

The Highland Council

Transport, Environmental and Community Services
15 August 2013

Agenda Item	11
Report No	TEC 59/13

Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments

Report by Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services

Summary

This report invites Members to approve the final draft of the *Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments* for use in all future Planning Applications and in applications for Roads Construction Consents.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Members will recall that the *Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments* were approved in draft form at the TECS Committee on 26 May 2011 for use on a trial basis in relation to Planning Applications and applications for Roads Construction Consent.
- 1.2 During the trial period a number of comments on the Guidelines have been made by developers and their agents and also by officials from the Council. A consultation seminar was held with members of the development industry on 1 March 2013. A summary of all the comments received and the action taken is provided in **Appendices A and B**.
- 1.3 Taking into account the comments received and the experience gained in using the document in live planning applications during the trial period the Guidelines are now in their final draft form and Members are invited to approve the final draft for use in all future Planning Applications and in applications for Road Construction Consents.
- 1.4 The Guidelines can be accessed via the following link.

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/A5A028B8-E114-4519-AA9F-3C37B23D088B/0/THCRTGNDFINALDRAFT.pdf>

A paper copy will be available in the Member's lounge.

2. Consultation

- 2.1 The comments and feedback received during the consultation period have been considered and the draft document amended accordingly where considered necessary.

3. Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments

- 3.1 The *Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments* is an update of the previous document *Roads Guidelines for New Developments* which was last reviewed in 2001. In view of the number of changes since that time the opportunity has been taken to completely rewrite the document and improve its layout.
- 3.2 While national guidance is available for trunk roads and can be applied to strategic council roads, there is currently no comprehensive guidance available at national level regarding standards to be adopted across the full range of local roads. Hence the requirement for the Council to have its own set of standards which takes account of national standards where these are applicable, and also reflect local conditions in the Highland Council area.
- 3.3 Reference is made to the Scottish Government document *Designing Streets* which describes policy relating to new residential streets with an emphasis on creating attractive environments with a *sense of place* and which encourage walking and cycling as well as accommodating motor vehicles.
- 3.4 Additionally the document *Scottish Planning Policy* includes a requirement for Local Authorities to apply maximum parking standards for some types of development and this aspect is incorporated in the new document.
- 3.5 The document has been produced by the Council with the assistance of Halcrow (Civil Engineering Consultants).
- 3.6 Minor amendments will be made to the document as required on an annual basis.

4. Scope of the Document

- 4.1 The document covers a wide range of requirements relating to new developments which are the responsibility of TEC Services as the Roads Authority, and also includes consideration of flood impact and assessment. It is subdivided into the following topics:
- Policy
 - Planning
 - Road Construction Consent & Traffic Orders
 - Road Network (including cycling , walking and public transport)
 - Design Objectives and Requirements
 - Parking
 - Construction Materials
 - Flooding
 - Construction Traffic

- 4.2 SECTION 1 of the document relates to **Policy and Procedures** and refers to national and Council policy which affects proposals for new development including *Designing Streets*.
- 4.3 Section 1 also sets out the information required in support of planning applications to enable the transport impacts including the proposed road design to be properly evaluated by TEC Services.
- 4.4 The procedures to be followed by developers applying for adoption of new roads are set out together with detailed construction requirements.
- 4.5 SECTION 2 covers **Standards and Guidelines** and sets out the full range of issues to be taken into account by developers in designing and constructing new roads and other transport infrastructure from main distributor roads to quiet residential streets and minor roads.
- 4.6 Full consideration is given to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and provision of public transport. Guidance is given on designing roads for low speeds in new residential areas.
- 4.7 The section deals with traffic signs, traffic signals, road markings, statutory undertakings, structures, road drainage, parking standards and construction materials standards.
- 4.8 SECTION 3 of the document covers **Flooding and Construction Traffic**. The chapter on construction traffic makes reference to requirements relating to applications for renewable energy developments.

5. Benefits

- 5.1 The new Guidelines provide up to date guidance which is in accordance with the latest standards set by the Scottish Government and other bodies.
- 5.2 The Guidelines will assist developers and their agents when preparing planning applications and applications for roads construction consent and Council staff in the assessment of these applications.
- 5.3 It will enable appropriate and consistent standards to be applied across the Council area.
- 5.4 Comments and feedback from developers and others involved in using the draft Guidelines have been taken into account in preparing the finalised version.

4. Implications

- 4.1 There are no resource implications attached to this report.
- 4.2 There are no legal implications attached to this report.

- 4.3 The Guidelines take full account of provision for disabled and vulnerable users.
- 4.4 The guidelines include reference to mitigation of flood risk to ensure that new developments are not at risk of flooding.
- 4.5 There are no risk implications attached to this report.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 Members are invited to approve the final draft of the *Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments* for use in all future Planning Applications and in applications for Roads Construction Consents.

(Note: The previous document '*Road Guidelines for New Developments*' will be withdrawn from use)

- 5.2 Members are invited to approve that authority is delegated to the Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services to carry out minor amendments to the Guidelines as required, normally on an annual basis. Any major amendments will be referred back to the TECS Committee for approval.

Designation: Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services

Report Author: John Danby

Date: 2 August 2013

Appendix A

Comment	Response	Action
P.9, para 2 - how is holiday accommodation defined?	The reference to holiday accommodation is intended to cover the situation where a holiday development remains in a single ownership including responsibility for the access road.	
P17, para 1.1.5 - RCC will not be granted prior to planning permission.	It is agreed that both Planning and RCC should be considered in parallel; nevertheless, RCC would not be granted in advance of Planning Consent.	
P19, para 1.4.1 - refers to reducing dominance of private car but this is contradicted elsewhere. Eg. Garages not counted towards off street parking provision.	The layout and content of developments can play a major part in reducing the dominance of the private car by providing good pedestrian and cycle access to schools, local shops, public transport etc. Nevertheless car ownership is likely to remain high in the highlands and the SPP does not set out to restrict car ownership. Experience shows that garages are not used for parking by many householders leading to indiscriminate parking on footways and verges and hence the requirement to provide adequate parking.	See later comments re. garage parking.
P19, para 1.4.2 - Council guidelines should not have priority over Designing Streets.	Designing Streets is applicable particularly for residential and lightly trafficked streets and the Council guidelines refer the reader to Designing Streets for Main and Minor residential streets. The Council Guidelines however cover a much wider range of road types and guidance is given for these. In addition development often takes place as an extension to the existing road network where the character and design speed is different to that assumed in Designing Streets.	Para 1.4.2 has been re-written.

P21, para 2.1.1.5 - gives no certainty to developers.	This is a statement of the legal position. In practise where there is an expectation that the roads will be adopted sufficient information is required at the planning stage to establish that the appropriate adoption standards can be met.	
P22, Fig.2.1 - is a scoping exercise for minor developments necessary?	The flowchart sets out the broad relationships between the Applicant, the Planning Service and TEC Services within the planning process and is not designed to show all the possible inter-relationships.	
P23, para 2.1.2.1 - definition of medium/ large or sensitive proposals	In the context of this document this relates to the scale and sensitivity of likely traffic impacts. However the Planning Service now offer a pre-application advice service for applications of all sizes.	
P24, para 2.1.4.2 - 1:500 location plan impracticable for most developments.	With the introduction of the e-planning system the Planning Service has stated a strong preference for drawings to be of maximum size A3 although larger drawings will be accepted.	Chapter 2 revised to set out clearly the requirements for each stage of planning application.
P24, para 2.1.4.3 - level of detail required for MSC and FUL applications?	The requirement is that all general arrangement plans shall be finalised as part of the planning process. Details relating to construction depths and engineering details will form part of the submission for RCC but shall be fully compatible with the general arrangement plans previously agreed.	As above.
P24, para 2.1.4.4 - normally dealt with by planning authority.	This section sets out the roads and transport issues which should be considered by an applicant and are relevant to the determination of a planning application.	As above.

<p>P27, para 2.2.1.1 - is a TA1 Transport Form required in all situations?</p>	<p>The TA1 Transport Form is a short and straightforward form which provides basic information regarding the transport impacts of a development where a Transport Assessment is not required. It is in line with the form recommended by Scottish Government.</p>	
<p>P27, 2.2.3.3 - discretion should be applied regarding need for a TA</p>	<p>The guidance regarding thresholds for a TA are in line with Scottish Government guidance.</p>	<p>Revised wording, 2.2.3.4 and 2.2.3.5</p>
<p>P28, para 2.2.3.4 - using this criteria almost all residential developments will require a TA</p>	<p>In line with Scottish Government guidance the normal threshold for residential development is 100 dwellings although in cases where smaller developments have a significant impact on the existing transport network a Transport Assessment may be required.</p>	<p>The additional requirements contained in 2.2.3.4 have been removed.</p>
<p>P28, para 2.2.3.5 - another delay in the approval process</p>	<p>Scoping assists in ensuring that Transport Assessment addresses all relevant issues helping to reduce abortive work and speed up the approval process. This is in line with Scottish Government guidance.</p>	
<p>P31, Ch.3 - a requirement for developers to use suitably qualified professionals would assist the RCC process</p>	<p>Sets out the Council's requirements in respect of Roads Construction Consent. The Council would always encourage applicants to use appropriately qualified professionals to deal with these aspects.</p>	

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 - do not accord with Designing Streets.	Designing Streets is aimed particularly at residential and lightly trafficked streets and the Council guidelines refer the reader to Designing Streets when considering this type of development. In practise much development takes place off the existing road network which has different characteristics and in rural areas where traffic speeds are higher. In addition non-residential development is also covered by the guidelines.	
P67, Table 5.1 - suggests in curtilage parking desirable for Home Zones and cul de sacs. Min. radius of 25m not consistent with Designing Streets.	The table refers to in-curtilage turning and it is accepted that this is not required for home zones and cul-de sac.	Revised Table 5.1
P147, Fig.6.1 and P158, Table 6.1 - what are parking requirements for larger houses and what account is taken of double garages?	It will generally be the case that larger houses and those with double garages will have larger driveways. In all cases it should be the aim to provide adequate parking to prevent the need for unplanned on street parking which can be obstructive to pedestrians and others and detrimental to amenity.	Revised wording to take account of double garages.
P172, para 7.4.1.5 and P174, table 7.1 - apparent discrepancy between the two.	There has been no significant increase in overall construction depths. Carriageway pavement construction is based on achieving industry standard design life and minimising maintenance requirements.	
P8, para 3 - Guidelines applicable to existing sites.	This refers to sites which have previously been developed. Where valid consents are in place this will be reflected when considering any request for future changes.	
P8, para 4 - discretion by local Area Roads Manager	No response required	
P8, para 5 - planning gain dealt with through the planning process	It is agreed that these matters are dealt with through the planning process.	

P10, Glossary - 'Allocated Parking Spaces' – no allowance for garages, no reference to larger garages or car ports.		Garage parking covered by revised wording in Fig. 6.1 and Table 6.1.
P17, para 1.1.5 - should be made clear that RCC process may run in parallel with planning process.	Agreed, it is the Council's intention that both processes will run in parallel	
P40, para 3.1.19.1 - often significant variation in Council's valuation of bond compared to developer's.	The Council's value of the bond will reflect the estimated cost of completing the works should the developer fail to do so.	
P41, para 3.1.23.3 - unable to use link provided.		Further action required.
P44, para 3.2.5.1 - stages for bond reduction need to be clarified.	Bond reductions will be in accordance with the relevant regulations.	
P57, para 4.3.4.3 - 'street' to be defined.		Para 4.3.4.3 has been revised.
P166, Table 6.9 - 2 cycle spaces per flat considered excessive.	The requirement could be relaxed where communal storage is provided.	Table 6 amended.
P44, para 3.2.6.3 - copy of H&S File to HC?	Necessary to provide an as-built record of the works and to identify any particular maintenance requirements.	
P45, para 3.3.3.2 - adoption of visibility splays?	In general, the Council "may" expect visibility splays at the junctions of public roads to be adopted.	
P63, para 5.3.2.6 - allows frontage access on distributor roads?	See 4.3.2.2 – direct frontage access to a local distributor road may be permitted where a 30 mph speed limit is provided.	
P71, table 5.3 - junction visibility splays more onerous than DMRB	4.5m 'x' distance for Main and Local Distributor roads at discretion of Roads Authority.	Table 5.3 revised.
Clarification required on maintenance of grassed road verges and embankment slopes.	This aspect is covered by 3.3.3.1	
No reference to set back distances for gates from edge of road.		Para 5.13.2.1 revised to cover this
Conflict in footway crossfall shown in Fig 5.10b and Fig.7.2 – suggest 2.5% is correct	Noted	Revised Fig. 7.2 - 2.5%

P33, para 3.1.3.3 - 'formal management system' to be clarified. Second and third sentences to form new paragraph		
P72, Table 5.4 - what is minimum stagger distance for private driveways on opposite sides of a rural road.	To be covered by SDB.	
Table 6.3 - parking standards for allotments to be reviewed.	To be assessed on merit – further guidance in Council's Allotment Policy.	Revised Table 6.3
Table 5.3 does not accord with SDB, Table 5.2.1 re. visibility y distances.		
Table 5.4 does not accord with SDB, 4.1.4 re. junction spacing on rural roads.	Covered by Note 1, Table 5.4	
Table 5.3 does not cater for situations where a Designing Streets road layout connects to an existing residential road.	The main road type largely dictates junction visibility requirements.	
Table 6.11 – disabled parking provision to be reviewed.		Revised Table 6.11
Para 6.3.5.3, Fig. 6.4 - include details for on street and off street disabled bays.		Revised Fig. 6.4, and Appendix 12
Forestry access details should be included	Agreed	Para 5.13.3 and Appendix 11

**DEVELOPERS SEMINAR ON 'ROADS AND TRANSPORT GUIDELINES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS'
and
PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE ON 'RESIDENTIAL DESIGN AND LAYOUT'**

1 MARCH 2013

FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS

Summary Table of Planning Application Supporting Documents

- Would dimensioned drawings be stamped as approved planning drawings – may cause issues particularly if there are changes at RCC. May be better for roads drawings to be submitted as supporting information.
- Potential for changes to planning drawings during the planning process resulting in need to revise roads drawings.
- Importance of pre-application advice to avoid abortive work.
- Most of the information requested can be made available fairly easily.
- Level of information required depends on the scheme.
- We may be looking for too much detail
- A sample drawing showing appropriate level of detail would be useful

Parking

- Parking can be biggest challenge in successfully designing a site
- Difficulty of providing parking standards in pastiche streets eg Fishertowns and also provide access for service and emergency vehicles.
- City/town centres should be defined and parking standards relaxed to promote regeneration.
- Courtyards should be multi-functional and not just restricted to parking.
- General perception that parking is not a big problem.
- For in-curtilage parking increase in requirement to 3 spaces for 4 bedrooms may not be realistic. Suggestion that no. of spaces could be based on house area (sqm) rather than no. of bedrooms.
- Suggestion that houses up to 4 bedrooms should have 2 spaces with additional spaces for larger houses.
- Drawing in fig 6 on page 147 of guidance is not compatible with designing streets.

Designing Streets

- Perception that THC are not promoting Designing Streets – how are we going to deal with it when we start using it.
- Issues with marketability of housing.
- Concern over providing small front gardens.
- Need to know what street patterns will be accepted by the Council.
- More swept path analysis will need to be done.
- Most people want to be able to park adjacent to their houses.
- DS is open to interpretation
- Feedback on completed DS schemes would be helpful