

Environmental Information Regulations – Response - 27974

I am writing about Forge Terrace, Oulton Broad (off Commodore Road), which has been subject to prolonged neglect over a period of years: extensive potholing along the full length of the road, a total and long-standing absence of street lighting, and no clearly defined carriageway line or boundary, which is causing genuine confusion among residents as to the extent of the road.

1. Confirmation of adoption status

I have checked the published East Suffolk District List of Streets (Schedule of Highways Maintainable at Public Expense, derived from Suffolk County Council's Local Street Gazetteer, dated 1 September 2026). Forge Terrace does not appear on that list under that name.

That omission is difficult to reconcile with the following facts, which I ask the Council to address directly:

(a) The Council has erected a street nameplate reading "Forge Terrace" at the junction with Commodore Road, formally identifying the road as a named street. I ask the Council to confirm the date on which that nameplate was erected, and the authority (street naming and numbering, or highways) under which it was done.

Street name plates are the responsibility of district councils not highway authorities. East Suffolk District Council publish information on their webpages.

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-and-building-control/street-naming-and-numbering>

Upon consulting with the East Suffolk, they advised that signage on private streets is recommended to developers during planning and installed at the request of the developer or residents, it is common practice to ensure that properties are identifiable to postal and emergency services and does not indicate a maintenance responsibility to the highway authority.

(b) The road was at some point surfaced in tarmacadam. I ask the Council to confirm, from its historic highway maintenance records, when Forge Terrace was first surfaced or subsequently resurfaced or repaired, and by whom. If those works were carried out by or on behalf of the highway authority, that is a positive act of maintenance relevant to whether the road is a highway maintainable at the public expense.

Forge Terrace is not highway maintainable at public expense. This private street is not listed on our works system.

(c) I note that the Council's List of Streets records adoption by defined extent (the

schedule includes a "Part public location" column identifying, for many streets, the specific length adopted). Please confirm whether the whole of Forge Terrace, or only a defined part of its length, is maintainable at the public expense, and if only part, the precise extent of the adopted section and the point at which it ends.

Please therefore confirm in writing, within 21 days of this letter:

(i) whether Forge Terrace, in whole or in part, is a highway maintainable at the public expense under section 36 of the Highways Act 1980, and if so, under what street reference (NSG Ref) and for what extent it is recorded, given its absence from the published list; and

Forge Terrace is not recorded as a highway maintainable at public expense. The parent record of Forge Terrace is Commodore Road, as represented in the properties addressing, and therefor is not an officially named street but a terrace of properties that does not require its own Unique Street Reference Number. Record 42500048 Commodore Road – Lowestoft has been updated to reflect this in the List of Streets from 1st October 2026. To be clear, the access to the properties identified as Forge Terrace is not highways maintainable at public expense, but Commodore road from the roundabout with Bridge Street to the junction with Bridge Street south of the level crossing is highways maintainable at public expense.

(ii) if it is not so recorded, the Council's position on why the road carries a Council-erected nameplate and appears to have been surfaced at public expense, and the basis on which the Council contends it is not maintainable at the public expense.

As stated above street name plates are the responsibility of district councils not highway authorities. East Suffolk District Council publish information on their webpages. <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-and-building-control/street-naming-and-numbering>.

As to basis on which the Council contends it is not maintainable at the public expense – no information found to suggest it is a highway maintainable at public expense. Upon consulting with the East Suffolk, they advised that signage on private streets is recommended to developers during planning and installed at the request of the developer or residents, it is common practice to ensure that properties are identifiable to postal and emergency services and does not indicate a maintenance responsibility to the highway authority.

2. If the road (or the relevant part) is maintainable at public expense

In that event, I put the Council on formal notice of the following defects and rely on section 41(1) of the Highways Act 1980, which imposes a duty on the highway authority to maintain highways maintainable at the public expense. This letter constitutes express written notification to the Council of these defects:

- Potholes along the full length of Forge Terrace, ranging from approximately 20 cm to 70 cm in diameter, and up to approximately 15-20 cm in depth in places. Several have been present for a prolonged period.

- A complete absence of street lighting extending over a period of years.
- No clearly defined carriageway line or boundary to the road, causing confusion among residents as to its extent.

I ask the Council to confirm, within 21 days:

- the date of the last highway safety inspection of Forge Terrace, and the road's classification within the Council's highway hierarchy;

Forge Terrace is not recorded as a highway maintainable at public expense, therefore no relevant records are held.

- the inspection frequency applied under the Council's Highway Safety Inspection Policy / the Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice, and the risk classification applied to the reported defects;

Forge Terrace is not recorded as a highway maintainable at public expense, therefore no relevant records are held.

- a written repair timetable for the potholes and the works needed to define the carriageway; and

Forge Terrace is not recorded as a highway maintainable at public expense, therefore no relevant records are held.

- whether the Council intends to exercise its power under section 97 of the Highways Act 1980 to provide street lighting, and if not, the reasons.

Forge Terrace is not recorded as a highway maintainable at public expense, therefore no relevant records are held.

3. If the road (or the relevant part) is not maintainable at public expense

In the event the Council confirms Forge Terrace, or any part of it, is not a highway maintainable at the public expense, I ask the Council to identify:

- who is responsible for its maintenance (frontagers, a residents' company, or other party), and any record of a private street works notice or agreement under Part XI of the Highways Act 1980; and

Responsibility for its maintenance – no records held.

Any record of a private street works notice or agreement under Part XI of the Highways Act 1980 – none found.

- whether the Council holds any power, under the Private Street Works Code (sections 205 to 218 of the Highways Act 1980), or the power to require repair of a dangerous private street under section 230, that could be exercised to address the disrepair.

The Highway Authority / Street works Authority does hold various powers it can engage as regards private streets, dependent on the facts. However, there is no duty on the

Highway Authority / Street works Authority to remedy defects in private streets'

4. Records request — Environmental Information Regulations 2004 / Freedom of Information Act 2000

Highway condition, inspection, drainage and maintenance information is environmental information. Please therefore treat the following as a request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (which require a response within 20 working days), and, insofar as any requested material falls outside those Regulations, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please provide copies of:

- *the Council's highway inspection and maintenance policy and defect-risk/intervention criteria, and its inspection and defect records for Forge Terrace for the past three years;*
[Highway Maintenance Operational Plan - Suffolk County Council](#)
- *the date of erection of the "Forge Terrace" street nameplate and the record authorising it;*

Unavailable as not erected by Suffolk County Council.

- *all historic records of surfacing, resurfacing or repair works carried out to Forge Terrace, with dates and the party carrying them out; and*

No records held as not a highway maintainable at public expense.

- *the entry (or absence of entry) for Forge Terrace in the Local Street Gazetteer, including any recorded adopted extent and adoption history.*

The parent record of Forge Terrace is Commodore Road, as represented in the properties addressing, and therefore is not an officially named street but a terrace of properties that does not require its own Unique Street Reference Number. Record 42500048 Commodore Road – Lowestoft has been updated to reflect this in the List of Streets from 1st October 2026. To be clear, the access to the properties identified as Forge Terrace is not highways maintainable at public expense, but Commodore Road from the roundabout with Bridge Street to the junction with Bridge Street south of the level crossing is highways maintainable at public expense.