



Department  
for Transport

# The Strategic Road Network and the Delivery of Sustainable Development

February 2013

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# Contents

|    |   |    |
|----|---|----|
| 1. | Introduction .....  | 5  |
| 2. | Policy aims and application .....   | 7  |
|    | The strategic road network and economic growth .....  | 7  |
| 3. | Plan-making .....   | 8  |
|    | Interaction with the strategic road network .....   | 8  |
|    | Location of development .....   | 8  |
|    | Promoting sustainable transport solutions through Local Plans .....                                     | 9  |
|    | Capacity enhancement.....   | 9  |
| 4. | Development management .....  | 10 |
|    | General principles .....  | 10 |
|    | Travel plans.....   | 10 |
|    | Demand management.....  | 11 |
|    | Capacity enhancement.....   | 11 |
|    | Development Orders and Neighbourhood Planning .....   | 11 |
| 5. | Assessment of proposals .....   | 12 |
|    | General .....   | 12 |
|    | Assessment horizon (review period) .....  | 12 |
|    | Access to the strategic road network.....   | 13 |
|    | Environmental impact of transport solutions.....  | 14 |
|    | Physical impact of development on the strategic road network.....                                       | 14 |
|    | Annex A: Additional policy for certain types of development.....  | 16 |
|    | Noise fences, screen fences, etc.....   | 16 |
|    | Advertisements.....   | 16 |
|    | Gateway structures and public art.....  | 16 |
|    | Telecommunications equipment.....   | 17 |
|    | Wind turbines .....   | 18 |
|    | Annex B: Roadside Facilities for Road Users on Motorways and All-purpose<br>Trunk Roads in England..... | 20 |
|    | Introduction.....   | 20 |
|    | Application of policy.....  | 20 |
|    | Spacing .....   | 20 |
|    | Planning and development .....  | 21 |
|    | Trip generation .....   | 22 |
|    | Impact of roadside facilities on the strategic road network .....                                       | 22 |
|    | Location.....   | 22 |
|    | Minimum requirements for signing .....  | 23 |
|    | Parking charges .....   | 25 |
|    | Picnic areas.....   | 25 |
|    | Access to the strategic road network.....   | 25 |
|    | Signing .....   | 25 |
|    | Mandatory parking provision .....   | 26 |
|    | Retail activities .....   | 26 |
|    | Hotels, conference centres and business centres.....  | 26 |
|    | Coach interchanges, park & ride, and park & share .....   | 26 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Facilities for low emission vehicles.....                       | 27 |
| Driver and tourist information .....                            | 27 |
| On-site power generation and other sustainability measures..... | 27 |
| Schedule 1 .....  | 28 |

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Highways Agency is an executive agency of the Department for Transport and is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network in England on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport, guided by its core principles of 'safe roads, reliable journeys, informed travellers'.
- 1.2** The Agency undertakes this role in the context of wider Government policies and objectives. Operating an effective and efficient strategic road network makes a significant contribution to the delivery of sustainable economic growth, helping to create the conditions that support the realisation of the aspirations of businesses and communities, and is a key deliverable for the Highways Agency in meeting its remit of delivery partner to national economic growth.
- 1.3** This document sets out the way in which the Highways Agency will engage with communities and the development industry to deliver sustainable development and, thus, economic growth, whilst safeguarding the primary function and purpose of the strategic road network. It replaces the policy set out in DfT Circular 02/2007 Planning and the Strategic Road Network and DfT Circular 01/2008 Policy on Service Areas and other Roadside Facilities on Motorways and All-purpose Trunk Roads in England. Annex A provides additional policy specific to certain types of development, whilst Annex B sets out the requirements for roadside facilities that are eligible for permanent signing from the strategic road network.
- 1.4** This policy should be read by local authorities, developers, enterprise partnerships, community groups and others involved in any development proposal which may result in any traffic or other impact on the strategic road network. It should be read in conjunction with the Highways Agency document 'The Highways Agency and the Planning Application Process: A Protocol for Dealing with Planning Applications', which provides advice on working with the Highways Agency, within the parameters of national policy and this policy, to progress their planning applications in an effective and positive manner.
- 1.5** The provisions set out in this document may be updated when appropriate to do so and readers are encouraged to check that they have the latest and true version by reference to the published version on the Department for Transport website. Further, from time to time the Highways Agency will issue advice that seeks to address matters arising from the planning process that have the potential to impact on the strategic road network but which may require some particular

consideration. Developers are encouraged to check the Highways Agency website or to contact the Highways Agency for further advice.<sup>1</sup>

- 1.6** This Circular is applicable to the whole strategic Road Network in England, including those roads managed by the Design, Build, Finance and Operate (DBFO) Companies.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.highways.gov.uk](http://www.highways.gov.uk); Highways Agency Information Line (HAIL) [ha\\_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk), 0300 123 5000; [planningqueries@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:planningqueries@highways.gsi.gov.uk); [roadside\\_facilities@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:roadside_facilities@highways.gsi.gov.uk)

## 2. Policy aims and application

### The strategic road network and economic growth

- 2.1** As operator, the Highways Agency supports the economy through the provision of a safe and reliable strategic road network, which allows for the efficient movement of people and goods. Such a network can play a key part in enabling and sustaining economic prosperity and productivity, while also helping support environmental and social aims by contributing to wider sustainability objectives and improved accessibility to key economic and social services.
- 2.2** A well-functioning strategic road network enables growth by providing for safe and reliable journeys. This can help reduce business costs by providing certainty, improving access to markets, enabling competition, improving labour mobility, enabling economies of scale, and helping attract inward investment. However, development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
- 2.3** In this light, development proposals are likely to be acceptable provided that they would not result in either the capacity of a section (link or junction) of the strategic road network being exceeded or an increase of demand for use of a section that is already operating at over-capacity levels, taking account of any travel plan, traffic management and/or capacity enhancement measures that may be agreed.
- 2.4** However, even where proposals would not result in capacity issues, the Highways Agency's prime consideration will be the continued safe operation of its network.
- 2.5** Local authorities and developers will be required to ensure that their proposals comply in all respects with design standards. Where there would be physical changes to the network, schemes must be submitted to road safety and non-motorised user audit procedures, as well as any other assessment appropriate to the proposed development. The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges sets out details of the Secretary of State's requirements for access, design, and audit.

# 3. Plan-making

## Interaction with the strategic road network

- 3.1** The preparation and delivery of Local Plans<sup>2</sup> provides an opportunity to identify and support a pattern of development that encourages the use of sustainable modes of transport, minimises journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities, and promotes accessibility for all. This can contribute to environmental aims by reducing the need for road construction and reducing vehicle emissions, and also reduce the cost to the economy of the environmental, business and social costs associated with traffic generation and congestion.
- 3.2** To make most efficient use of the limited available capacity on the SRN, and because additional physical capacity is difficult, costly and takes time to provide, the HA will engage in the Local Plan process to reduce the potential for creating congestion on the SRN.

## Location of development

- 3.3** In determining its contribution to the development of Local Plans, the Highways Agency's aim will be to ensure that the scale and patterns of development are planned in a manner which will not compromise the fulfilment of the primary purpose of the strategic road network. To this end, the Agency will assess the cumulative and individual impacts of Local Plan proposals on the ability of the various road links and junctions to accommodate the forecast traffic flows in terms of capacity and safety.
- 3.4** The Highways Agency will work with local authorities and developers in identifying potential development sites and can provide information and expertise in helping to understand the transport implications of proposals.

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<sup>2</sup> Each Planning Authority is required to produce a Local Plan in accordance with the provisions of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) taking account of the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework



## Promoting sustainable transport solutions through Local Plans

- 3.5** Through the production of Local Plans, development should be promoted at locations that are or can be made sustainable, that allow for uptake of sustainable transport modes and support wider social and health objectives, and which support existing business sectors as well as enabling new growth.
- 3.6** The Highways Agency will work with local authorities and developers in identifying opportunities to introduce travel plan measures through the Local Plan, based on existing and proposed patterns of development that will support sustainable transport choice and retain capacity within the transport network so as to provide for further development in future Plan periods.

## Capacity enhancement

- 3.7** Capacity enhancements and infrastructure required to deliver strategic growth should be identified at the Local Plan stage and would not normally be considered as a fresh proposal at the planning application stage. The Highways Agency will work with strategic delivery bodies to identify infrastructure and access needs at the earliest possible opportunity within the Local Plan making process in order to assess suitability, viability and deliverability of such proposals.
- 3.8** Where a potential capacity need is identified, it will be considered and weighed alongside environmental and deliverability considerations. Additional capacity may be considered in the context of the Highways Agency's forward programme of works, balancing the needs of motorists and other road users with wider impact on the environment and the local/regional community.

# 4. Development management

## General principles

- 4.1** Where development proposals are consistent with an adopted Local Plan, the Highways Agency would not anticipate the need for engagement in a full assessment process at the planning application stage. In such circumstances, considerations normally would be limited to the agreement of the detailed transport solution, including any mitigation measures necessary, rather than the principle of the development itself.
- 4.2** However, where proposals are not consistent with the adopted Local Plan then a full assessment of their impact will be necessary, which will be based on the capacity of the strategic road network determined on the basis that the Plan proposals will be implemented.
- 4.3** Where measures to minimise trip generation and traffic management measures are shown to leave residual demand that can be accommodated within the existing infrastructure capacity, further mitigation will not be sought.

## Travel plans

- 4.4** The traffic impact of significant development should be managed by seeking to minimise trip generation. The preparation and implementation of a robust travel plan that promotes use of sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport is an effective means of achieving this.
- 4.5** The Highways Agency will work with local authorities and developers in identifying opportunities to introduce travel plan measures for individual developments and groups of development that will support sustainable transport choice and retain capacity within the transport network so as to provide for further development in future Plan periods.
- 4.6** By the inclusion of existing development within the provisions of a travel plan, it may be possible to free up capacity within the road network so as to accommodate the residual demand generated by proposed new development, which would otherwise be unacceptable.

## Demand management

- 4.7** Where the implementation of travel plan measures alone would not reduce the traffic demand of an individual development or group of developments to acceptable levels, the Highways Agency will work with local planning authorities and local highway authorities to determine whether it would be possible to implement traffic management measures on the local road network that would regulate overall traffic flows in line with the available capacity on the strategic road network.

## Capacity enhancement

- 4.8** While capacity enhancements should normally be addressed at the Plan-making stage, such measures may be considered in the context of individual planning applications subject to the additional provisions that delivery of the adopted Plan proposals would not be compromised, and that the outcome would be compatible with the overall capacity of the trunk road concerned.

## Development Orders and Neighbourhood Planning

- 4.9** The Highways Agency will seek to engage with Local Enterprise Partnerships, communities and neighbourhoods in the development of their proposals, applying the principles outlined above.

# 5. Assessment of proposals

## General

- 5.1** The Highways Agency will provide the local planning authority or other relevant consenting body with its assessment of transport impact based on a transport assessment produced by the promoter of the development under consideration (the authority itself in the case of Plan proposals). This can be weighed alongside all other material considerations in evaluating the likely impacts of the proposed development and in forming the overall assessment prepared by the planning authority/consenting body or the developer, as appropriate to the particular stage of the planning process concerned.

## Assessment horizon (review period)

- 5.2** The current capacity of existing infrastructure must be compared with the overall forecast demand (existing demand, plus traffic likely to be generated by existing commitments to developments, the additional traffic generated by the development and modelled background growth), normally for a period of ten years after the date of registration of a planning application<sup>3</sup>. This should be supported by an acceptable Transport Assessment or Transport Statement incorporating a Travel Plan as required in the National Planning Policy Framework, produced in line with current Department for Transport guidance or on a basis otherwise agreed with the Highways Agency. This period is referred to in this circular as the 'review period'.
- 5.3** In promoting sustainable transport and accessible sites the Highways Agency will look to developers to manage down the traffic impact of proposals. This is particularly the case where the related road could experience capacity problems in the short or medium term.
- 5.4** Where insufficient capacity exists to provide for overall forecast demand throughout the review period (outside of the Highways Agency's forward programme of works), capacity enhancements may be agreed, subject to environmental and deliverability considerations.

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<sup>3</sup> The length of the review period, at the discretion of the Secretary of State for Transport, can be amended for individual cases, where there is a wider political and economic imperative or, for example, where proposals will take a long time to develop fully. This would only be in exceptional circumstance.

These improvements will normally be provided by means of a funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Transport.

## Access to the strategic road network

- 5.5** The creation of new accesses to the strategic road network can impact on its ability to fulfil the function of facilitating the safe and effective movement of goods and people in support of economic growth by compromising traffic movement and flow.
- 5.6** In delivering local economic growth, it is essential that the wider economic needs of the country are not compromised. New accesses to busy high speed strategic roads allow for more weaving and turning manoeuvres, which in turn create additional risk to safety and reduce the reliability of journeys, which in turn has a negative impact on overall national economic activity and performance.
- 5.7** For that reason there will be no additional direct accesses to motorways and other routes of near motorway standard other than for the provision of signed roadside facilities for road users (see Annex B), maintenance compounds and, exceptionally, major transport interchanges. Where access is agreed for such development, the Highways Agency will be unable to support any subsequent change in permitted land use. Through access to other developments is not permitted.
- 5.8** However, proposals for the creation of new junctions may be identified and developed at the plan-making stage where such new infrastructure is essential for the delivery of strategic planned growth.
- 5.9** Access to motorways and routes of near motorway standard for other types of development will be limited to existing junctions with all-purpose roads. Modifications to existing junctions will be carried out only where traffic flows and safety will not be adversely affected. In line with the standards contained in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, for safety and operational reasons, connections to slip roads and/or connector roads will not be permitted.
- 5.10** The Highways Agency will adopt a graduated and less restrictive approach to access to the remainder of the strategic road network. However, the preference will always be that new development should make use of existing junctions.
- 5.11** Any proposal to change the use of an existing roadside facility for road users on the strategic road network that is not motorway or a route of near motorway standard will be considered against local conditions and the merits of the individual case.

## Environmental impact of transport solutions

- 5.12** In consultation with relevant infrastructure providers, statutory environmental advisors and consenting authorities, developers must ensure all environmental implications of the transport solutions associated with their proposals, including construction works, are adequately assessed and reported so as to ensure that the mitigation of impact is compliant with prevailing standards.
- 5.13** Where a likely negative impact on the environment occurs outside of a highway boundary as a result of the proposals (for example visual impacts or noise levels at new housing located near to a road), any required mitigation measures must be located outside of the strategic road network's highway boundary.
- 5.14** Developers must ensure adequate environmental information is provided at all stages of the planning process to satisfy the local planning authority and any other consenting authorities that the environmental impacts of the proposed transport solutions have been appropriately considered, that measures have been included within the proposals that mitigate these impacts as fully as is reasonably possible, and to enable all residual impacts to be taken into account by the local planning authority in the development consent process.
- 5.15** Transport assessment undertaken by the promoter of the development should be comprehensive enough to inform the likely environmental impacts of the proposed transport solution, including air quality and noise, along with the measures required to mitigate these impacts as appropriate.

## Physical impact of development on the strategic road network

- 5.16** There may be development proposals that, while not within the statutory requirement for a local planning authority to consult the Highways Agency, have the potential for direct or indirect physical impact on the strategic road network or its amenities, or to put users of the road at risk (such as fire hazard; stability of embankments and cuttings; integrity of structures; water run-off; air quality; visibility of traffic signs; etc.). Developers and local authorities are encouraged to identify such potential risks and discuss with the Highways Agency at the earliest opportunity to avoid the possibility of delaying or putting the delivery of their proposals at risk.
- 5.17** In order to ensure the integrity of the highway drainage systems, no water run off that may arise due to any change of use will be accepted into the highway drainage systems, and there shall be no new connections from third party development and drainage systems. Where there is an existing third party connection the right for

connection may be allowed to continue provided that the land use of the contributing catchment to the connection remains unaltered.

- 5.18** In facilitating development the Highways Agency may agree to allow temporary works within the highway boundary of the strategic road network provided that the operational integrity and safety of the network is not compromised. However, any such temporary arrangement will not be allowed to become permanent. When planning a development, the possibility of temporary works should be raised and discussed with the Highways Agency as early as possible.

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# Annex A: Additional policy for certain types of development

## Noise fences, screen fences, etc

- A.1** For reasons of safety, liability and maintenance, with the sole exception of fences provided by the Highways Agency at its own cost, all noise fences, screening and other structures must be erected on the developers land, and far enough within the developers land to enable maintenance to take place without encroachment onto highway land.

## Advertisements

- A.2** The Highways Agency will not object to proposals for advertising consent relating to proposals for displays outside of the highway boundary of the strategic road network unless it has specific reason to consider that a hazard to road safety would be a direct consequence of the development. This would include advertisements that are located where particular attention should be given to the driving task, or where they incorporate elements of traffic sign design, such as directional arrows.
- A.3** In order to safeguard the integrity and function of the system of prescribed and authorised traffic signs, the Highways Agency will refuse to allow the erection of any advertisement within the highway boundary of the strategic road network, regardless of any consent that may be granted. The Highways Agency will seek prompt removal of any unauthorised adverts or other apparatus placed within the highway boundary.

## Gateway structures and public art

- A.4** Gateway structures and public art cannot be sited within the highway boundary of the strategic road network for legal, safety and operational reasons. However, often, siting them near the strategic road network is desirable to local authorities and developers. The Highways Agency is keen to support delivery of such proposals where there is no additional risk to road users.



- A.5** Due to the wide variety of design and form that such structures may take, and therefore the potential impact on safety and operation of the strategic road network, it is not practical to address all possible considerations in this policy. The Highways Agency encourages any party with a proposal that may be near to or impact on the road network to discuss design and delivery proposals at the earliest opportunity.

## Telecommunications equipment

### New infrastructure

- A.6** Mobile Network Operators have the right under the Telecommunications Act 1984 to install equipment within the boundary of a highway that is not a protected street (as defined by section 61 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991) once they have obtained planning permission where required.
- A.7** Such installations must not cause a safety or environmental hazard to any road users, workers, or any third party and it must not interfere in our ability to carry out either routine or structural maintenance. Neither should any harm be caused to the long-term integrity of the highway including pavement, earthworks, structures, drainage works and ancillary equipment. Traffic signs must not be obscured.
- A.8** All operations must be carried out without interference to traffic flows.
- A.9** To these ends, the Highways Agency requires Mobile Network Operators to provide:
- a structural analysis of the mast and foundations to show the structural integrity of the mast;
  - a full road safety audit, which must consider the installation of the equipment and its maintenance as well as any static hazard presented;
  - site specific details to the Highways Agency's Area Manager to agree the requirements for safety barriers and suitable means of maintenance and construction access. There must be provision clear of the carriageway for the parking of vehicles used in the maintenance of the telecoms equipment with safe entry and exit.

### Use of Highways Agency telecommunications network

- A.10** The Highways Agency is considering new approaches to make its roadside telecommunications network available to enable points of access for 3rd party services such as broadband for rural businesses. Businesses are encouraged to approach the Highways Agency to

discuss using the network to aid their connectivity or carrier requirements.

## Wind turbines

### Location

- A.11** In order to mitigate the risks to the safety of road users arising from structural or mechanical failure, the Highways Agency will seek a setback from the highway boundary of height + 10% is necessary for micro and small turbines. For Commercial turbines a set back distance equal to their height + 50 metres will be sought.<sup>4</sup>
- A.12** The Highways Agency recognises that, in certain circumstances, variation to the above set-back may be considered appropriate, subject to the findings of a site-specific assessment. An example may be where there is a significant difference in elevation between the highway and the proposed turbine location. The proposer would be expected to demonstrate that any relaxation on the suggested set-back distance poses no unacceptable risk. The burden of proof will lie with the proposer.

### 'Icing'

- A.13** Most modern wind turbines will have vibration and/or climate sensitive technology that will shut down the turbine if there is the potential for icing. Where this technology is present there should be no need to consider this issue further. Evidence of this technology on the proposed turbines should be provided.

### Visual distraction

- A.14** Any potential for visual distraction should be minimised by the provision of a clear, continuous view of the wind turbine(s) that develops over the maximum possible length of approach carriageway.
- A.15** Wind turbines should not be located where motorists need to pay particular attention to the driving task, such as the immediate vicinity of road junctions, sharp or unexpected bends and crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.
- A.16** The existing road accident record nearing the vicinity of the proposed wind turbine(s) should be analysed with particular attention being given to accident types. Locations with a history of rear end shunt accidents should be treated with particular caution.

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<sup>4</sup> Small wind turbines are those with a power output of up to 50kW

## **Dazzle**

- A.17** Most turbines will be constructed with materials that eliminate dazzle, and this should be easy to establish and eliminate as a concern. Evidence of this technology on the proposed turbines should be provided.

## **Access**

- A.18** The promoter of a wind farm should prepare a report covering the construction, operation and de-commissioning stages of the development. From this, the acceptability of the proposal should be determined and any mitigating measures should be identified.
- A.19** Access to the site for construction, maintenance and de-commissioning should be derived via the local road network and, normally, there should be no direct connection to the strategic road network.
- A.20** Swept path analyses should be provided by the developer for the abnormal load deliveries to the site.

# Annex B: Roadside Facilities for Road Users on Motorways and All-purpose Trunk Roads in England

## Introduction

- B.1** This annex sets out policy on the provision, standards and eligibility for signing of roadside facilities on the strategic road network, to enable compliance with the Traffic Signs Regulation and General Directions 2002<sup>5</sup>. It replaces Department for Transport (DfT) Circular 1/2008 “Policy on Service Areas and other Roadside Facilities on Motorways and All-purpose Trunk Roads in England”.

## Application of policy

- B.2** This policy applies to all existing signed roadside facilities, and to all proposed signed roadside facilities. It should be noted that the operation of all signed roadside facilities will be the subject of a legal agreement between the Secretary of State and the operator.

## Spacing

- B.3** Motorway service areas and other roadside facilities perform an important road safety function by providing opportunities for the travelling public to stop and take a break in the course of their journey. Government advice is that motorists should stop and take a break of at least 15 minutes every two hours. Drivers of many commercial and public service vehicles are subject to a regime of statutory breaks, and other working time restrictions as well and such facilities assist in compliance with requirements.

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<sup>5</sup> Or any subsequent replacement. To be lawfully placed on the highway all signs (whether permanent or temporary) must either be prescribed by legislation or be specially authorised on behalf of the Secretary of State.

- B.4** The network of service areas on the strategic road network has developed on the premise that drivers should have the opportunity to stop at intervals of approximately half an hour. However, at peak hours, on congested parts of the network, travel between service areas can take longer.
- B.5** The Highways Agency therefore recommends that the maximum distance between motorway service areas should be no more than 28 miles. The distance between services can be shorter, although to protect the safety and operation of the network, the access/egress arrangements of facilities must comply with the requirements of the [Design Manual for Roads and Bridges](#) including its provisions in respect of junction separation.
- B.6** Speed limits on the trunk road network vary and therefore the maximum distance between signed services on trunk roads should be the equivalent of 30 minutes driving time. This distance can also be shorter, also subject to compliance with design requirements set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.
- B.7** The distances set out above are assumed to apply to all parts of the strategic road network and to be in the interests of and benefit to all road users regardless of traffic flows or route choice. In determining applications for new or improved sites, local planning authorities should not need to consider the spacing of sites beyond conformity with the maximum and minimum spacing criteria established for safety reasons. Nor should they seek to prevent competition between operators; rather they should determine applications on their specific planning merits.

## Planning and development

- B.8** It is for the private sector to promote and operate service areas to meet the needs of the travelling public. New and existing roadside facilities are subject to the provisions of relevant planning legislation and regulation, which together set the framework under which local planning authorities are to consider the planning proposals for such developments.
- B.9** As a statutory consultee within the planning system, the Highways Agency continues to have an interest in such proposals and will provide advice to local planning authorities on matters relating to the impact that such proposed developments will have upon the safety and operation of the strategic road network. Local planning authorities and developers are encouraged to discuss with the Highways Agency at the earliest opportunity any proposals to develop new roadside facilities or to alter and/or sign existing sites. All such proposals should be referred to the Highway Agency, Planning & Economic

## Trip generation

- B.10** The Highways Agency will only support proposals for or within service areas and other roadside facilities, where there is potential for them to become destinations in their own right, if it can be shown that there would be no overall increase in trip mileage, and always provided that there would be no significantly adverse impact on the safety and operation of the strategic road network. All such proposals will be considered in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework and the stated primary function of roadside facilities being to support the safety and welfare of the road user.

## Impact of roadside facilities on the strategic road network

- B.11** At all roadside facilities, it is particularly important to avoid adverse impacts upon the effective operation of the strategic road network, such as the risk of congestion or of vehicles slowing on the main carriageway. Proposals for new roadside facilities will be subject to road safety audit procedures to be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

## Location

- B.12** On-line (between junction) service areas are more accessible to road users and are as a result more attractive and better at encouraging drivers to stop and take a break.
- B.13** Therefore, the Highways Agency would prefer proposals for new facilities to be at on-line locations.
- B.14** However, a site sharing a common boundary with the highway at a junction with the strategic road network may be considered in circumstances where it can clearly be demonstrated that the construction of an on-line service area would have an adverse impact or could not be delivered due to planning, safety, operational or environmental constraints.
- B.15** An exception to these location criteria is signing to truckstops located within 2 miles of the strategic road network that otherwise meet the minimum requirements for signing. However signing will not be provided where, in order to reach the truckstop, HGVs would be required to pass through residential areas.



**B.16** Facilities that do not meet the location criteria will not normally be signed unless there are demonstrable benefits in so doing.

## Minimum requirements for signing

**B.17** The following represent the minimum requirements for the various types of roadside facility that may be signed from the strategic road network. All facilities accessed from the motorway must be signed for safety reasons and as such all existing or future sites must comply with the signing requirements.

**B.18** Further guidance on the design, authorisation, funding, installation and maintenance of signs is available from the Highways Agency.<sup>6</sup>

### Motorway service areas

**B.19** Should be open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; and provide at all times:-

- free parking for up to two hours for all vehicle types that are permitted to use the roads that are served by the facility (see schedule 1);
- free toilets for all road users, hand washing facilities for all road users, with no obligation to make a purchase;
- access to a cash operated telephone (card phones alone will not suffice);
- shower facilities for heavy goods vehicle (HGV) drivers;
- fuel, hot drinks and hot food;

### Motorway rest areas

**B.20** Should be open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; and provide at all times:-

- free parking for up to two hours for all types of vehicle that are permitted to use the roads that are served by the facility at half the level required for motorway service areas (see schedule 1);
- free toilets for all road users, hand washing facilities for all road users, with no obligation to make a purchase;
- access to a cash-operated telephone (card phones alone will not suffice);

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<sup>6</sup> This will be provided as a guidance note alongside the published circular.

## **Motorway truckstops**

- B.21** Should be open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, primarily serve the needs of HGVs and their drivers, and provide at all times:
- free parking for up to two hours for HGVs (see schedule 1);
  - free toilets and hand washing facilities, with no obligation to make a purchase;
  - shower facilities for HGV drivers;
  - fuel, hot drinks and hot food.

## **All-purpose trunk road service areas**

- B.22** Should be open at least between the hours of 8.00 am and 8.00 pm every day except Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day. They should be limited to a single or two adjoining interconnected premises, which may be accessed directly from the trunk road or directly from a junction on that road; and provide:-
- free short-term parking for a minimum of two hours for all road users (see schedule 1);
  - free toilets available to all road users, together with hand washing facilities in sufficient number to cope with demand;
  - access to a cash operated telephone (card phones alone will not suffice);
  - fuel, hot drinks and hot food;
  - adequate indoor tables and chairs to cater for expected demand (subject to minimum provisions for eight people).

## **Truckstops signed from the strategic road network**

- B.23** Should be open at least between the hours of 8.00 am and 8.00 pm every day except Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day. They primarily should serve the needs of HGVs and their drivers and provide:-
- free parking for up to two hours for HGVs (see schedule 1);
  - free toilets, hand washing facilities with no obligation to make a purchase;
  - shower facilities for HGV drivers;
  - hot drinks and hot food.



## Parking charges

- B.24** At all types of site, where a charge is to be levied for parking beyond the mandatory two free hours, the charging regime must be clearly displayed within both the parking areas and the amenity building. Drivers must at all times be afforded the opportunity to pay the charge on the site, before leaving and without the need of a mobile phone. Cash payments must be accepted.

## Picnic areas

- B.25** Picnic areas will be permitted at all types of facility.
- B.26** The provision of a minimum of ten tables, each with seating for six, will allow the inclusion of a 'picnic area' symbol as one of the generic symbols/logos shown on the advanced direction sign to the site concerned.

## Access to the strategic road network

- B.27** The availability of rear access routes at new sites will be considered on a site by site basis by the local planning authority concerned as part of the planning process. The Highways Agency will provide input as a statutory consultee to the planning system.
- B.28** In order to avoid the creation of unofficial road junctions there must be no through connection to the associated motorway or all-purpose trunk road. Such rear accesses as may be approved will have use restricted to staff, deliveries, parties carrying out duties for and on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport, for the emergency services, and for breakdown recovery and assistance
- B.29** Access to other developments through a roadside facility is not permitted.

## Signing

- B.30** All signing of roadside facilities and signing arrangements within sites must comply with the current Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions and any other guidance as may be issued from time to time by the Department for Transport or the Highways Agency. Approval must be sought from the Highways Agency's signs specialist for the use of all non prescribed signs. Advice and working drawings may be obtained from [traffic.signs@dft.gsi.gov](mailto:traffic.signs@dft.gsi.gov)

## Mandatory parking provision

- B.31** Schedule 1 sets out the methodology for calculating the levels of parking that should be provided for the various types of roadside facility by vehicle type.

## Retail activities

- B.32** The scope and scale of retail activities at roadside facilities is a matter for consideration of the relevant local planning authority in line with the National Planning Policy Framework and local planning policies. However, local planning authorities should have regard to the primary function of roadside facilities as being to support the safety and welfare of the road user.

## Hotels, conference centres and business centres

- B.33** Such development will be a matter for consideration by the relevant local planning authority in line with the National Planning Policy Framework and local planning policies.
- B.34** As a statutory consultee to such proposals, the Highways Agency will not object to the provision of hotels; conference centres; and business centres at roadside facilities for motorists unless there would be consequent adverse impact on the safety and/or operation of the strategic road network such as a net increase in travel.
- B.35** Separate parking must be provided to service such developments so as to avoid any reduction in the general parking provision available to other road users.

## Coach interchanges, park & ride, and park & share

- B.36** Such development will be a matter for consideration by the relevant local planning authority in line with the National Planning Policy Framework and local planning policies.
- B.37** As a statutory consultee to such proposals, the Highways Agency will take account of the local transport benefits in its response to proposals for coach interchanges; park & rides; and park and share facilities for motorists, and will not object unless there would be a material adverse impact on the safety and/or operation of the strategic road network. The Highways Agency particularly welcomes proposals that will produce a net reduction of trip mileage.

## Facilities for low emission vehicles

- B.38** Operators of roadside facilities are encouraged to provide refuelling facilities for low emission vehicles, including recharging facilities for plug-in vehicles and other arrangements that meet the needs of emergent low carbon and alternative fuel technologies as appropriate, such as gas refuelling stations. More information can be found at [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk).

## Driver and tourist information

- B.39** Operators of roadside facilities are encouraged to provide live traffic information services and to make available local, regional and national tourist information.

## On-site power generation and other sustainability measures

- B.40** Operators are encouraged to introduce measures that reduce the carbon footprint of their sites. However, such measures as may be provided should be compliant with relevant guidance as may be issued from time to time by the Highway's Agency. In this context, operators' attention is drawn to the provision set out in Annex A.

## Schedule 1

Parking requirements for different types of vehicle should be calculated based on the below, and using the most recent complete year data for peak month Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) where:

A = number of cars and light goods vehicles; and

B = number of HGVs and coaches.

Advice on traffic flows should be obtained from the Highways Agency.

| Parking requirements at motorway service areas                   |  |          |   |
|--|--|----------|---|
|  | Calculation <sup>7</sup>   | Variable | Notes   |
| <b>Traffic flow (Vehicles per day)<sup>8</sup></b>               |  |          |   |
| Light vehicle  |  | A        | Advice on traffic flows is available from the Highways Agency |
| HGV and coach  |  | B        |   |
| <b>No. of parking spaces required<sup>9</sup></b>                |  |          |   |
| Cars   | 0.5 % of A   | C        |   |
| HGV  | 0.5 % of B   | D        |   |
| Abnormal load  | Minimum of 1   |          |   |
| Coach  | 0.1 % of B   | E        |   |
| Coach interchange <sup>10</sup>                                  | No. of bays provided   | E1       |   |
| Caravan/motorhome/vehicle and trailer                            | 0.015 % of A   | F        |   |
| Motorcycle   | 0.015% of A (where the percentage falls below 10 a minimum of 10 should be provided) | G        | Dedicated motorcycle bays for securing bikes                  |
| Additional spaces for lodges                                     | One space per 2 bedrooms   |          |   |
| Spaces for disabled users  | 5% of C (where the percentage falls below 5 a min. 5 should be provided)             |          | Located adjacent to the front entrance                        |
| Spaces for disabled users caravan/motorhome/ vehicle and trailer | 5% of F (where the percentage falls below 2 a min.2 should be provided)              |          |   |
| Spaces for disabled lodge users                                  | min. of 2  |          |   |

<sup>7</sup> The Highways Agency's Planning and Economic Development Team can assist with these calculations

<sup>8</sup> Where the necessary information exists operators may wish to increase the number of parking spaces for particular types of vehicle to recognise the particular demographics of the road served by the facility.

<sup>9</sup> Parking for disabled travellers should be clearly signed at the entrance to the MSA

<sup>10</sup> Where such a facility has been permitted

## Parking requirements at motorway rest areas

The requirements in respect of a motorway rest area will be half that required for a motorway service area, rounded to the higher whole number when clear division cannot be made.

## Parking requirements at motorway truckstops

The requirements in respect of a motorway truckstop will be the same as the HGV requirement for a motorway service area. For safety reasons a minimum of 10 parking spaces for cars; 1 space for a caravan; and 1 space for a coach should be provided. A minimum of 1 abnormal load space should also be provided.

| Parking requirements at trunk road service areas                |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   | Calculation <sup>11</sup>  | Notes  |
| <b>No. of parking spaces required<sup>12</sup></b>              |  |  |
| Cars  | 0.1 % of A   | Minimum of 10                                |
| HGV   | Minimum of 2   |  |
| Abnormal load   | Minimum of 1   |  |
| Coach   | Minimum of 1   |  |
| Coach interchange <sup>13</sup>                                 | No. of bays provided   |  |
| Caravan/motorhome/ vehicle and trailer                          | Minimum of 2   |  |
| Motorcycle  | 0.015% of A (where the percentage falls below 10 a minimum of 10 should be provided) | Dedicated motorcycle bays for securing bikes |
| Additional spaces for lodges                                    | One space per 2 bedrooms   |  |
| Spaces for disabled users                                       | Minimum of 3   |  |
| Spaces for disabled users caravan/motorhome/vehicle and trailer | Minimum of 1   | Located adjacent to the front entrance       |
| Spaces for disabled lodge users                                 | Minimum of 2   |  |

<sup>11</sup> The Highways Agency's Planning and Economic Development Team can assist with these calculations

<sup>12</sup> Parking for disabled travellers should be clearly signed at the entrance to the services

<sup>13</sup> Where such a facility has been permitted