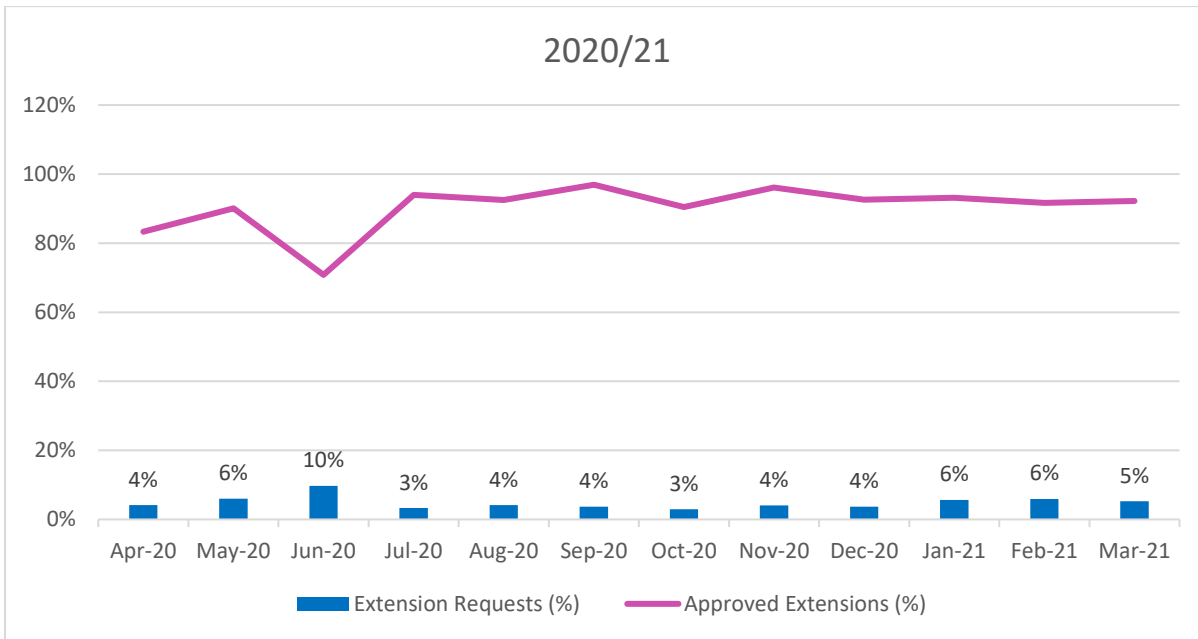
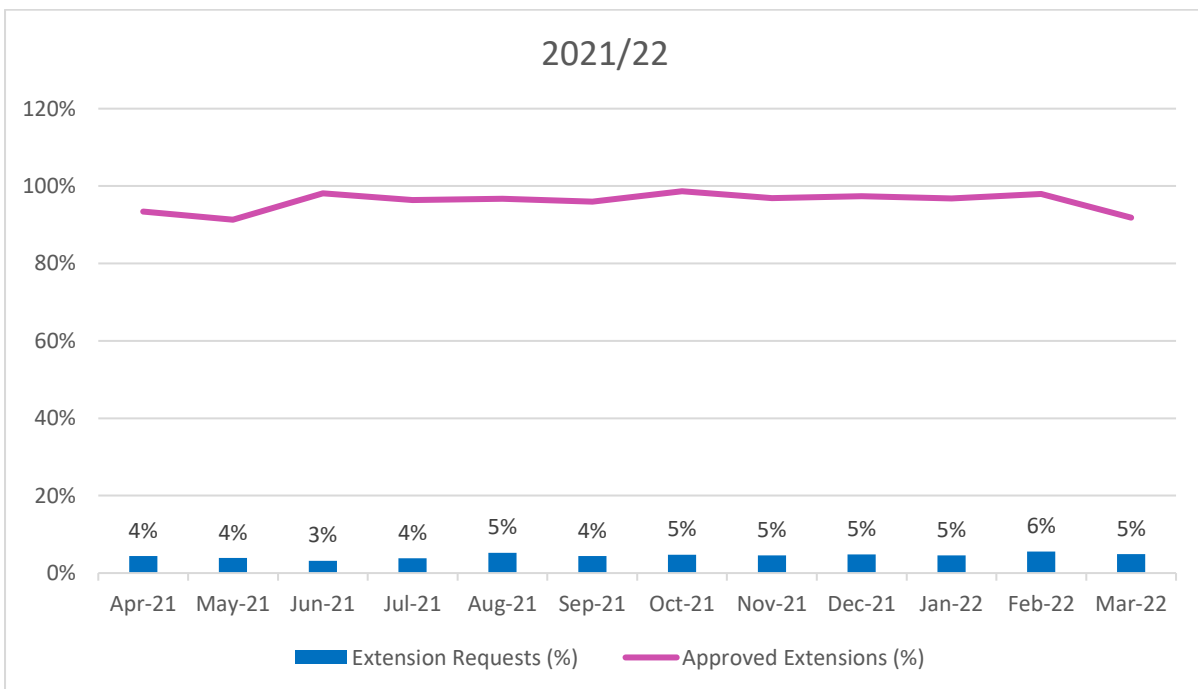


Chart 4.3



5.3.2 Analysis

The main consideration when reviewing this information is that extensions can be requested for a variety of reasons and need to be assessed on their individual merits based on the circumstances at a particular site, the challenges being faced by the works undertaker and the disruption and complaints the work is generating. Generally, the least disruption is caused by allowing works already in progress to continue rather than instructing a site be cleared for the undertaker to come back at a later date and cause a second period of disruption on the network. On average over the previous 2 years 5% of permits had an extension requested on them, of which 93% were granted.

6.4 KPI 4 - The number of occurrences of reducing the application period

Also known as "early starts," this will be shown as:

- The total number of permit and permit variation applications made
- The number of agreements to reduce the notification period as a percentage of requests made

5.4.2 Results

The data provided in this section has been obtained from running the Confirm Permits KPI #4: Reduced Application Period Report and is available in its original format upon individual request.

Table 5.0

Month	Applications Received	Early Start Applications Agreed
Apr-20	2,828	172
May-20	4,025	269
Jun-20	5,533	363
Jul-20	6,699	557
Aug-20	4,982	461
Sep-20	6,098	503
Oct-20	5,245	278
Nov-20	5,919	187
Dec-20	5,375	158
Jan-21	6,011	136
Feb-21	6,633	140
Mar-21	7,148	183
Total	66,496	3,407

Table 5.1

Month	Applications Received	Early Start Applications Agreed
Apr-21	5,613	160
May-21	5,393	174
Jun-21	6,539	211
Jul-21	5,960	190
Aug-21	5,585	223
Sep-21	5,609	187
Oct-21	4,532	109
Nov-21	5,011	83
Dec-21	4,585	93
Jan-22	4,874	112
Feb-22	4,983	146
Mar-22	6,744	212
Total	65,428	1,900

Chart 5.2

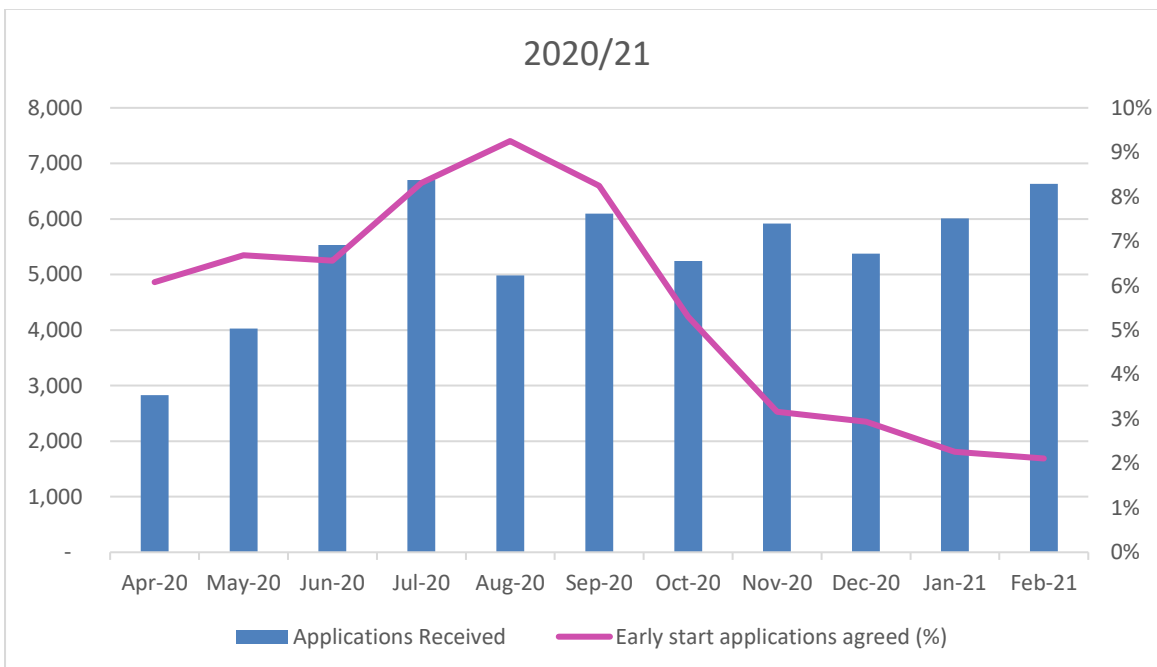
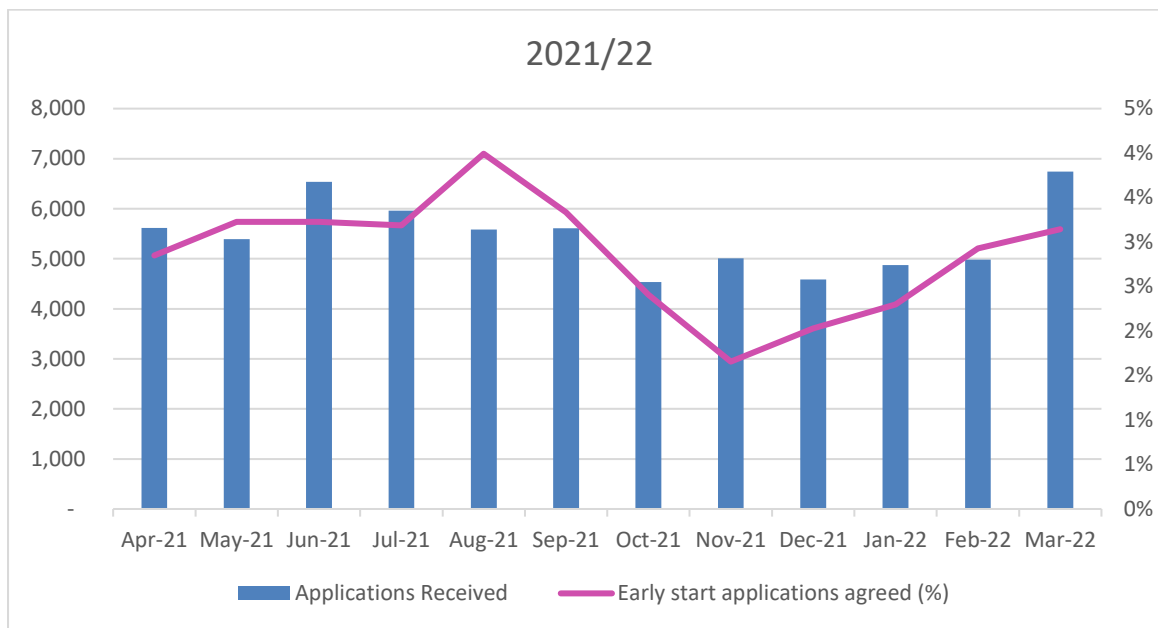


Chart 5.3



5.4.2 Analysis

This measure was considered to be in relation to the number of times promoters were allowed by Staffordshire County Council to start their works without having to comply with the minimum permit application lead-in period, commonly known as an early start agreement.

Early start requests are considered individually on their own merits by Staffordshire County Council and are never refused without a valid reason. In Year one 5% of early start requests were granted on average with this decreasing in Year 2 to 3%. We believe this will be due to increased demand for road space on the network following the lifting of Coronavirus restrictions and a greater number of promoter activities resuming.

6. TPI measures

This section outlines the Permit Indicators (TPI) contained as Annex A within the Statutory Guidance for Highway Authority Permit Schemes.

These indicators for permit schemes are additional to the general TMA Performance Indicators (TPIs), which are already being produced.

6.1 TPI1 Works Phases Started (Base Data)

6.2 TPI2 Works Phases Completed (Base Data)

6.3 TPI3 Days of Occupancy Phases Completed

6.4 TPI4 Average Duration of Works

6.5 TPI5 Phases Completed on time

6.6 TPI6 Number of deemed permit applications

6.7 TPI7 Number of Phase One Permanent Registrations

7. Authority Measures

In addition to the above measure, Staffordshire County Council has collated its own data.

These measures should reflect the business case and objectives put forward in the scheme submission documentation.

7.1 – Number of overrun incidents

The number of activities that are logged by the Permit Authority as overrunning their agreed end date is an indicator of how well the activity promoters are managing their activities and lessening the impact of their works on road users.

- The number of overrun incidents shown as a percentage of permits issued

Whilst this measure sheds light on the effort of works promoters to complete works within agreed timescales, it is not considered that it is a measure that is reflective of the success or failure of permitting.

7.1.1 Results

The data provided in this section has been obtained from running the Confirm Street Work Occupation Report and is available in its original format upon individual request.

Table 6.0

Month	Overrun incidents	Permits Issued	% Overrun
Apr-20	14	2097	0.67%
May-20	24	3128	0.77%
Jun-20	28	4335	0.65%
Jul-20	53	5383	0.98%
Aug-20	37	3956	0.94%
Sep-20	59	5091	1.16%
Oct-20	37	4393	0.84%
Nov-20	32	4970	0.64%
Dec-20	35	4442	0.79%
Jan-21	37	4997	0.74%
Feb-21	63	5418	1.16%
Mar-21	77	5733	1.34%
Total	469	53943	0.89% (average)

Table 6.1

Month	Overrun incidents	Permits Issued	% Overrun
Apr-21	97	4548	2.13%
May-21	29	4481	0.65%
Jun-21	36	5450	0.66%
Jul-21	78	4954	1.57%
Aug-21	38	4623	0.82%
Sep-21	44	4519	0.97%
Oct-21	32	3451	0.93%
Nov-21	26	3842	0.68%
Dec-21	49	3483	1.41%
Jan-22	60	3760	1.60%
Feb-22	38	3874	0.98%
Mar-22	49	5123	0.96%
Total	576	52108	1.11% (average)

Chart 6.2

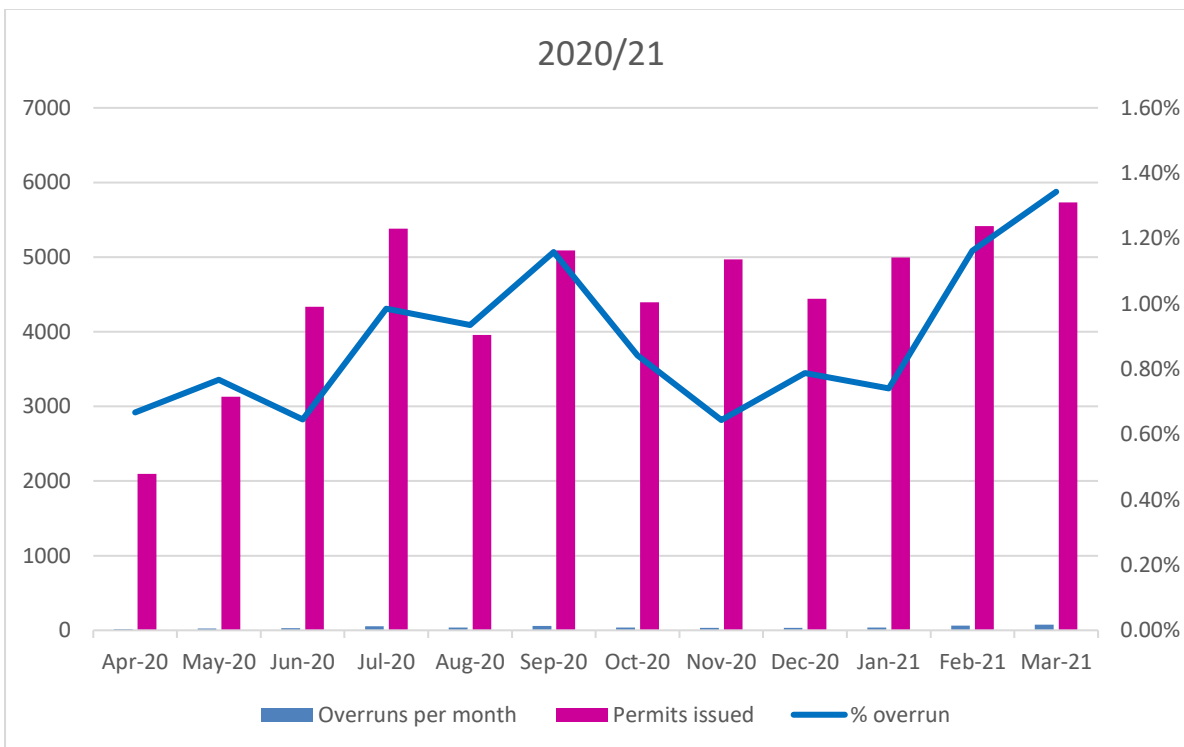
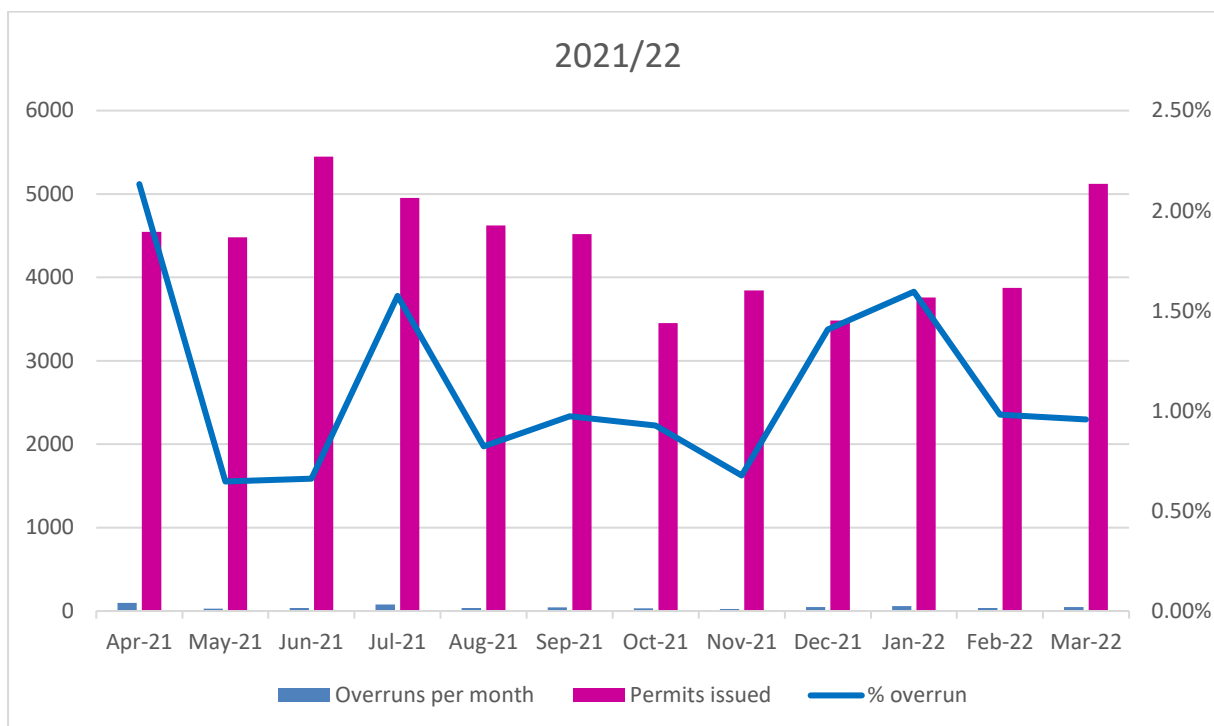


Chart 6.3



7.1.2 Analysis

The number of overrunning works is very low and fairly consistent over the 2-year period of 2020/21 & 2021/22 though there was a significant increase in April 2021 as the only month where this has risen to above 2%.

In 2020/21 the average Statutory Undertaker overrun incident rate was 40 per month and 1 per month Highway Authority overrun incidents.

In 2021/22 the overrun incident rate for Statutory Undertaker work increased to an average of 47 per month whilst the Highway authority Incident rate remained at 1 per month on average.

7.2a – Average road occupancy

One of the benefits of permits is that works durations can be judged more effectively and the use of conditions is a greater driver for tighter processes from all activity promoters to reduce their occupation of the highway. Additionally, analysis of permit durations shows how the Permit Authority and activity promoters are reducing the overall impact of activities on the highway.

7.2.1 Results

The data provided in this section has been obtained & collated by Staffordshire County Council from running reports from Street Manager to accurately reflect the true duration of works. Please note that the data for year 1 (2020/21) starts in July 2020 due to the release of Street Manager being delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic & national lockdowns.

Chart 7.0

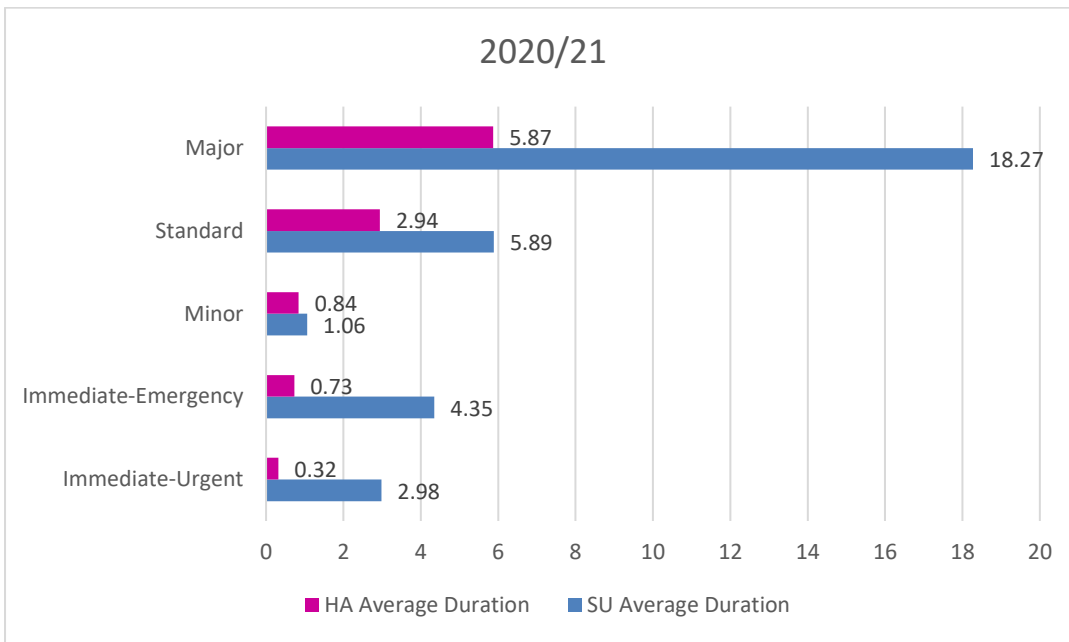
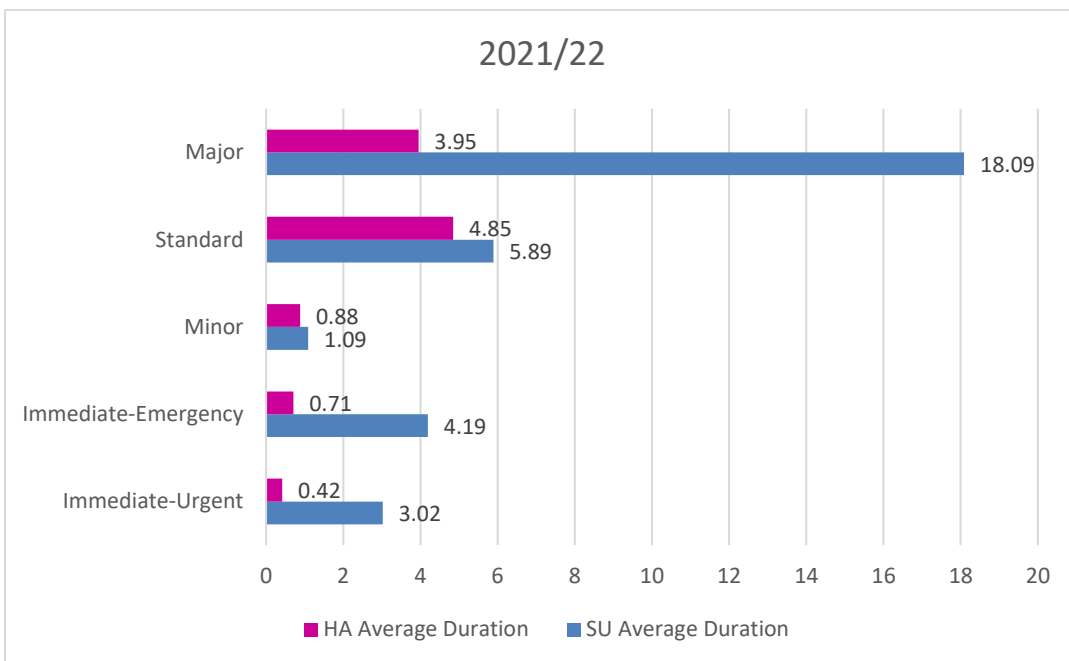


Chart 7.1



This data has been further interrogated and broken down into different permit & industry types as shown in the table below. These have been separated into the following: Water, Gas, Electric and Telecoms

Table 7.2

Year 1 (2020/21)	Immediate-Urgent	Immediate-Emergency	Minor	Standard	Major
Gas	5.46	7.95	1.46	6.75	25.94
Water	2.93	0.90	1.34	5.02	9.02
Electric	4.80	2.38	0.94	6.17	23.04
Telecoms	1.28	1.45	0.37	5.09	4.59
Highway Authority	0.32	0.73	0.84	2.94	5.87

Table 7.3

Year 2 (2021/22)	Immediate-Urgent	Immediate-Emergency	Minor	Standard	Major
Gas	4.36	7.13	1.48	5.62	24.49
Water	2.96	2.83	1.08	5.14	11.45
Electric	5.01	1.42	1.25	6.17	31.59
Telecoms	1.20	1.18	1.08	6.19	12.33
Highway Authority	0.42	0.71	0.88	4.85	3.95

7.2.2 Analysis

During year 1 the average duration for Statutory Undertaker work was considerably higher than that of Highway Authority work. In year 2 there was a reduction in average durations for immediate permit work in most industry sectors but a large increase in water work durations. For planned work durations either stayed around the same or decreased slightly but there is a notably large increase in duration for major permit work in the electric sector.

The reductions in duration can be attributed to tighter network management and higher demands for network space following the easing of Coronavirus restrictions and a return to normal working practices.

7.2b - Days of Disruption Saved/ Number of collaborative works

The potential economic benefits from shared working space are considerable. In addition, this measure shows a proactive and positive approach to working together to minimise disruption and occupancy.

This data has been collated using Street Manager reporting and pivoted on the column titled "Is there collaborative working?" As before, year 1 includes data from July 2020 onwards due to Street Manager being released part way through the financial & operational year.

7.2.3 Results

The charts below show the total number of works that took place on the Staffordshire County Council network and the number of permits that were flagged as working in collaboration in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Chart 8.0

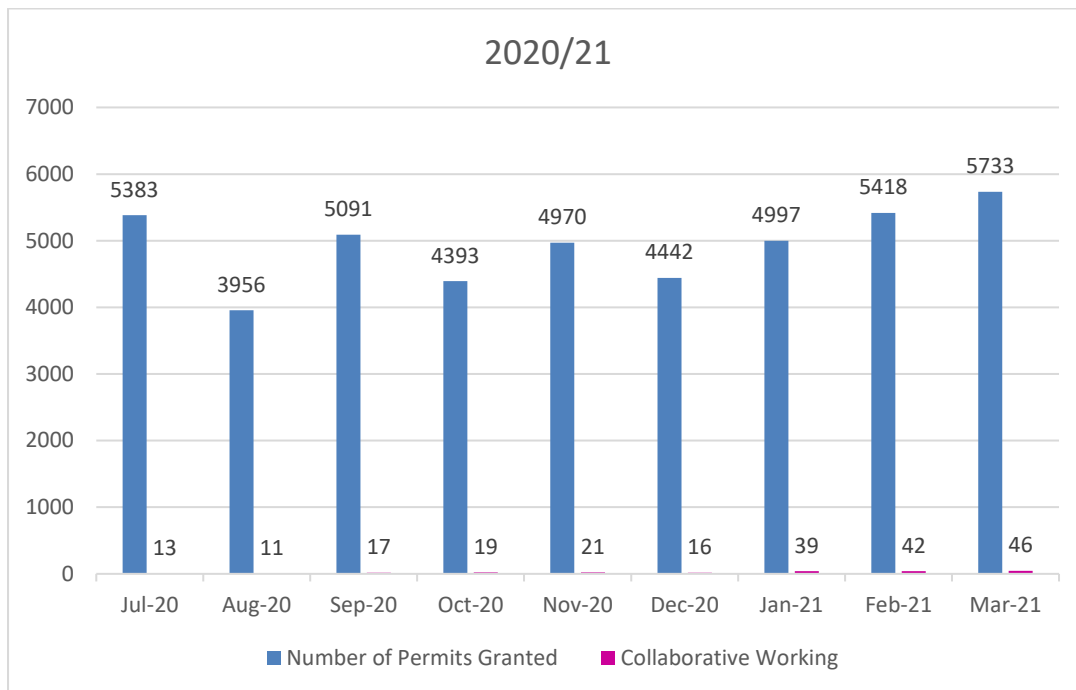
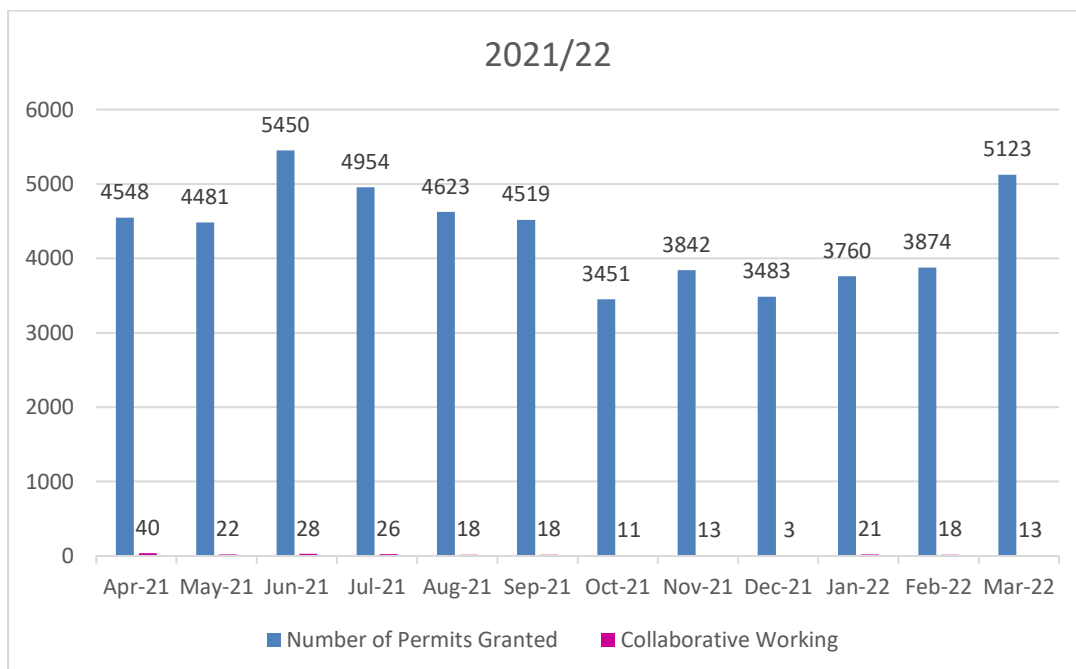


Chart 8.1



7.2.4 Analysis

In 2020/21 there were 338 permits flagged for collaborative working with a combined duration of 1016.64 days and in 2021/22 this increased to 387 permits with a combined duration of 1156.06 days.

Collaborative working is encouraged at Staffordshire County Council to help minimise the disruption and duration of work being carried out on the network though it is recognised that a lot more can be done with regards to increasing the incidences of collaborative working and the authority are placing more of a focus on this going forward where it is reasonably practicable for Statutory Undertakers to consider and implement this. This can be further encouraged by offering discounted permit fees and realised savings on Traffic Management costs by the works promoters.

7.3 Number of refused permits by refusal reason

Monitoring permit refusals shows the common reasons for refusal which is helpful to the activity promoter to identify any particular areas for improvement, this metric is also an indicator of parity.

This data has been collated using Street Manager reporting and pivoted on the column titled "Reasons for Refusal." As before, year 1 includes data from July 2020 onwards due to Street Manager being released part way through the financial year.

7.3.1 Results

The charts below show the number of refusals broken down by response code.

Chart 9.0

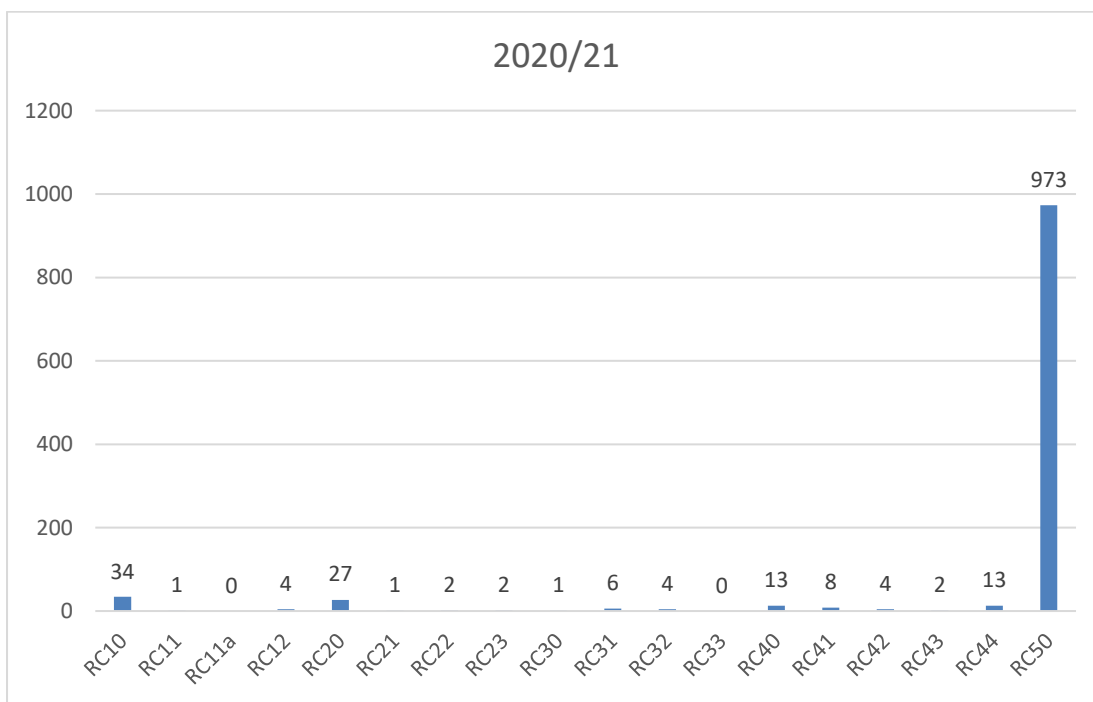
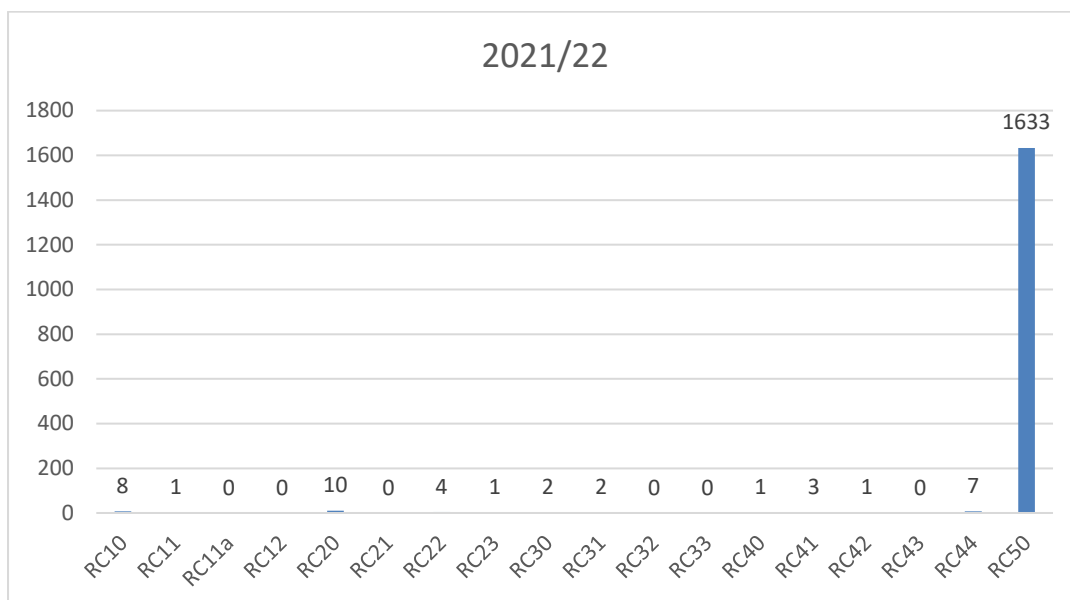


Chart 9.1



As the above data does not accurately reflect the refusal reasons for the associated permits Staffordshire have completed a sample manual review of the refusal text provided for 50 permits from each year and the following trends have been identified:

Table 9.2

Year 1 (2020/21)	Sample refusal reason text
RC20 - Incorrect details on permit	3
RC21 - Incorrect primary recipient	7
RC22 - Location issues	1
RC31 - Conflicting activity	5
RC41 - TM not approved	1
RC42 - Early start agreement	23
RC43 - S.58 restriction	3
RC50 - Other	7

Table 9.3

Year 2 (2021/22)	Sample refusal reason text
RC12 - TM details not received	10
RC20 - Incorrect details on permit	4
RC21 - Incorrect primary recipient	9
RC22 - Location issues	2
RC31 - Conflicting activity	9
RC41 - TM not approved	1

RC42 - Early start agreement	13
RC44 - Duration Challenge	1
RC50 – Other	1

7.3.2 Analysis

From the sample data we have collated there is an indication that there is a trend of permits being refused due to:

1. Promoters not submitting applications with the correct legislative lead in times
2. Traffic Management documents not being received in time
3. Permit applications being submitted for private streets
4. Clashes with other work already booked in on the highway

This data has highlighted that refusal reasons have been given in the works comment description text but that the different codes have not consistently been applied by the Officers. In future years Staffordshire County Council will be putting a greater focus on ensuring the reasons for refusal are being accurately captured in order to provide more comprehensive data for analysis.

7.4 Number of cancellations as a percentage of granted permits

To ensure the control of works and to proactively minimise the effect of those activities on many different affected parties, it is important that any booked road space not required is cancelled in a timely manner.

It is not a statutory requirement for promoters to cancel works, either before or after the start date, but the DfT and HAUC support good practice in that promoters should cancel road space bookings if no longer required.

As a permit attracts a fee at the point of application it is anticipated that this will encourage more efficient planning and discourage the cancellation of works and replanning at a later date as each new application will attract a fee. This is a clear improvement over noticing as there were no financial disadvantages to the promoter for replanning works at short notice however, this still poses challenges to the Highway Authority to coordinate activities on the network.

This data has been collated using Street Manager reporting and pivoted on the column titled "Work Status." As before, year 1 includes data from July 2020 onwards due to Street Manager being released part way through the financial year.

This measure is expressed as:

- Percentage of permits cancelled compared with number of applications received

7.4.1 Results

The below charts show the number of applications received compared to the percentage of cancellations that were received.

Chart 10.0

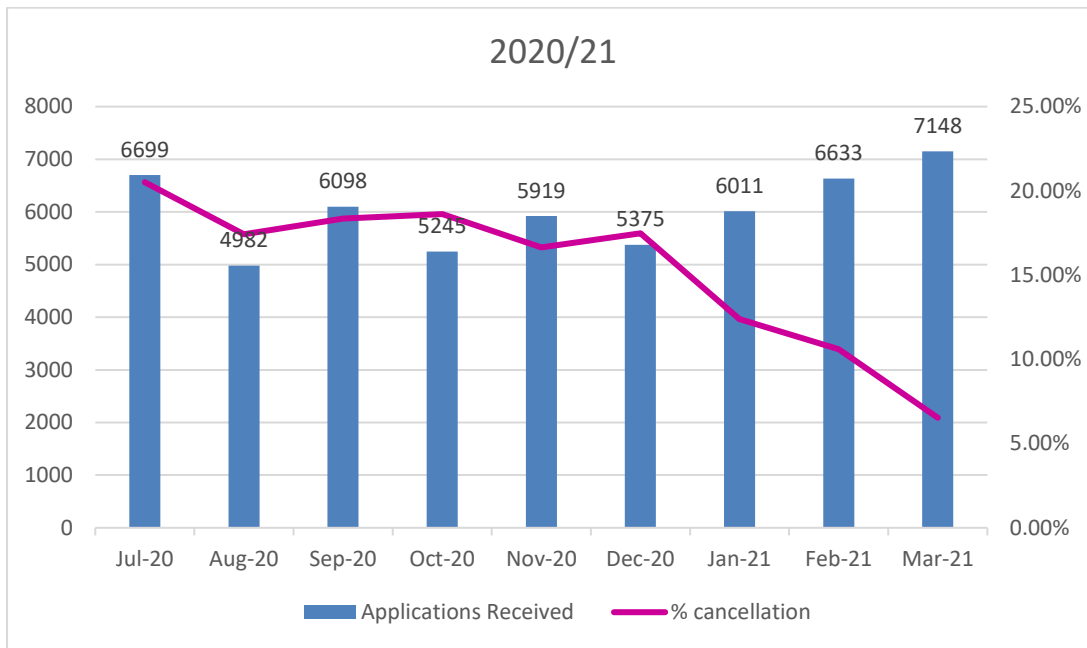
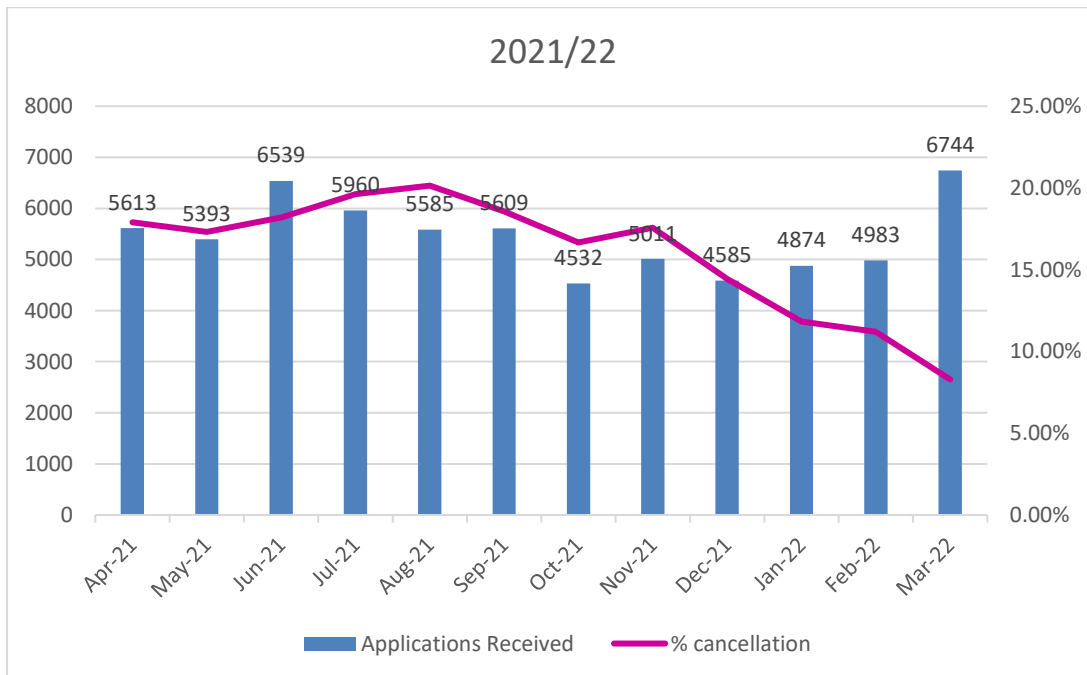


Chart 10.1



The split of cancellations in the above data is as follows:

Table 10.2

Industry Type – Year 1*	Percentage of cancellations
Gas	22.81%
Water	12.83%
Electric	7.28%
Telecoms	15.04%
Highway Authority	23.17%

Table 10.3

Industry Type – Year 2	Percentage of cancellations
Gas	13.63%
Water	12.23%
Electric	8.56%
Telecoms	17.96%
Highway Authority	24.38%

****Year 1 data from 1st July 2020 to 31st March 2021 as this has been extracted from Street Manager reports***

7.4.2 Analysis

There is a decrease in the cancellation percentages in year 2 for Gas and Water which suggests that the permit scheme is working in driving more efficient planning with established companies within the industry.

The volume of permits Staffordshire County Council receive from the electric sector is relatively small in comparison to other industry types so any slight change in cancellations has a larger impact on the percentage.

There has been a significant increase in telecoms activity due to Central Government focus on fibre deployment across the UK via DCMS funding. As such, this is putting additional demand on the Staffordshire highway network for road space. As we are not able to accommodate all requests for road space, this may have an impact on the cancellation percentage as a number of permits will be cancelled following a permit refusal or modification request.

The overall cancellation rate for year 1 (July 2020-March 2021) was 18.48% and this reduced in Year 2 (April 2021-March 2022) to 17.32% which demonstrates an improvement in planning by the various promoters.

7.5 First time permanent reinstatements

Section 70 of NRSWA 1991 allows statutory undertakers to carry out an interim or a permanent reinstatement. Interim reinstatements must be made permanent within 6 months. Therefore, undertaking a first-time permanent reinstatement can reduce disruption on the highway network, particularly when traffic management is required by taking away the need for the network to be occupied twice. By completing a permanent reinstatement first time there are also significant cost benefits to many statutory undertakers including labour, traffic management and permit fees.

This data has been collated using Street Manager Registered Reinstatements reporting and pivoted on the columns titled "Reinstatement State" and "Date Registered." As before, year 1 includes data from July 2020 onwards due to Street Manager being released part way through the financial & operational year.

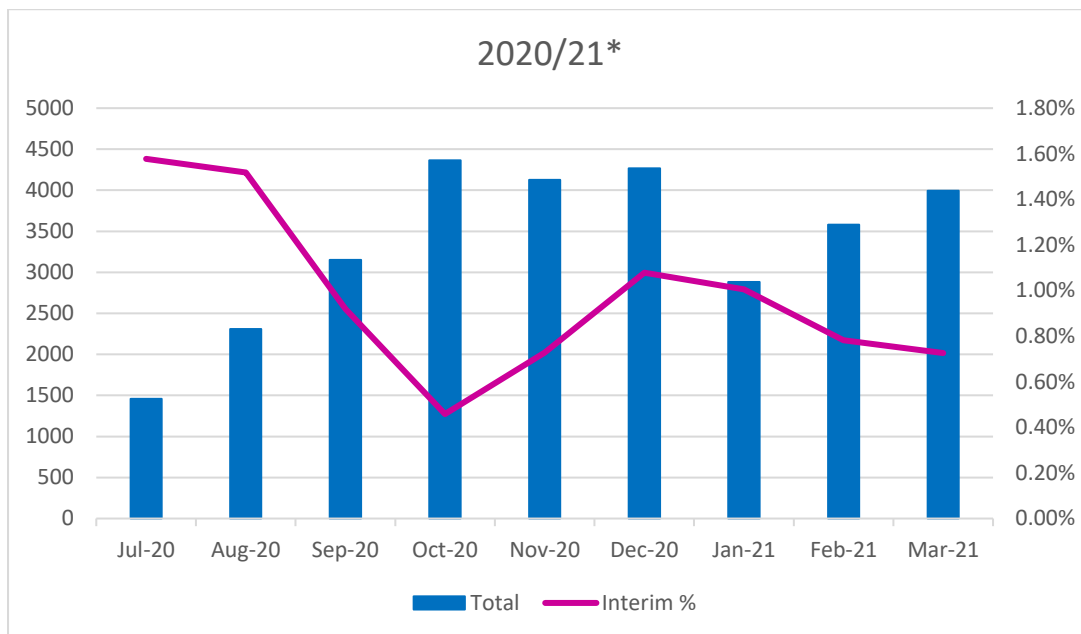
This measure is expressed as:

- Percentage of interim reinstatements against number reinstatements registered

7.5.1 Results

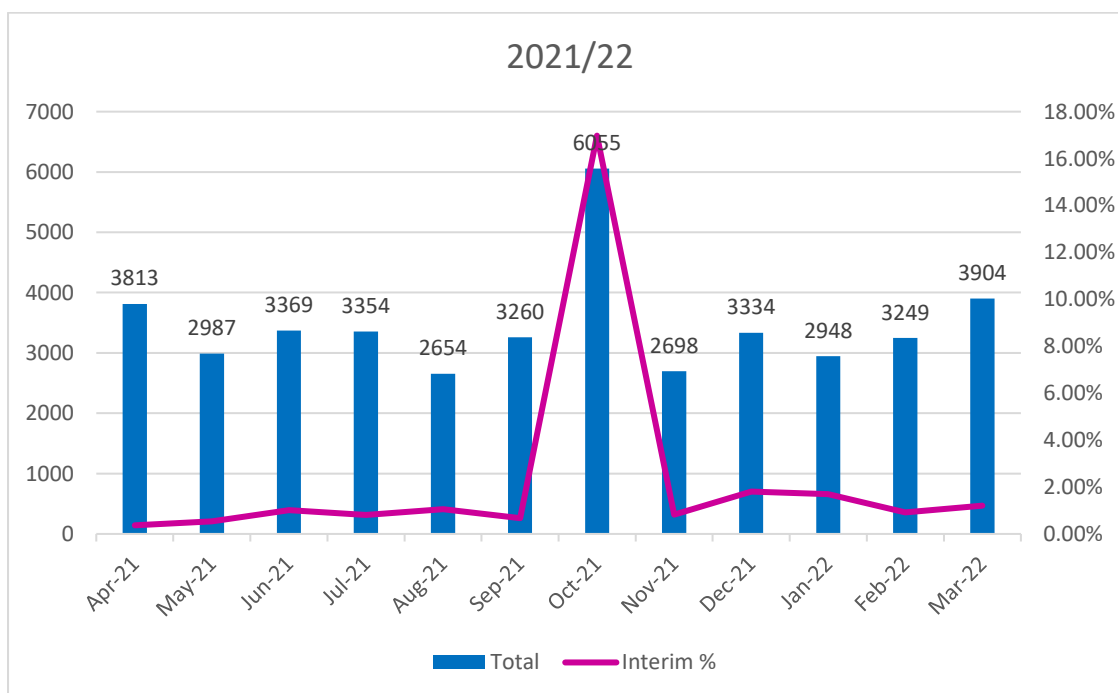
The below charts display the total number of reinstatements registered and the percentage of these that were registered as interim reinstatements

Chart 11.0



***Year one runs from July 2020 to March 2021 as the data has been extracted from Street Manager**

Chart 11.1



7.5.2 Analysis

The results indicate a generally low percentage of sites being completed to an interim standard, with the average for year 1 being 0.98% overall and the average for year 2 being 2.32%.

However, there is a large anomaly in the data for year 2 in October 2021. This is due to a system issue that one of the Statutory Undertakers experienced, meaning their sites were not recording correctly,

and a large batch of reinstatement information needed to be re-submitted to correct this. If we take the data for October 2021 out of consideration, the average interim reinstatement percentage for year 2 was 0.99%.

The first 2 years of data are indicating that the percentage of interim reinstatements is remaining below 1% and that the permit scheme is helping to incentivise work being completed to a permanent standard first time which, in turn, reduces the disruption caused by road works and street works.

7.6 Category A “in progress” inspection results

Category A inspections described in the [NRSWA Code of Practice for Inspections](#) scrutinise the way a site is set up; suitability of traffic management, signing and guarding and site safety. This is not just for vehicular traffic; it has particular significance to the safety of pedestrians and those with a disability. In addition, they may also cover methods of excavation, materials and methods used during the reinstatement.

Category A inspections are part of NRSWA and are a common reporting and performance measure for authorities. It can be argued that this measure is not specific to the permit scheme and does not necessarily provide information on how the permit scheme is being operated. However, this measure has been included within the WaSP scheme because one of the key objectives of WaSP is to ensure the safety of those using the street and those working on activities that fall under the scheme, with particular emphasis on people with disabilities.

This data has been collated using Street Manager Inspections reporting and pivoted on the columns titled “Inspection Outcome” and “Inspection Date.” As before, year 1 includes data from July 2020 onwards due to Street Manager being released part way through the financial & operational year.

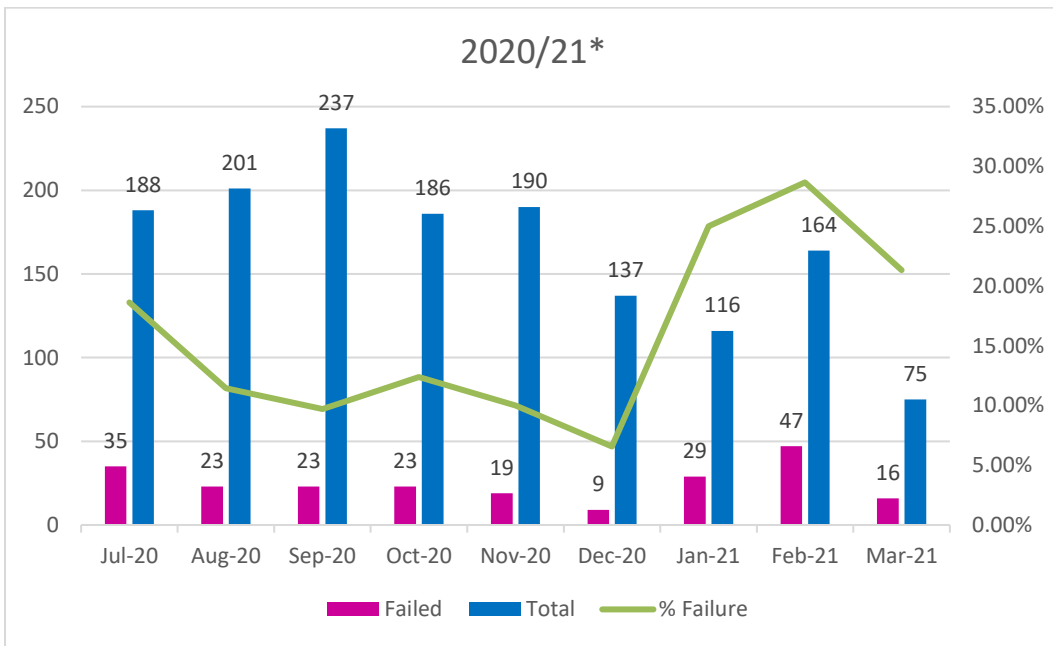
This measure is expressed as:

- Percentage of failed Category A inspections against the total number of Category A inspections completed.

7.6.1 Results

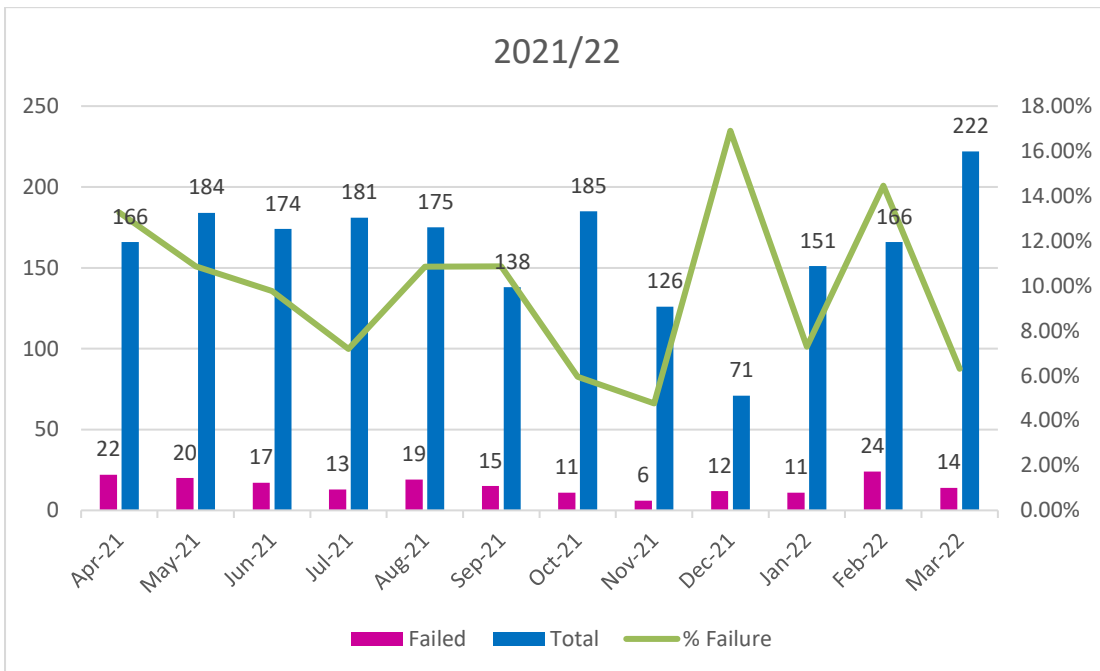
The following charts display the percentage failure rate on Category A inspections across the county.

Chart 12.0



***Year one runs from July 2020 to March 2021 as the data has been extracted from Street Manager**

Chart 12.1



7.6.2 Analysis

The overall rate of inadequacies identified on live sites is slightly higher than expected, 15.97% in year 1 on average and 9.87% in year 2 on average. The failure rate is normally expected to be below 10% (as per the NRSWA Code of Practice for Inspections 2002 Section 7.3).

The downward trend is indicating that the implementation of a permit scheme is having a positive effect on site safety.

The significant increase in site failures in Q4 of year 1 can partly be attributed to one statutory undertaker being placed on a formal improvement plan. The means there was increased scrutiny of

their sites and therefore more failed inspections being completed as Staffordshire County Council worked with them to drive, educate and implement the necessary improvements.

Staffordshire County Council will continue to review this data going forward and work to drive compliance and improvement with the various statutory undertakers operating on the Staffordshire highway network.

7.7 Permit condition inspection results

Street Manager caters for specific permit condition compliance inspections that provide a measure of whether the promoter is working within the terms of their permit.

There is no statutory inspection sample size for condition compliance inspections, however, the expectation is that any site that is inspected for a NRSWA Category A inspection will also have its permit conditions checked (and vice versa).

Regulation 20 created the offence for an undertaker or someone acting upon its behalf to undertake works in breach of a stated condition.

This data has been collated using Street Manager Fixed Penalty Notice reporting and pivoted on the columns titled "Offence Date" and "Offence Code." As before, year 1 includes data from July 2020 onwards due to Street Manager being released part way through the financial year.

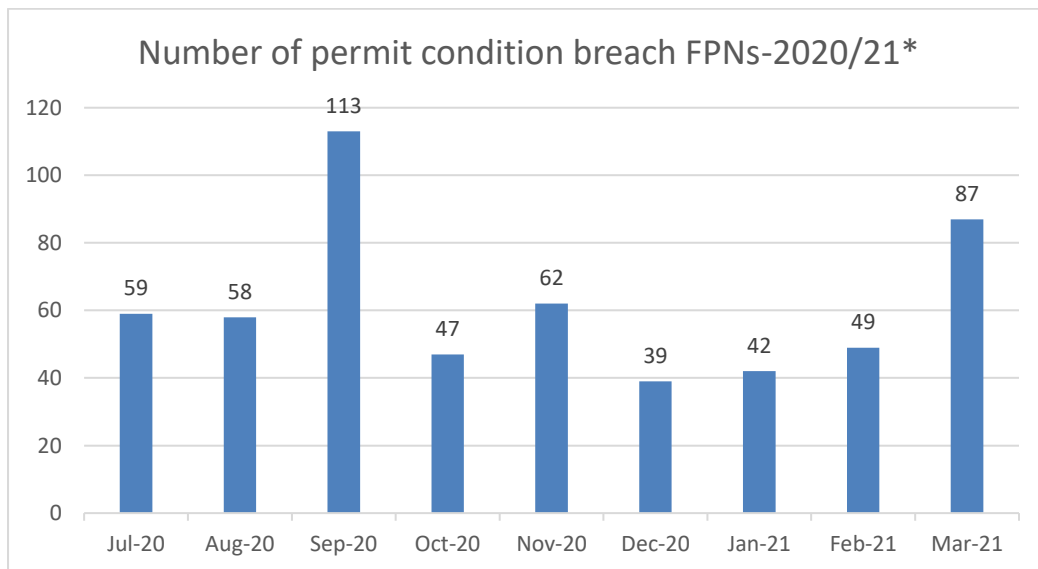
This measure is expressed as:

- Total number of FPNs issued under Regulation 20

7.7.1 Results

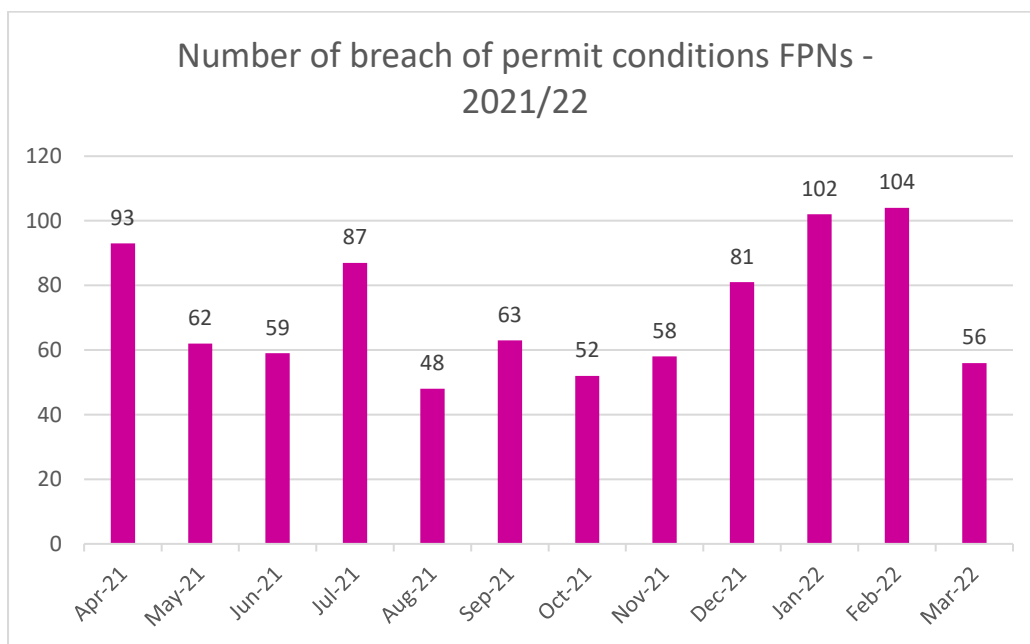
The below charts demonstrate the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) that has been issued to works promoters for breaching their agreed upon permit conditions on site.

Chart 13.0



***Year one runs from July 2020 to March 2021 as the data has been extracted from Street Manager**

Chart 13.1



7.7.2 Analysis

The data above demonstrates an increased focus from the Traffic & Network Management Team and Staffordshire County Council on permit conditions being breached by works promoters which has resulted in an increase in FPNs. Sites and permits will continue to be monitored, FPNs will be issued and used as a compliance tool where it is deemed appropriate, to drive the correct behaviours by promoters across the county.

8. Conclusion

Staffordshire County Council implemented the West and Shires Permit Scheme as a tool to allow improved management of all activities on the highway network and to better coordinate work being undertaken by Statutory Undertakers and its own highway contractors. By doing this Staffordshire can minimise the disruption and inconvenience caused by road works and street works amongst other activities.

The data provided demonstrates parity of treatment between statutory undertakers and the highway authority and the positive conclusions drawn from the implementation of the permit scheme are summarised below:

- Better control, planning and coordination of works
- Increased ability to challenge and check on activities on the highway
- Introduction of permit conditions to promote safety and reduce disruption as well and build up a better picture of the true circumstances on a site and how these may affect the general public including pedestrians
- Ability to encourage collaborative working and accurately record this and offer incentives via 50% reduced permit fee applications to promoters

Staffordshire believe the implantation of the scheme to have been mostly successful and have adapted to the challenges presented by the Coronavirus pandemic which impacted communication with various promoters, training and recruitment amongst other things. Below is a summary of the aspects of the scheme which will be given a greater focus by Staffordshire over the coming years.

- Consideration of permit conditions and when these are required and relevant
- Exploring more ways to encourage collaborative working to minimise the amount of time the highway network is subject to disruption
- Ensuring we are accurately recording the reasons for permit applications being refused to allow for better analysis and engagement with the affected promoters to reduce the instances of this
- Further work with promoters to improve the timeliness and quality of data being provided to Staffordshire on permit applications and ensure what is being promoted on the permit is reflected on site
- Consideration to be made with regards to recording permit condition breach data in more detail so this can be further analysed and any concerns addressed with the relevant promoters
- Continue to monitor cancellation volumes with the relevant promoters to achieve a reduction in wasted network space/time.

No significant changes were made to the service operation during this reporting period and no changes to permit fee levels are being proposed at this time.

9. Glossary

EToN system – The Electronic Transfer of Notices, the nationally agreed format for the transmission of notice information.

EToN developers – representatives of the main software developers involved in street works

EToN Strategy Group – responsible for the development of the EToN system

NMD – Network Management Duty, a legal obligation created by the Traffic Management Act 2004 for highway authorities to secure the expeditious movement of traffic

AM – Authority Measure

PAN – Permit Advice Note

TMA – Traffic Management Act 2004

(Sample) Cat A – An inspection undertaken during the progress of the works as defined in Section 2.3.1 of The Code of Practice for Inspections 2002

NRSA – New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991

FPN – Fixed Penalty Notice

DfT – Department for Transport

HAUC - highways and Utilities Committee

WaSP – West and Shires Permit Scheme

TTRO - Temporary Traffic Regulation Order

Confirm – Streetworks Management System used by Staffordshire County Council

Minor permit – duration of 1-3 working days

Standard permit – duration of 4-10 working days

Major permit – duration of 10 working days+ or road closures

Immediate-emergency permit – used when circumstances present a risk to life or property

Immediate-urgent permit – used when circumstances present a potential significant financial loss to the undertaker, cause interruption to supply, to reconnect supplies or services where the undertaker would be under a civil or criminal liability

Street Manager – National permitting system launched by the DfT on 1st July 2020

HA – Highway Authority

SU – Statutory Undertaker

DCMS – Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

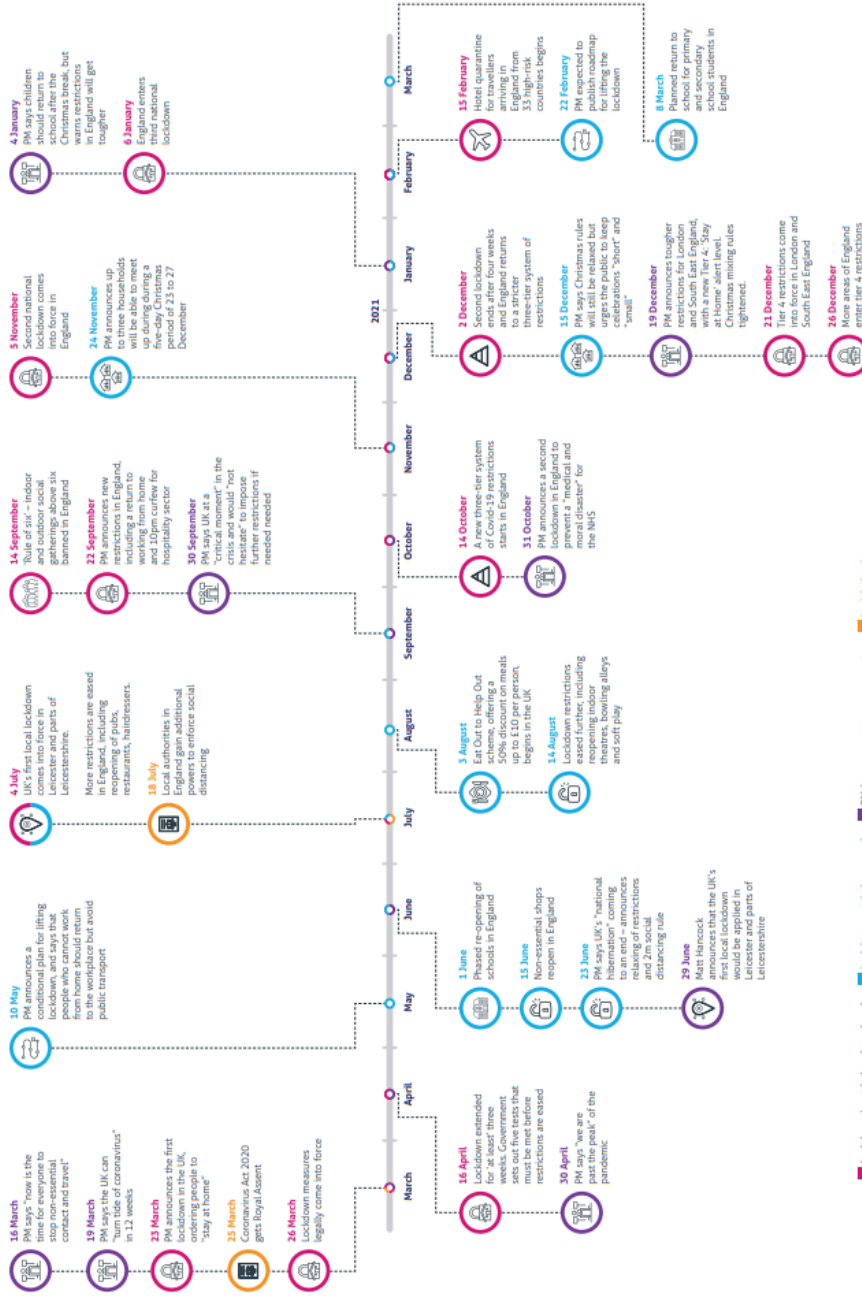
Working Day – weekdays

SCC – Staffordshire County Council

10. Appendix A

Timeline of UK coronavirus lockdowns, March 2020 to March 2021

IFG



Source: Institute for Government analysis.

