The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments
Stiùiridhean Rathaidean is Còmhdhalach airson Leasachaidhean Ùra

Section 1 – Policy and procedures /
Earrann 1 – Poileasaidh is modhan

Chapter 1
Caibideil 1
Policy
Poileasaidh

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Section 1 – Policy and procedures / Earrann 1 – Poileasaidh is modhan

Section 1 of this document describes the processes involved in satisfying the transportation aspects of planning applications and in obtaining the necessary consents that are required before a new road is constructed and, thereafter, adopted as a public road by The Highland Council, acting in its role as Local Roads Authority.

Section 1 includes the following:

Chapter 1 – Policy

Chapter 2 – Planning

Chapter 3 – Road Construction Consent and Traffic Orders

Chapter 1 – Policy / Caibideil 1 – Poileasaidh

1.1 Introduction and general requirements / Ro-ràdh agus riatanasan coitcheann

1.1.1 This document sets out the Highland Council's requirements for:

- the overall transport requirements for new development;
- the design and construction requirements for new roads which may be adopted by the Council;
- the assessment of flood risk and associated mitigation.

1.1.2 The Highland Council's function as Planning Authority is undertaken by the Planning and Development Service while the functions of Local Roads Authority and Local Flood Authority are undertaken by the Flood Risk Management Team and the Transport Planning Team in consultation with the Local Area Roads Teams. The term 'the Council' is used subsequently within this document to cover all of its functions and roles.

1.1.3 The Planning and Development Service will consult with the Flood Risk Management Team and the Transport Planning Team on the transport and flooding implications of planning applications. When assessing an application for planning permission, the Council will require to be satisfied on a range of transport issues, including the accessibility of the proposed development, provision for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport, private cars and service vehicles, parking and the traffic impact on the existing road network, together with proposals for mitigation measures. The national and Council policies and standards which determine the circumstances and extent to which these need to be considered are set out in this document. The Planning and Development Service may also consult with Transport Scotland in respect of applications which have an impact on the trunk road network for which different standards are applicable.

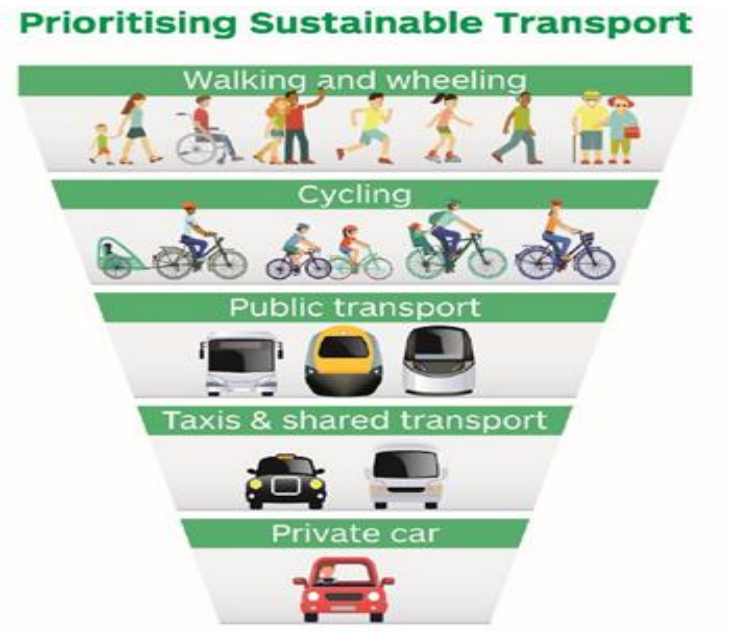
1.1.4 The Transport Planning Team in consultation with the Local Area Roads Teams are responsible for setting standards for the construction of new roads proposed for adoption and controls this through the issue of Road Construction Consent for which the appropriate design and construction standards are set out in this document. In addition, where existing roads are to be improved as part of a development, procedures are in place to ensure the Council's requirements are met.

1.1.5 Prior to the construction of any new road, a developer is required to obtain both Planning Permission and Road Construction Consent. It should be noted that formal Road Construction Consent will not normally be granted until detailed planning permission has been obtained.

1.2 National policy and guidance / Poileasaidh is stiùireadh nàiseanta

1.2.1 The key national policy framework relating to the transport and flooding implications of proposed development is set out within the following documents and it is expected that proposals submitted to the Council shall generally be in accordance with these:

- The National Transport Strategy 2 published in 2020 sets out the Scottish Governments vision for transport for the next 20 years. The four priorities in the strategy are to reduce inequalities, take climate action, deliver inclusive economic growth and improve our health and wellbeing. The strategy states that to achieve these priorities, the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy will be embedded in all decision making. In addition, the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy will be used to inform future investment decisions to ensure that the priorities for transport options are focused on reducing inequalities and the need to travel sustainably.



- The current Scottish Planning Policy is being revised and will become

a part of the National Planning Framework.

- Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 sets out the powers and responsibilities of the Council as Local Roads Authority, and provides the basis on which roads are adopted and on the issuing of Roads Construction Consent;

- Designing Streets sets out policy and guidance on the design of urban streets, particularly residential and other lightly trafficked streets. For a discussion of the relationship of Designing Streets to the guidance given in this document refer to Section 1.4 below;

- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) sets out standards for trunk roads but these are also applicable in certain cases to non-trunk roads. Generally where standards are given in this document they should be used on local roads in preference to the DMRB. However, for some works, for example highway structures and when undertaking work on heavily trafficked roads, the DMRB standards are applicable, except where agreed otherwise with the Council;

- There are a number of other national policy documents relevant to planning issues and development. These can be accessed at:

  Planning and architecture - gov.scot

  National Transport Strategy | Transport Scotland

- National Roads Development Guide supports Designing Streets and expands on its original principles clarifying the circumstances in which it can be used, whilst also providing other guidance on other areas such as rural areas subject to national speed limits. The NRDG is complimentary to the Council guidelines which provide more detailed information on a wide range of topics not covered in the NRDG. The intention is that both are used as reference documents. In order to avoid conflict between the documents, and to ensure the NRDG meets the requirement of the Highland Council, variations have been introduced to the NRDG. The Highland Council variations can be accessed within the NRDG from the appendix on Local Authority Variations and at: National Roads Development Guide

1.3 Council policy and guidance / Poileasaidh is stiùireadh na Comhairle

1.3.1 Council policies include the spatial and land use planning policies and strategies applicable to the Highland area. The Council policies generally augment and build upon the national policy framework. Proposals submitted to the Council are expected to take full recognition of the following:

- Highland-wide Local Development Plan - Highland Council, which provides details of strategic policies, with regard to issues such as land use, housing, transportation, business/industry, environment and tourism;
- Local Place Plans, which set out local planning polices within defined areas of the Council area;
- Development guidance, which relate to defined development areas.
- Highland Local Transport Strategy sets out the Council's transportation policies.
- Sustainable Design Guide sets out the Council's strong commitment to sustainability together with a number of other documents, which provide additional planning policy guidance.
- Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (this document) sets out the detailed requirements for transport for new development together with requirements for new road construction.
- Access to Single Houses and Small Housing Developments sets out requirements for single houses and small groups of houses in the countryside which do not require a road adoption. The booklet also forms an appendix to the Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (this document).

1.4 New residential and mixed-use development / Leasachadh ùr còmhnaidheach agus cleachdadh measgaichte

1.4.1 Designing Streets sets out policy and guidance at national level and is mainly applicable to residential and other lightly trafficked streets. The emphasis is to increase the attractiveness of streets for pedestrians and cyclists, to increase the 'sense of place' and to reduce the dominance of the private car. Designing Streets also supports the aims and objectives of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy as set out in the National Transport. In lightly trafficked streets there is an expectation that the design should be less determined by the requirements of motor vehicles and that the character of the environment should lead to a reduction in vehicle speeds thus improving the surroundings for other users. This should lead to a greater range and diversity of layouts and designs being acceptable and provide greater local character and choice.

1.4.2 The Council expects residential development proposals, where applicable, to be based generally on the principles of Designing Streets, which reflects government policy. For Development outwith the scope of Designing Streets, for example where high traffic volumes or speeds are anticipated or where development is accessed off existing roads, the requirements of this document (Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments) shall be applied. It is recommended that developers seek early discussion with the Council to agree the design parameters to be incorporated within new residential developments.

1.4.3 Whilst it is desirable to create new environments which are less dominated by the motor vehicle, the continuing role of the car and other motor vehicles must be fully recognised in development proposals with adequate provision made for parking, service vehicles and bus routes. Roads considered to have a distributor function and where higher levels of traffic are anticipated are not specifically covered in Designing Streets and shall be designed to take account of appropriate standards in accordance with the guidance in this document.

1.4.4 The Council acknowledges that appropriate design speeds, road geometry and applicable speed limits for proposed new roads will be influenced by adjacent development, traffic flows and their composition, together with movement and place considerations. Hence, this should result in more

design-led solutions on an individual site-by-site basis rather than rigidly using fixed standards.

1.4.5 Mixed-use developments are encouraged, especially with a network of well-connected streets. This can result in local facilities being in close proximity to each other, such that sustainable modes of travel, especially walking, can be predominant within the area.

1.5 Development in the countryside / Leasachadh air an dùthaich

1.5.1 For the development of single houses and small clusters of up to four houses where there is no requirement for the construction of a new adopted road reference should be made to the Access to Single Houses and Small Housing Developments.

1.5.2 For larger proposals in the countryside requiring a new adopted road or an extension to an existing adopted road, developers will be expected to come forward with proposals which respect the rural character of the area. These will nevertheless be expected to cater safely for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic and be constructed to high standards in order to minimise maintenance over the design life of the proposed road.