

COLLABORATION TOOLKIT



Collaboration:

“The action of working with someone to produce something.”

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Introduction

This document is not designed to be prescriptive in its format but will open up the discussions and highlight the issues that need to be considered by all parties where collaborative works can make a positive impact for all of those involved.

An introduction to collaboration as set out in various documents:

1. Legislation, Codes of Practice and Guidance:
 - a. Activities on the highway are regulated and governed by legislation. These laws ensure that the people using the highways can do so in a safe and free manner. All guidance will always refer to the Legislation and associated Codes of Practice.
 - b. The Co-ordination Code of Practice makes specific reference to the addition of collaboration.
2. Local Authority Schemes:
 - a. Permits schemes' main aims are to reduce congestion, reduce delays to the travelling public, improve network management, promote safer environments and help reduce carbon emissions.
 - b. Permit schemes should be written to encourage collaboration by offering discounts to promoters.
 - c. Lane Rental Schemes can play a big part in encouraging collaborative working. Whether that be through discounts or future-proofing for subsequent works. They should be seen as to incentivise rather than penalise collaborative working.

██████████ – Traffic Manager Croydon Council. Highways Public Realm Department

Croydon and TfL developed a policy on collaborative working. It was originally called Collaborative Croydon it has been taken up by GLA of which Croydon is one of the founding members. It is now called London Infrastructure. GLA have funded places to roll out the aims of the policy. The aim is to get developers, utility promoters and the council's own work to programme their works to one occupation.

This should reduce the time spent on the highway and prevent S58 breaches by carrying out resurfacing programme after collaborative works has been implemented. We often had collaboration with TfL, utility and LBC's own works; sometimes we can incorporate Section 50 licences too. This has brought successful savings in costs of parking suspensions, traffic orders, disruption to the residents, and reduced congestion.

We have also learned that you need to cover off all aspects of the environment where the collaborative works is taking place, ie. let schools know, waste collection, bus routes, residents own requirements (ie. moving or if they are improving their homes, deliveries to site). Mostly positive outcomes were achieved. For our work on Epsom Road - championed by the Mayor of London - we achieved an award. It also gained recognition at LoTag.

Out of scope:

Method of sharing of reinstatement and traffic management costs, liability and guarantee periods. These elements are touched on within the document, however, due the uniqueness of each

‘Collaboration’, there is no prescriptive guidance attempted within this document. The focus throughout is on communication and flexibility in order to allow for each specific circumstance.

Benefits of collaborating

1. We can see that there are benefits to collaborating works together. Below are just a few examples:
 - a. Reduced road occupation and delays to road users.
 - b. Reduced cost to businesses from network delays.
 - c. Sharing of materials between works promoters.
 - d. Sharing of resources between all works promoters.
 - e. Opportunity for positive stakeholder messages and praise.
2. Large schemes of works are the ones that have the most obvious benefit to collaborative working. But **all planned** works from any promoter can benefit from collaboration where any form of reduction can be realised. The below are some of the main works promoters that carry out works in the highways:
 - a. Highway authorities.
 - b. Utility providers.
 - c. Section 50 works promoters.
 - d. Development works.
3. There are many benefits to collaborating works within many different parties; those benefits can be shared to end-users:
 - a. Reduced infrastructure installation costs.
 - b. Reduced material cost.
 - c. Reduced waste material produced.
 - d. A positive impact on the environment and carbon savings.
 - e. Assistance to the Highway authority in fulfilling Network Management Duty
4. Public perception is a major consideration in all types of works in the highway. How the travelling public is affected by works go a long way in making road and street works successful. Where it is clear that works are being collaborated to reduce congestion, it can help with public behaviour around the works. It can foster the following:
 - a. Good relations towards the works.
 - b. Visible evidence of a minimum disruption to road users.
 - c. Positive social media interaction.
 - d. Praise of individuals or locations.
 - e. Acceptance of future works.

Identifying opportunities

Identifying areas where collaborative works could occur can be vast and varied; there will be many locations and discussions that can lead to positive collaboration. The most opportune time to be thinking about collaboration is at the planning stage of works – the earlier the better. This is the moment to think about how cost, duration and resources can be managed and positively reduced. You should only be limited by your imagination of who is contacted and brought into collaboration:

1. Coordination meetings:
 - a. Highway authority co-ordination meetings is an excellent forum - here the authority has a vested interest in the planning of all activities on its road network. Many major activities of note will be known at these meetings. It is at this forum that these works are discussed between all the major works promoters and authorities.



- b. Local events of all types happen in all local authority areas. These events can close one or multiple roads for the event to take place; they can present an opportunity for collaboration to exist, especially when the other activities are of small duration and can be accomplished within the duration of the event.
 - c. Planning departments can have advance knowledge of development works long before they start to affect the highway network. Where activities spill out onto the highway consideration should be given to collaborate multiple activities. And advance notice should be given to all parties so that they have the opportunity to collaborate even if the developer doesn't want to.
 - d. Authorities should be aware of potential development sites in streets that may be identified for reconstruction/resurfacing.
- 2. Online sources:
 - a. Street Manager is the DfT's new digital platform for planning and managing roadworks. All works submitted to Highway authorities are now managed through that portal.
 - b. The 'One Network' portal is a huge resource of information to assist with the planning of potential highway activities. The portal is full of works promoters' information showing locations, durations and traffic management information; details about ownership and make-up of street; road closure and diversion routes are also visible. It also has real-time transport information.
 - c. Planning portals can give an indication of long-term development planning, showing the potential for future collaboration opportunities.
- 3. Permit Applications:
 - a) Each refusal for a "Clash of works" could be an *opportunity to collaborate*. The local authority MUST carefully assess each application as part of their Network Management Duty.
 - b) Co-ordination of permit applications is an *active* role; with the correct information supplied, the local authority plays a key role in making collaboration work – this is usually more than sending a comment back to the promoter.
 - c) A Permit Application means that Promoters have committed staff, resources, and materials to the dates requested – involvement at the planning stage by the local authority can impact positively to achieve collaboration.
- 4. 'Word of mouth' from other stakeholders:
 - a. Further collaborative opportunities can also be found during current collaborative works. Future projects can be discussed and planned further, especially where the project is a long duration. It can also help to cement cooperation between different works promoters and contractors.
 - b. Opportunities can arise where ongoing works can be seen to be starting, or ongoing, whilst planners or operatives are working in the same areas. Flexibility is key here where works are required quickly. This will require the planner to make contact and finalise conversations quickly so that road space can be obtained.
- 5. Internal discussions
 - a. Where local authority yearly resurfacing plans have been finalised by executive committees - encouragement should be made to share those plans and invite external works promoters to collaborate. Involvement of district and parish councillors can be helpful in the organisation and planning.



- b. Utility promoters should be encouraged to submit plans early, especially if they are aware of multiple works upcoming. This is a positive way to help reduce fees, resources and materials.

Considerations

1. The collaborative works that are being carried out play a central role in how and what other works can be carried out. Ensuring that the activities are carried out in a logical order and that resources are available to prevent delays is important. These are just some of the questions that could be asked:
 - a. What are the activities and their durations? Which activity can be actioned and in what order?
 - b. Can the activities be carried out together? Are there limitations on activities being carried out in close proximity?
 - c. Does the work area facilitate all activities together at the same time, or one after the other?
 - d. Can the activities be carried out by one promoter's contractor? Does any contractor have multi-skilled personnel to minimise people on site?
 - e. Is there any urgency to any particular works being carried out?
 - f. Will the weather be suitable for all activities?

2. Like all successful projects, it all starts with a plan. A plan that looks at all the steps and timescales laid out in an easy-to-follow sequence. The 'Collaboration Checklist' in the appendix can be used as a basis to put a plan in place. It is important that all parties are aware of the plan, and where they fit into the plan:
 - a. Initial meeting and communications.
 - b. Documenting the plan.
 - c. All Materials and suppliers.
 - d. Equipment required on all works.
 - e. Resources required on all works.
 - f. Traffic Management required for the duration of works.
 - g. Regular Site meetings to check on progress.
 - h. Responsibilities of all parties.
3. Documentation is important to ensure that everyone can follow the same process. When changes are made it is important that all those changes are communicated to all parties:
 - a. Creating a proper plan.
 - b. Standardising the checklists.
 - c. Identifying all the stake holders including contact details.
 - d. Identifying all the materials and supplier details.
 - e. Ensuring that any changes made to the plan are communicated to all contacts on the checklist.
 - f. Any legal documentation required.
 - g. Naming all the parties.
4. Highway authorities should take into account that successful collaboration is not always within the control of each promoter. Therefore, it would be reasonable to allow additional time to achieve this and should not challenge durations unreasonably, especially when a clear benefit can be seen. Any difficulties are best discussed with the Highway authority to agree safety concerns, urgency or lack of co-operation.
5. An introduction of a form of Clerk of Works to navigate the council departments can help to ensure smooth running of the project.
6. Create and maintain relationships throughout the works planning process. This includes utility promoter planners, supervisors and authority co-ordinators being able to openly discuss potential collaboration, and to have the trust and flexibility between them to enable the best possible outcome.

West Sussex County Council

Wherever 'realistically possible' collaborative working is used - or the question at least asked of undertakers to try and save road space/network days. However, this is wholly reliant on undertakers and more often 2nd/3rd party contractors to want to play ball. Internal resources to have on-site meetings pre-works is helpful to ensure all avenues are investigated thoroughly to collaborate.

Most of the successes will be down to the individual supervisors being "up for" sharing road space which a lot of the time is not the case – the benefits to the guys on the ground are often not enticing as saving a permit fee or less TM cost does not have any bearing on them. Some of the down sides on site can also make it not worth the risk – some gangs come from far and wide which impacts their reliability to be on site when they say they will, working to a good standard, being thoughtful to other working parties, poor levels of reinstatement, completing on time all contribute to more hassle and in the end potentially not saving road time. Other problems for contractors also include how they work any finances in sharing cost etc, most do not want this inconvenience which adds to the often-negative initial approach.

Responsibilities

1. As is the case with all excavations in the highways, a notification of intent to carry out the works must be raised to the relevant Highway Authority:



- a. It is important to determine who are the Primary and Secondary promoters. This can be determined by allocating the Primary promoter as the promoter with the longest works duration. It is important that Secondary promoters are fully aware of what responsibility they have and where their responsibility starts and ends. These can be documented on the 'Collaboration Checklist' so all parties are aware.
 - b. All promoters are to be aware of the total duration of the whole collaborative works. They must be aware of timings their works are due to start and end. Having knowledge of other promoters start and end time will be useful. Continued discussions with all parties about date changes is vital.
 - c. Information discussed and made at site meetings should be properly recorded onto any notices and permits. It is always wise to check that the information recorded is correct and reasonable for the work being carried out.
2. Commercial & Operational
- a. Where a promoter has commercial responsibilities. These should always be mentioned at the earliest opportunity. So that it can be properly incorporated within the timescale of the plan.
 - b. Consider whether the TTRO cost can be shared between promoters via invoices raised by the local authority.
 - c. Consider the extent of each collaborators' reinstatement obligations; this should be reasonably agreed between parties and noted in any agreement.
 - d. Inspection regime: Category A inspections should account for collaborative works where a secondary promoter is operating within the primary site. All promoters operatives must ensure Risk Assessments account for these circumstances, and any adjustments can be undertaken through communication between promoters and authorities as required.
3. Itemising the Costings
- a. It is important that the following are clearly determined. Where the costs can be shared is ideal. And clearly defined cost responsibilities should be itemised on the Collaboration Checklist at the earliest opportunity.
 - i. Materials
 - ii. Resources
 - iii. Traffic management
 - iv. Documentation
4. Working out disagreements – Mediation
- a. Setting out a proper mediation procedure may be useful in the event of disputes.

Industry perception

How working with other works promoters is seen will play a big part in how the industry will accept and adopt collaboration. Highway authorities will want to see visible reduction in disruption to road users, whilst works promoters will want to see reductions in cost, durations, and the ability to gain road space to provide, or maintain, services.

- 1. Highway authorities (organisation only)

- a. Reduction in occupation of the highway.
- 2. Statutory Undertakers
 - a. Cost reduction in materials and time.
- 3. Other works promoters
 - a. Access to the highway to carry out work.
- 4. Housing Developers
 - a. Cost savings to developer/customer.

Bursting the Myths

- 1. What are thought to be advantages:
 - a. Reduction in disruption to the travelling public.
 - b. Reduced excavation of the highway.
 - c. Kinder to the environment.
 - d. Good publicity.
- 2. What are thought to be drawbacks?
 - a. Lack of cooperation and understanding of collaboration.
 - b. A hesitancy to be the primary promoter.

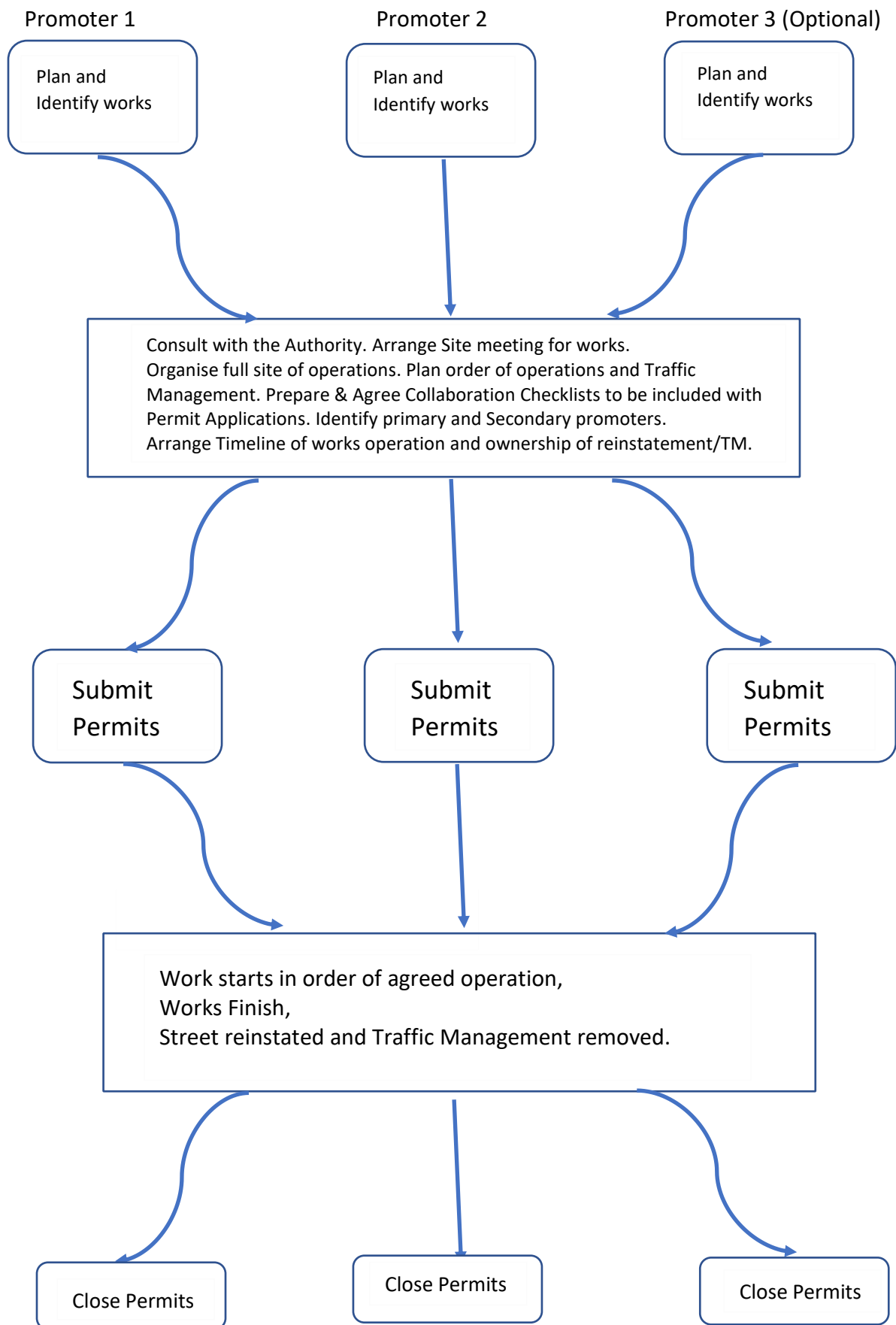
██████████ - Network Manager at Colas PFI Portsmouth CC

Collaboration reduces the amount of occupancies on the highway, reduce delays, benefit the environment, increase customer and client satisfaction and to share costs and resources.

Collaboration is encouraged and has been very successful.

It takes a little more time to execute but the cost benefits, customer satisfaction and S58 compliance has real benefits to the Highway Authority and Works promoters.

How to collaborate works (diagram)



██████████ – Connections Supervisor, UKPN

For collaboration to be a true success we need to get away from the traditional stigma that “Collaboration doesn’t work”. Collaborative working *can* work, but needs the effort from *all* parties for it to be a success; it can take a little more time in planning, but requires supervisors and co-ordinators with a positive mind-set to make it work safely and efficiently.

With that in mind, it needs good relationships at ground level with supervisors able to communicate well and be adaptable and flexible in their approach to the works. In addition, if there isn’t enough communication up front and throughout the works (particularly when things don’t go to plan) it can lead to the project failing.

When successful, it can have a positive impact on our customer connection scores and costs as well as helping to build good relations with the local authority as reduce durations on the road network. This is a real win-win-win.

There is occasionally a down-side in that perhaps certain promoters take on the role of “primary promoter” on a disproportionate number of jobs meaning they have more of responsibility on their shoulders. If there was a way of promoters sharing relevant TTRO and/or TM costs where possible, it would not always be the one promoter in first each time leading the way - this could help a lot of promoters to open their eyes to what success could look like.

If I were asked what could make a big difference: I do think that a little more effort from the local authority in terms of “co-ordination” could further enhance collaborative working and make it a big success.

For example, we are asked by the authority to collaborate via works comment (or email) work with another promoter; there is then often no more involvement from the authority meaning the works are left in the hands of the promoter supervisors. The authority co-ordinator should be involved in the formulation of the plan, then ensure the plan is understood and if something is going wrong to then be flexible enough to allow extensions to enable all parties to complete works.

Occasionally authorities can be quite rigid when it comes to certain road spaces (Lane Rental or bus routes); oddly, it is exactly these roads where we should pursue collaboration. For example, if we are asked to work over 4 consecutive Sundays (to avoid LR) rather than work differently/collaboratively during the week can often give the misconception to road-users that occupations are longer than they need to be.

In theory, as a supervisor, the “Collaboration” should already be agreed before reaching me, with the finer details of resource, materials etc to be added. Is there an opportunity to ensure effective collaboration even earlier in the connection process? Potentially, this could mean better conversations at design stage between all parties, possibly triggered by local authority Planning departments.

Conclusion

Where collaboration can be seen to benefit all those involved it can work. It should be something that all promoters should consider early in the planning process. Highways Authorities should actively seek and point out collaboration opportunities to be presented to works promoters. Where agreed, authorities should *actively* engage to see them to their end result.

Where innovation is championed to show a benefit to the Network Management Duty of the Highway Authority, it should not be unreasonable for the Authority to take the lead and direct the project. Best practice of previous collaborative works can be shared within the works promoters so that there are continuous lessons learned. Permit Schemes and Lane Rental discounts can help to play a part in progressing the works, especially when the developer or customer can be shown a benefit in terms of cost or reduced delivery times.

Equally, works promoters should actively co-operate so that collaborative works are expediated safely; any issues arising should be resolved to the best of their abilities and in a timely manner. That could involve expediting commercial contracts within their own organisation if the whole project requires it.

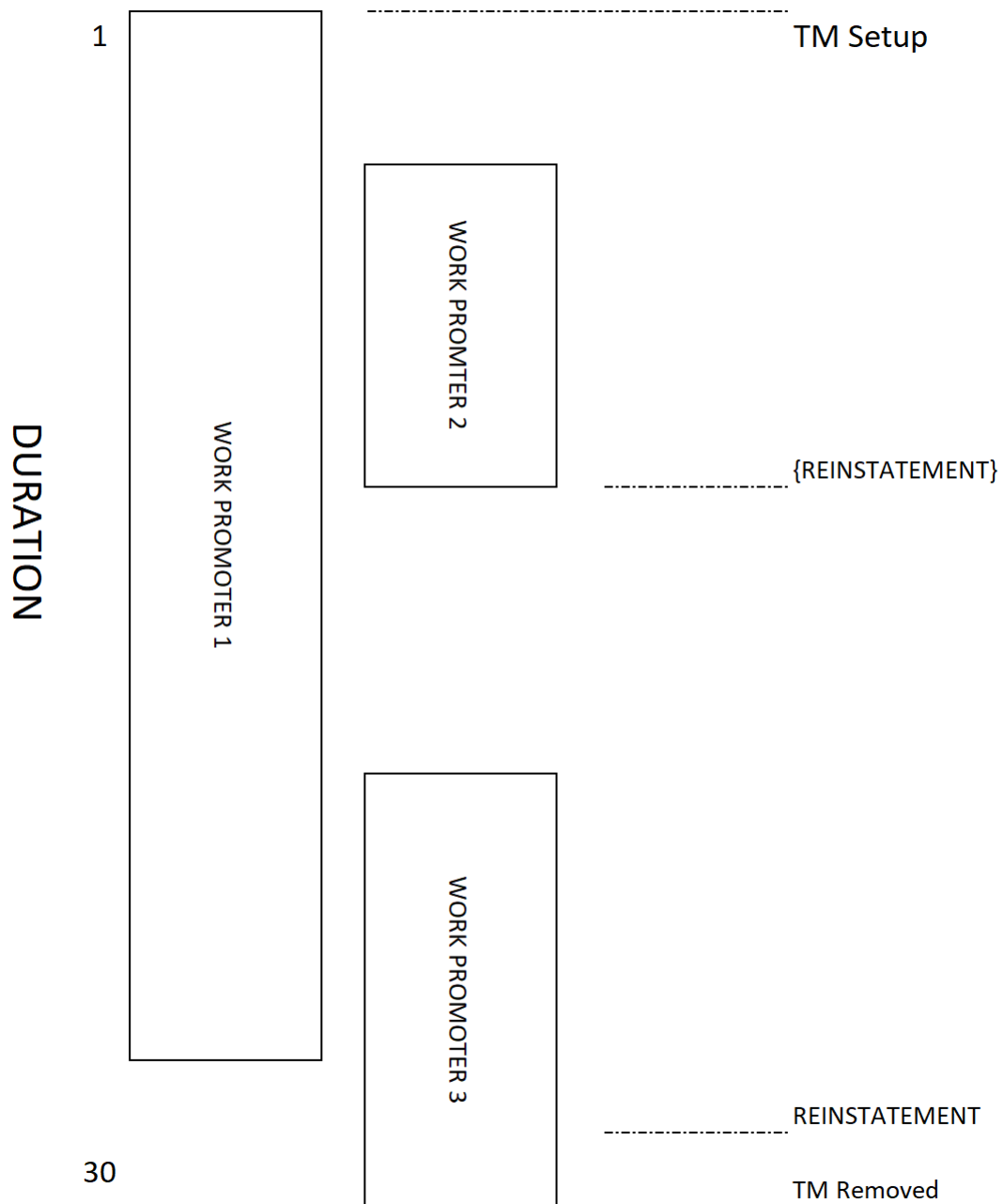
There should be a shared end goals and outcomes that all parties are aware of. The reduction of waste, emissions and vehicle movements are all to be considered. All parties should remain flexible to challenges and keep in mind that the work may need to be agile in its operation.

Communication is paramount to keeping the project on track. So all contacts details should be current, including any stand-ins. It should also be noted that when a directive is given to benefit the project, it should be acted upon with a view to keeping the timeline reduced.

Details of financial, Temporary Traffic Orders and other costs should be agreed upon at the earliest opportunity. Where possible they should be agreed upon prior to notices or permits and other activities being submitted.

Appendixes

Appendix 1 : Work plan



Appendix 2 : Example Checklist

Collaborative Working Checklist			
Street Name and Location		NAME (capitals)	Contact NUMBER
		contact	
		Promoter 1 Contact	
Job Number		Promoter 2 Contact	
		Promoter 3 Contact	
Promoter 1 Work Reference			
Description of work			
TM Requirements	TM Contact		TM Company
Promoter 2 Work Reference			
Description of work			
TM Requirements	TM Contact		TM Company
Promoter 3 Work Reference			
Description of work			
TM Requirements	TM Contact		TM Company
Agreed Collaboration Details			

References

1. New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
2. Traffic Management Act 2004
3. HAUC England Guidance for Permit Schemes 2017
4. Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Street Works and Works for Road Purposes and Related Matter HAUC (England) Edition
5. Road Traffic Act 1984
6. Control of Pollution Act 1974
7. The Town and Country Planning (England)

