

DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT

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Department for Transport

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THE STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK AND THE DELIVERY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

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'.
2. The Highways 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.
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 Department for Transport (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.
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's planning protocol documents¹ which provide advice on working with the Highways Agency, within the parameters of national policy and this policy, to progress their planning proposals in an effective and positive manner.
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.² 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.³
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.

¹ <http://www.highways.gov.uk/publications/planning-protocols-for-planning-and-development/>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport>

³ www.highways.gov.uk; Highways Agency Information Line (HAIL) ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk, 0300 123 5000; planningqueries@highways.gsi.gov.uk; roadside_facilities@highways.gsi.gov.uk

POLICY AIMS AND APPLICATION

The strategic road network and economic growth

7. 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.
8. 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.
9. Development proposals are likely to be acceptable if they can be accommodated within the existing capacity of a section (link or junction) of the strategic road network, or they do not increase 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. However, development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
10. 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.
11. 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, environmental, and non-motorised user audit⁴ procedures, as well as any other assessment appropriate to the proposed development. The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges⁵ sets out details of the Secretary of State's requirements for access, design, and audit, with which proposals must conform.

⁴ Non-motorised user audit will consider the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, and should give particular consideration to the needs of disabled people.

⁵ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/ha/standards/>

PLAN MAKING

Interaction with the strategic road network

12. The preparation and delivery of Local Plans⁶ provides an opportunity to identify and support a pattern of development that minimises trip generation at source and 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 objectives and also reduce the cost to the economy arising from the environmental, business and social impacts associated with traffic generation and congestion.
13. To make most efficient use of the limited available capacity on the strategic road network, and because additional physical capacity is difficult, costly and takes time to provide, the Highways Agency will engage in the Local Plan process to reduce the potential for creating congestion on the strategic road network.

Location of development

14. In framing its contribution to the development of Local Plans, the Highways Agency's aim will be to influence the scale and patterns of development so that it is planned in a manner which will not compromise the fulfilment of the primary purpose of the strategic road network.
15. In order to develop a robust transport evidence base, the Agency will work with the local authority to understand the transport implications of development options. This will include assessing the cumulative and individual impacts of the Local Plan proposals upon the ability of the road links and junctions affected to accommodate the forecast traffic flows in terms of capacity and safety. Such assessments should be carried out in line with current Department for Transport guidance or on a basis otherwise agreed with the Highways Agency.

Promoting sustainable transport solutions through Local Plans

16. 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.
17. The Highways Agency will work with local authorities and developers to identify opportunities to introduce travel plan and demand management measures through the Local Plan. These will be based on existing and proposed patterns of development in a manner that will support sustainable transport choice and retain capacity within the transport network so as to provide for further development in future Plan periods.

⁶ 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.

Capacity enhancement

18. Capacity enhancements and infrastructure required to deliver strategic growth should be identified at the Local Plan stage, which provides the best opportunity to consider development aspirations alongside the associated strategic infrastructure needs. Enhancements should not normally be considered as fresh proposals 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 in order to assess suitability, viability and deliverability of such proposals, including the identification of potential funding arrangements.
19. Where a potential capacity need is identified, this 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.

Development Orders and Neighbourhood Planning

20. 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.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

General principles

21. Where development proposals are consistent with an adopted Local Plan, the Highways Agency does not anticipate the need for engagement in a full assessment process at the planning application stage. In such circumstances, considerations will normally be limited to the agreement of the details of the transport solution, including any necessary mitigation measures, and to ensuring that the transport impacts are included in the overall environmental assessment provided to the local planning authority, rather than the principle of the development itself.
22. 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 performance and character of the strategic road network as determined by the presumption that the Plan proposals will be fully implemented.
23. The Highways Agency will provide the local planning authority or other relevant consenting body with its assessment of the transport impact, as generally derived from a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement incorporating a Travel Plan as required in the National Planning Policy Framework, produced by the promoter of the development concerned in line with current Department for Transport guidance or on a basis otherwise agreed with the Highways Agency.
24. Where appropriate, conditions may be agreed to offset any unacceptable impacts that may be identified through the assessment process.

Assessment of development impact

25. The overall forecast demand⁷ should be compared to the ability of the existing network to accommodate traffic over a period up to ten years after the date of registration of a planning application or the end of the relevant Local Plan whichever is the greater. This is known as the review period.⁸
26. The Highways Agency expects the promoters of development to put forward initiatives that manage down the traffic impact of proposals to support the promotion of sustainable transport and the development of accessible sites. This is particularly necessary where the potential impact is on sections of the strategic road network that could experience capacity problems in the short or medium term.
27. Where the overall forecast demand at the time of opening of the development⁹ can be accommodated by the existing infrastructure, further capacity mitigation will not be sought.

Travel Plans

28. 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 managing the impact of development on the road network, and reducing the need for major transport infrastructure.
29. The Highways Agency will work with local authorities and developers to identify opportunities to introduce travel plan measures for individual developments and groups of development that will support sustainable transport choice. Such measures contribute to the ongoing effectiveness of the strategic road network in ensuring efficient national and regional connectivity, whilst retaining capacity within the strategic road network so facilitating provision for further development in future Plan periods.
30. By the inclusion of existing development within the provisions of a travel plan associated with new development, it may be possible to free up additional capacity within the road network so that the demand generated by a proposed new development, which would otherwise be unacceptable, can be accommodated.

⁷ The overall forecast demand will be the existing flow plus traffic likely to be generated by development already committed, plus traffic likely to be generated by the development under consideration, less any reduction arising from any travel plan or demand management measures that are being proposed.

⁸ 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.

⁹ The opening of the development shall be taken to be the date at which the development first becomes available for occupation, unless agreed otherwise.

Demand management

31. Demand management involves a range of techniques that can be implemented to minimise traffic generation. There may be circumstances where the implementation of travel plan measures alone would not be sufficient to reduce the traffic demand of an individual development or group of developments to acceptable levels.
32. In such instances the Highways Agency will work with local planning authorities and local highway authorities to determine whether the implementation of traffic management measures could effectively regulate and manage traffic flows so as to make the most effective use of the available capacity on the strategic road network.

Capacity enhancement

33. Only after travel plan and demand management measures have been fully explored and applied will capacity enhancement measures be considered. While capacity enhancements should normally be addressed at the plan-making stage, such measures may be considered at the time when individual planning applications are submitted, subject to the over-riding principle that delivery of the adopted Local Plan proposals should not be compromised.
34. Where insufficient capacity exists to provide for overall forecast demand at the time of opening, the impact of the development will be mitigated to ensure that at that time, the strategic road network is able to accommodate existing and development generated traffic. Any associated mitigation works should be appropriate to the overall connectivity and capacity of any affected part of the strategic road network.
35. These improvements will normally be delivered by means of a funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Transport.
36. Where a development will be brought forward in phases, any mitigation needs will be assessed based on the opening of the final phase. However it may be necessary to implement some mitigation measures in line with the opening of certain phases of development according to the impacts that they generate.

ACCESS TO THE STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK

37. 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.
38. In delivering economic growth at local level, it is essential that the wider economic needs of the country are not compromised. New accesses to busy high speed strategic roads lead to more weaving and turning manoeuvres, which in turn create additional risk to safety and reduce the reliability of journeys, resulting in a negative impact on overall national economic activity and performance.

39. Where appropriate, proposals for the creation of new junctions or direct means of access may be identified and developed at the Plan-making stage in circumstances where it can be established that such new infrastructure is essential for the delivery of strategic planned growth.
40. Where the strategic growth test cannot be met there will be no additional junctions with, or direct means of access to, motorways and other routes of near motorway standard¹⁰ other than for the provision of signed roadside facilities for road users (see Annex B), maintenance compounds and, exceptionally, major transport interchanges.
41. Where access is agreed for such development, the Highways Agency will be unable to support any subsequent change in permitted land use that retained the agreed access. Further through access to other developments will not be permitted.
42. Access to motorways and routes of near motorway standard for other types of development will be limited to the use of existing junctions with all-purpose roads. Modifications to existing junctions will be agreed where these do not have an adverse impact on traffic flows and safety. In line with the standards contained in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, for safety and operational reasons, direct connections to slip roads and/or connector roads will not be permitted.
43. The Highways Agency will adopt a graduated and less restrictive approach to the formation or intensification of use of access to the remainder of the strategic road network. However, the preference will always be that new development should make use of existing junctions. Where a new junction or direct means of access is agreed, the promoter will be expected to secure all necessary consents, and to fund all related design and construction works.
44. On a trunk road that is not a motorway or a route of near motorway standard, any proposal to change the use of an existing roadside facility for road users will be considered against local conditions and the merits of the individual case.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

45. In consultation with relevant infrastructure providers, statutory environmental advisors and consenting authorities, developers must ensure all environmental implications associated with their proposals, are adequately assessed and reported so as to ensure that the mitigation of any impact is compliant with prevailing policies and standards. This requirement applies in respect of the environmental impacts arising from the temporary construction works and the permanent transport solution associated with the development, as well as the environmental impact of the existing trunk road upon the development itself.

¹⁰ Routes of near motorway standard will normally be grade-separated dual carriageway routes benefitting from restricted direct access.

46. Where a likely negative impact on the environment resulting from the proposals occurs outside of a highway boundary as a result of the proposals (for example air quality, visual impacts, artificial light or noise impacts at new housing affected by a road), any required mitigation measures must be located outside of the strategic road network's highway boundary.
47. 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 have been appropriately considered, that measures have been included within the proposals as required by relevant policies or otherwise, 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.
48. Transport assessment undertaken by the promoter of the development should be comprehensive enough to establish the likely environmental impacts, including air quality, light pollution and noise, and to identify the measures to mitigate these impacts.¹¹ This will enable local authorities to fulfil their remit of considering appropriate environmental impact assessment of development.

PHYSICAL IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK

49. There may be development proposals that, whilst 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.
50. 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 into those systems from third party development and drainage systems. Where there is already an existing third party connection the right for connection may be allowed to continue provided that the input of the contributing catchment to the connection remains unaltered.

¹¹ Advice and standards for environmental assessment of development affecting trunk roads can be found in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/ha/standards/dmr/vol11/>

ANNEX A: SPECIAL TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT

NOISE FENCES, SCREEN FENCES, ETC

- A1. For reasons of safety, liability and maintenance, with the sole exception of fences owned and 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

- A2. The Highways Agency will not object to proposals for advertising consent 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 unlawfully incorporate elements of traffic sign design, such as directional arrows. Advertisements within the highway boundary are not permitted. The Highways Agency will remove any unauthorised adverts placed within the highway boundary.

GATEWAY STRUCTURES AND PUBLIC ART

- A3. The siting of gateway structures and public art within the highway boundary of the strategic road network will not be permitted for legal, safety and operational reasons. However, the siting of such features near the strategic road network may be seen as desirable to local authorities and developers. The Highways Agency is keen to support delivery of such proposals where no additional risk to road users is presented.
- A4. Due to the wide variety of design and form that such structures may take, and therefore the scope for 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 promoter of such 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

- A5. 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.
- A6. 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. These factors should be discussed with the relevant Highways Agency's Area Manager prior to any works being undertaken.

- A7. All operations must be carried out without interference to traffic flows.
- To these ends, the Highways Agency requires Mobile Network Operators to obtain technical approval for their installation, and provide a full road safety audit, which must consider the installation of the equipment and its maintenance as well as any static hazard presented. Full details of the registration procedure can be found in the DMRB at http://www.dft.gov.uk/ha/standards/tech_info/

WIND TUBINES

Location

- A8. In order to mitigate the risks to the safety of road users arising from structural or mechanical failure, the Highways Agency will seek a minimum setback from the highway boundary of height + 50 metres or height x 1.5, whichever is the lesser.¹²
- A9. 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. In particular this may apply 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'

- A10. 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

- A11. 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.
- A12. 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 bends, and crossings for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
- A13. 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.

¹² Subject to over-riding provisions contained in legislation elsewhere, for example those relating to permitted development.

Dazzle

- A14. 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

- A15. 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.
- A16. Access to the site for construction, maintenance and de-commissioning should be obtained via the local road network and, normally, there should be no direct connection to the strategic road network.
- A17. 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

- B1. 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 2002.¹³ 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.
- B2. All such proposals will be considered in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework and, in particular, the statement that it includes regarding the primary function of roadside facilities being to support the safety and welfare of the road user.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

- B3. 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

- B4. 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 and these facilities assist in compliance with such requirements.
- B5. The network of service areas on the strategic road network has been developed on the premise that opportunities to stop are provided at intervals of approximately half an hour. However the timing is not prescriptive as at peak hours, on congested parts of the network, travel between service areas may take longer.

¹³ 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.

- B6. 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, but 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 Bridges¹⁴ including its provisions in respect of junction separation.
- B7. Speed limits on the strategic road network vary and therefore, applying the same principles, 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.
- B8. The distances set out above are considered appropriate for to all parts of the strategic road network and to be in the interests and for the benefit of 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 merits of 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

- B9. It is for the private sector to promote and operate service areas that 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 within which local planning authorities would consider the planning proposals for such developments.
- B10. 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 Highways Agency, Planning & Economic Development, The Cube, 199, Wharfside Street, Birmingham B11RN; roadside_facilities@highways.gsi.gov.uk

TRIP GENERATION

- B11. In circumstances where there is potential for these to become destinations in their own right, the Highways Agency will only support proposals for or within service areas and other roadside facilities 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.

¹⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Design_Manual_for_Roads_and_Bridges

IMPACT OF ROADSIDE FACILITIES ON THE STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK

- B12. At all roadside facilities, it is particularly important to avoid adverse impacts upon the effective operation of the strategic road network, such as increasing the risk of congestion or of vehicles slowing or stopping 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

- B13. On-line (between junctions) service areas are considered to be more accessible to road users and as a result are more attractive and conducive to encouraging drivers to stop and take a break. They also avoid the creation of any increase in traffic demand at existing junctions.
- B14. Therefore, in circumstances where competing sites are under consideration, on the assumption that all other factors are equal, the Highways Agency has a preference for new facilities at on-line locations.
- B15. However, in circumstances where an on-line service area cannot be delivered due to planning, safety, operational or environmental constraints, a site sharing a common boundary with the highway at a junction with the strategic road network is to be preferred to the continued absence of facilities.
- B16. An exception to these general location criteria are truckstops located within 2 miles of the strategic road network that otherwise meet the minimum requirements for signing. However signing will not be agreed in circumstances where, in order to reach such a truckstop, HGVs would be required to pass through residential areas.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR SIGNING

- B17. The following criteria set out the minimum requirements for the various types of roadside facility that may be eligible for signing 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 meet the requirements for signing.

Table B1: Minimum requirements for the various types of roadside facility that may be eligible for signing from the strategic road network

Minimum requirements to be eligible for signing M= Mandatory P = Permitted	Motorway		APTR service area *	Truckstops on Motorways	Truckstops signed from SRN #	Truckstops on All-Purpose Trunk roads
	Service Area	Rest Area				
Open 24 hrs a day 365 days a year	M	M	N/A	M	N/A	N/A
Open minimum 12 hours per day between 8am and 8pm every day except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.	N/A	N/A	M	N/A	M	M
Free parking for up to 2 hours minimum for all vehicles permitted to use the road served by the facility.(see schedule 1)	M	M	M	M	M	M
Free toilets/hand washing facilities with no need to make a purchase.	M	M	M	M	M	M
Shower and washing facilities for HGV drivers, including secure lockers in the shower/washing area.	M	P	P	M	M	M
Fuel	M	P	M	M	P	P
Hot drinks and hot food available at all opening hours for consumption on the premises.	M	P	P	M	P	P
Hot drinks and hot food available 8am to 8pm for consumption on the premises.	N/A	P	M	N/A	M	M
Access to a cash operated telephone.	M	M	M	M	M	M
Use as an operating centre for the purposes of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995 or the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981.	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	P	P

* Limited to a single or exceptionally 2 adjoining interconnected premises, accessed directly from the trunk road or directly from a junction on the trunk road.

See note B16 Location

- B18. Further guidance on the design, authorisation, funding, installation and maintenance of signs is available from the Highways Agency.¹⁵

PARKING CHARGES

- B19. 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 necessity to use a mobile phone. Cash payments must be accepted.

PICNIC AREAS

- B20. Picnic areas will be permitted at all of the above types of facility.
- B21. 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 that site.

ACCESS TO THE STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK

- B22. The availability of other connecting access routes at new sites will be considered on a site by site basis by the relevant local planning authority as part of the planning process. The Highways Agency will provide input as a statutory consultee to the planning process.
- B23. 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. Where subsidiary accesses may be approved their will be restricted to staff, deliveries, parties carrying out duties for and on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport, the emergency services, and breakdown recovery and assistance.
- B24. Access to other developments through a roadside facility is not permitted.

SIGNING

- B25. 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

MANDATORY PARKING PROVISION

- B26. Where a site is subject to a pre-existing sealed agreement which specifies the levels of parking provision, this shall continue to apply until such time as the scale and/or scope of on-site activities is extended.

¹⁵ This will be provided as a guidance note alongside the published circular.

- B27. Where the scale and/or scope of on-site activities is extended, the methodology set out in Schedule 1 shall be used for calculating the numbers of parking spaces by vehicle type that should be provided for the various types of roadside facility. The methodology set out in Schedule 1 will also be used for calculating the levels of parking provision for all new sites promoted after the publication of this policy.
- B28. However, notwithstanding the provisions of the previous two paragraphs, levels of provision may be adjusted to reflect local conditions through a process of site specific negotiation. It will be the responsibility of the site operator to demonstrate that any departure from the requirements of Schedule 1 is appropriate.

RETAIL ACTIVITIES

- B29. The scope and scale of retail activities at roadside facilities is a matter for consideration by 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 which is to support the safety and welfare of the road user.

HOTELS, CONFERENCE CENTRES AND BUSINESS CENTRES

- B30. 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.
- B31. As a statutory consultee to such proposals, the Highways Agency will not object to the provision of hotels; conference centres; and business centres at the sites of roadside facilities for motorists unless there would be demonstrable adverse impact on the safety and/or operation of the strategic road network such as a net increase in travel.
- B32. 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

- B33. 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.
- B34. 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 demonstrable adverse impact on the safety and/or operation of the strategic road network or the roadside facility in question.. The Highways Agency particularly welcomes proposals that will produce a net reduction of trip mileage.
- B35. Separate parking must be provided to service such activities so as to avoid any reduction in the general parking provision available to other road users.

FACILITIES FOR LOW EMISSION VEHICLES

- B36. 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.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport.

DRIVER AND TOURIST INFORMATION

- B37. 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

- B38. 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 provisions set out in Annex A regarding wind turbine development.

SCHEDULE 1

Parking requirements for different types of vehicle should be calculated on the basis of the table below, using the most recent complete year data to identify the peak monthly flow, averaging that to find the daily flow and then applying the appropriate formulae:

A = number of cars and light goods vehicles; and

B = number of HGVs and coaches

Advice on obtaining and interpreting traffic flows should be obtained from the Highways Agency

Parking requirements at motorway service areas			
Calculation ¹⁶		Variable	Notes
Traffic flow (Vehicles per day) ¹⁷			
Light vehicle		A	Advice on traffic flows is available from the Highways Agency
HGV and coach		B	
No. of parking spaces required ¹⁸			
Cars	0.5 % of A	C	Dedicated motorcycle bays for securing bikes
HGV	0.5 % of B	D	
Abnormal load	Minimum of 1		
Coach	0.1 % of B	E	
Coach interchange ¹⁹	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	
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		

Parking requirements at motorway rest areas

The parking requirements for a motorway rest area are half those required for a motorway service area, rounded up to the higher whole number as necessary.

¹⁶ The Highways Agency's Planning and Economic Development Team can assist with these calculations.

¹⁷ Where the necessary supporting information is available operators may wish to increase the number of parking spaces for particular types of vehicle in recognition of the particular make up of the road users served by the facility.

¹⁸ Parking for disabled travellers should be clearly signed at the entrance to the MSA.

¹⁹ Where such a facility has been permitted.

Parking requirements at motorway truckstops

The parking requirements for a motorway truckstop are 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 car with 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		
	Calculation²⁰	Notes
No. of parking spaces required²¹		
Cars	0.1 % of A	Minimum of 10
HGV	Minimum of 2	
Abnormal load	Minimum of 1	
Coach	Minimum of 1	
Coach interchange ²²	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	Located adjacent to the front entrance
Spaces for disabled users caravan/motorhome/vehicle and trailer	Minimum of 1	
Spaces for disabled lodge users	Minimum of 2	

²⁰ The Highways Agency's Planning and Economic Development Team can assist with these calculations.

²¹ Parking for disabled travellers should be clearly signed at the entrance to the services.

²² Where such a facility has been permitted.

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