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Advice on Planning for small developments

March 2016

Introduction

This guidance provides an introduction to what Transport Scotland considers when consulted on planning applications for small developments near Scotland's trunk roads. It is intended for developers, their agents and planning authorities for smaller developments of less than 100 houses or other development types that will result in an equivalent number of trips to and from the development.

Transport Scotland is an Agency of the Scottish Government responsible for managing the Scottish trunk road network on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

Details of the trunk road network are available at

<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/road/maintenance/key-facts-about-trunk-road-network-scotland>

The main purpose of the trunk road network is to provide for the safe and efficient movement of strategic long distance traffic between major centres. It is recognised, however, that in many locations the trunk road provides the only road access to a development or forms an important part of the road network used for local trips. Care is needed to ensure a balance is struck between local and wider interests when assessing development proposals.

Planning Applications

Planning Authorities must consult Transport Scotland where developments impact on the trunk road network before they make their decision. We welcome, and encourage, discussions with developers before they submit planning applications.

To maintain the safe and efficient operation of the trunk road network, we review development proposals to consider their impact. We will agree the mitigation measures that developers will need to deliver to address any adverse impacts arising from the development, if they are required. We provide the Planning Authority with recommendations in our planning application consultation response. The Planning Authority then considers all the information in relation to an application and decides on whether to grant planning permission.

This advice is not exhaustive and further guidance may be needed prior to submitting the planning application. For more complex developments we recommend that developers seek advice from an appropriate professional.

For larger developments additional considerations and assessments are likely to be required, see the Transport Scotland website.

Consulting Transport Scotland

We would encourage potential developers to provide details and discuss proposed applications with the Transport Scotland Development Management Team as early as possible and whenever you have a query. We can provide views on the general acceptability of proposals and advise whether supporting evidence needs to be submitted with the planning application. These early discussions help us to process your planning application more quickly and assists in avoiding any abortive work.

We will respond to all pre-application and other inquiries and will meet you on site if needed, noting that we seek to combine visits to make best use of our resources. Contact details can be found at the end of this guidance.

Transport Scotland Considerations

This guidance sets out some of the factors to be considered when proposing new development, including some of the common factors considered in relation to new and upgraded trunk road junctions and accesses.

Where there are no capacity or safety issues arising from a development, changes to the trunk road network are unlikely to be required. However, where a development leads to an increase in traffic using an existing junction or access it may be necessary for the developer to provide mitigation for safety or capacity reasons. It is unlikely that trunk road capacity will be a concern for most of the smaller applications we consider, but it is essential that the safety of trunk road users is not compromised.

Roads Design Standards

When carrying out any alterations or improvements to the trunk road, the changes must be designed and constructed to meet or surpass the trunk road design standards set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) (<http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/ha/standards/dmr/index.htm>). It should be noted that these may be different from non-trunk road design standards. Where it is not possible to meet the standards set out in DMRB for any modification to the trunk road network, it will be necessary to make a formal application to Transport Scotland for a Departure from Standard. Transport Scotland's Development Management Team will act as sponsors for any application for a Departure from Standard and should be contacted for further advice.

For trunk roads in urban areas, to meet Scottish Government's policy from "Designing Streets", an approach which balances place and movement may be more appropriate. Further advice can be obtained from Transport Scotland's Development Management Team.

Any changes to the trunk road network need to be suitable for everyone of all ages and abilities. Further guidance is available in Transport Scotland's "Roads for All: Good Practice Guide for Roads" available at http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/rrd_reports/uploaded_reports/j256264/j256264.pdf.

Road Safety Audits

Road safety needs to be fully considered where changes to the trunk road network are being proposed. To minimise the possibility of accidents Road Safety Audits apply operational road safety experience to the design and construction phases of changes to the trunk road network, as well as after changes have been built.

Road Safety Audits are required for new or permanent changes to the existing trunk road layout or features. In certain circumstances, where changes to the trunk road being proposed are very minor in nature, the Transport Scotland Development Management Team can, on your behalf, recommend the requirement be waived, which then needs to be approved by Transport Scotland's Head of Standards. The Transport Scotland Development Management Team will only make a recommendation if they are satisfied that it is appropriate to do so.

A Road Safety Audit is multi stage process carried out at different stages during the design process as well as before and after the access or road is open to traffic. Road Safety Audits must be undertaken by a Team, one of which should hold a Certificate of Competency, the qualification required to carry out a road safety audit on the Trunk Road network. Transport Scotland's Development Management Team can advise further.

Access Design Considerations

Visibility Splays

A visibility splay is an essential safety feature of your access or junction. This is the distance a driver needs to be able to see left and right along the trunk road when waiting to turn out of a junction or access onto the trunk road. These areas, known as visibility splays, are indicated as the shaded areas on Diagram 1. These are important as drivers need a clear view of approaching traffic in order to exit safely.

Visibility splays also allow traffic on the public road to see pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles leaving the development. An unobstructed visibility splay allows you to see and be seen, therefore the longer the length of visibility splay, the more time another road user has to see you, and for you to see them.

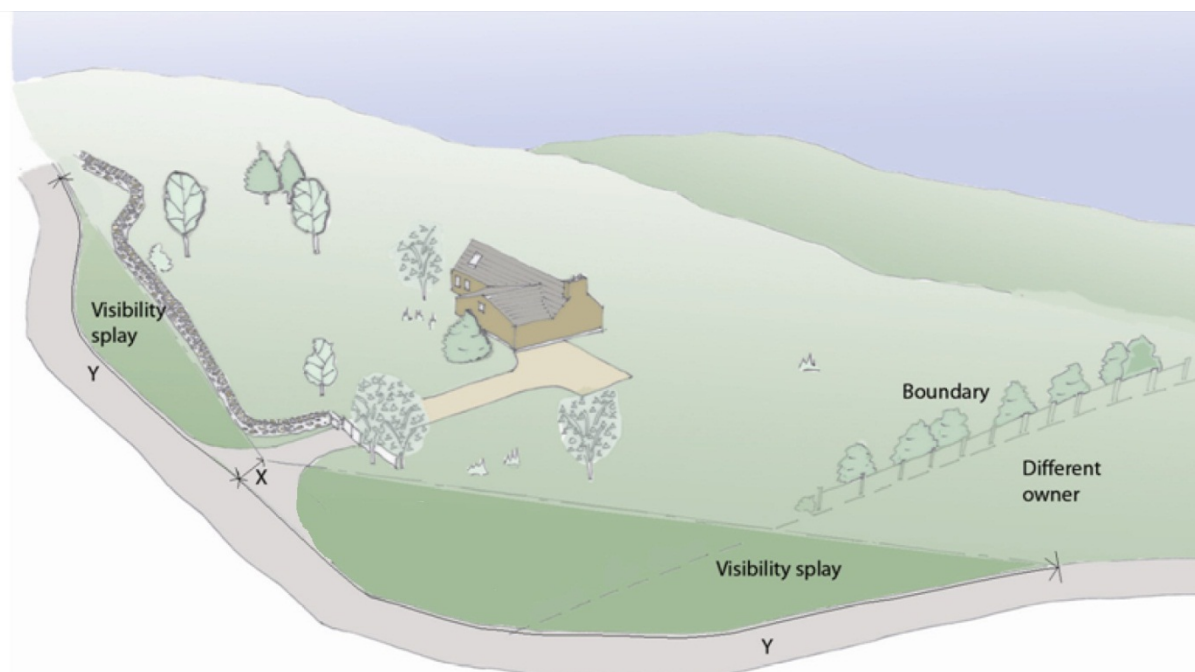


Diagram 1: Visibility Splays – Reproduced with kind permission of The Highland Council

The visibility splay is made up of two distances shown as 'x' and 'y' in Diagram 1. The 'x' distance is measured along the centreline of the access from the edge of the trunk road carriageway and is normally 4.5 metres. This can be reduced to 2.4 metres, or 2 metres in certain circumstances. The distance you need to see along the road (the 'y' distance) is measured in both directions from the centreline of the access along the nearside edge of the trunk road carriageway. The 'y' distance for different speeds can be found in Table 1. The traffic speed can be based on speed limits or measured traffic speeds.

The visibility splay starts at 'x' distance from drivers eye height which is between 1.05 and 2 metres, depending on the vehicle. From this height at the access or junction the driver needs to see an object height of between 0.26 metres and 1.05 metres above the road surface along the 'y' distance. Therefore the visibility splay must be kept clear of objects that may block this view to ensure that the driver can clearly see approaching traffic. As well as achieving visibility splays applicants will

usually be required to maintain them. It may be necessary for developers to approach adjacent land owners to obtain permission to enter their land to cut back vegetation for this purpose.

Speed of traffic on the Trunk Road	kilometres per hour	30	50	60	70	85	100	120
	miles per hour	19	31	37	43	53	62	75
'y' Distance (m)		45	70	90	120	160	215	295

Table 1: Visibility Splay "y" distance

In urban areas, a visibility splay should also be provided from a driveway to the footway to allow young children to be seen by the driver. This splay should be 2 metres by 2 metres from the driver's eye height of 1.05 metres to an object height of 0.6 metres above the rear of the footway, as shown in diagram 2.

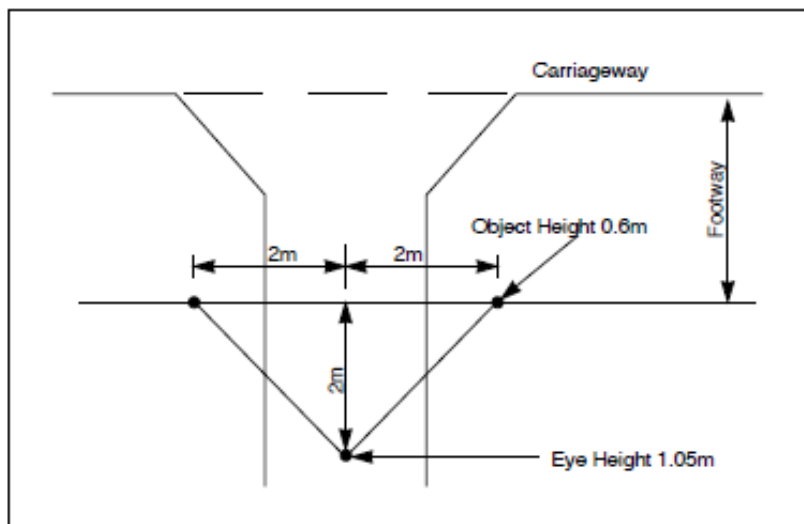


Diagram 2: Footway Visibility at access

Forward Visibility

Forward visibility is the distance drivers can see when travelling along the trunk road. Drivers need sufficient time to be able to see, and react appropriately to potential hazards such as a vehicle waiting to turn right into an access or junction. Developers will be expected to demonstrate that they can achieve the forward visibility required which will depend on the speed of the traffic on the trunk road. Contact the Transport Scotland Development Management Team for further advice on requirements.

Junctions and Access Layouts

Location of New Junctions and Accesses

For safety reasons, new junctions and accesses will not normally be permitted at locations where vehicles travelling or turning on and off the trunk road cannot see the appropriate distance to stop safely e.g. where visibility is restricted, such as on bends, crests or dips. New junctions and accesses may also be resisted where these are located on sections of the trunk road that are used for overtaking as this will reduce overtaking opportunities and hinder the safe and efficient movement of high volumes of long distance traffic.

Urban Access

In urban areas, where the trunk road speed limit is low then a narrow access with a drop kerb at the trunk road edge is likely to be acceptable, see Diagram 3.

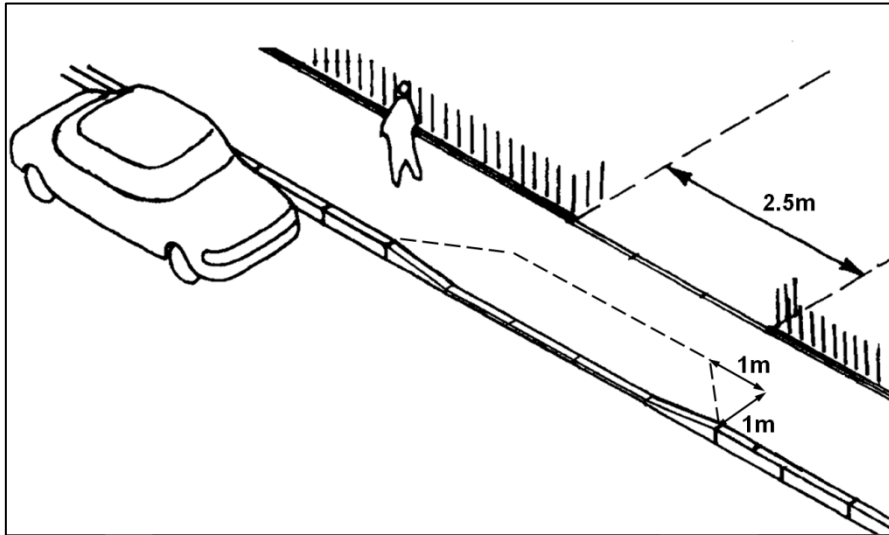


Diagram 3: Typical Urban Access

Rural Junction or Access

In rural areas, the width of the access or side road will depend on the amount of traffic that will be using it. An appropriate corner radius (see Diagram 4) will need to be provided, the size of which will be determined by a combination of location, vehicle speeds and the type of vehicle which will be using it. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to provide a taper to cater for large vehicles or adjust the layout depending on the traffic using the access. Further adjustments could include the provision of a right turn lane, prohibiting certain manoeuvres, or providing diverge and merge tapers where the access or junction is onto a dual carriageway.

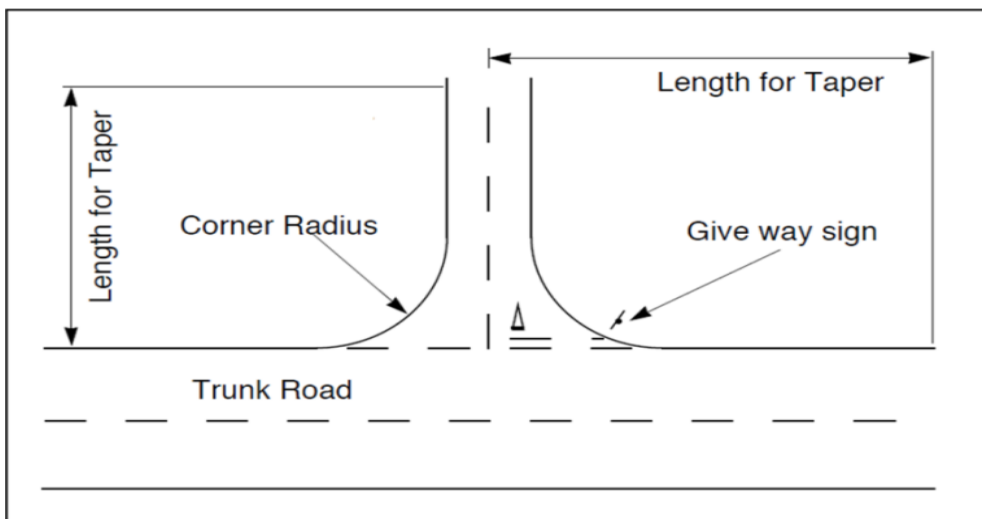


Diagram 4: Typical Access Layout

Further advice on these requirements can be found in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges or from the Transport Scotland Development Management Team.

Gradient

Junctions and accesses should not have a gradient in excess of 10% when approaching the trunk road. A flat dwell area should be provided to avoid the risk of vehicles stalling on a hill start, or inadvertently rolling into the trunk road when attempting to leave the junction. This should be at least 15 metres long although this may be reduced in difficult circumstances. For single dwellings this may be relaxed to 5 metres.

Other Considerations

Turning Facilities, Servicing and Parking

Vehicles joining the trunk road should always use a forward gear as this is the safest form of exiting an access, and we will normally ask for a service bay or turning facilities to be provided within the site. Parking on the trunk road can be unsafe in certain circumstances and we will normally require sufficient parking spaces to be provided within the development.

Surfacing and Drainage

An access should be surfaced in an approved bituminous material for at least the length of the longest vehicle expected to use it. This surfacing will have to connect with the trunk road surfacing in an approved manner.

The impact of any new or changed access on the trunk road drainage system must be considered. No surface water drainage can be connected into the trunk road drainage system and any access must be designed to prevent surface water flowing on to the trunk road.

Non-car users, Fences and Gates

The needs of pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians will also need to be considered. For many developments, a boundary fence may have to be erected to prevent pedestrian access to the trunk road. This will usually be maintained by the developer or applicant. If a gate is to be provided on an access it will need to be set back an appropriate distance to allow a vehicle to wait clear of the road and footway. The length should accommodate the largest vehicle expected to use the access.

Lighting

For safety reasons, trunk road drivers should not be dazzled by light from the site and lighting should be arranged so that it does not shine on to the trunk road. The internal site layout should be arranged to ensure that headlights of vehicles moving within the development do not point directly at oncoming traffic on the trunk road. As a last resort screening may be required to stop this happening.

Permissions Following Planning Consent

Working on the Trunk Road

Being granted planning permission does not automatically allow you to work on the trunk road. You will require to contact the appropriate Transport Scotland Operating Company (<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/road/maintenance/operating-companies>) and supply them with sufficient information to allow them to check the design and construction details of the works. The Transport Scotland Operating Company will also give you permission to work on the trunk road to ensure that the works will not cause unnecessary inconvenience to other road users and supervise the works as they are undertaken. The trunk road is a dangerous environment and only suitably competent people with appropriate training and safety equipment should undertake tasks near live carriageways.

Additional Permissions

In certain cases, it may be necessary for the developer to sign a “Letter of Understanding” followed by a “Minute of Agreement” which will impose certain conditions on the completion of the works. This may also require the submission of a road bond to protect Transport Scotland should the work not be completed for any reason beyond the developer’s control.



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For further advice on any aspect of this note please contact the Transport Scotland Development Management Team
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