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Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Highways Department

Road Vibration Rationalisation

Damage to properties is unlikely to occur as a result of vibrations caused by traffic. Research undertaken by the Transport Research Laboratory the effects of ground-borne vibrations caused by road humps (TRL416), and traffic induced vibrations in buildings (Research Report 246) found that only in unusual circumstances is it likely that there will be a risk of superficial building damage and there is no evidence that more serious structural damage could occur.

The Highway Authorities duty under Section 41 of The Highways Act 1980 is to maintain the highway so that it is free from danger to all users. We however have no duty to investigate traffic-induced noise and building vibration generated by road users.

Many structural problems are not related to the public highway but instead caused by other factors.

Homeowners or their insurers must commission a structural survey of their property. Only on receipt of sufficient evidence from a trained and competent assessor will action be considered.

If action is deemed as necessary to prevent further damage to a property from traffic-induced vibration, the works will be limited to surfacing works and will be added into the maintenance program pending funding availability. No compensation shall be paid for damage caused by traffic-induced vibration, as the council has not duty to protect properties from traffic-induced vibration. The duty is to keep the highway safe for highway users and this is dealt with by the Highway Safety Inspection Procedure.

It is recommended the engineering evidence provided follows the suggested format and includes content as given in Annex A (BS 6472-1:2008), or a template assessment report can be provided through contacting Highways@blackburn.gov.uk.