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Development and the Trunk Road Network

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1 Introduction

This guidance sets out the approach taken by Transport Scotland when consulted on planning applications for developments affecting the trunk road network. This document focuses on those developments which require to be supported by a transport assessment. These are generally those developments of 100 houses or other development types that will result in an equivalent number of trips.

This document provides advice on the information that we require and review in relation to the potential effects of development on the trunk road network, and the process undertaken to enable a formal response to be provided to planning authorities. It is intended for developers, their consultants and agents, and planning authorities.

For development of a scale that is unlikely to require a transport assessment you should refer to Transport Scotland's Advice on Planning for Small Developments on our website.

1.1 Planning Applications and Transport Scotland

Planning authorities should consult Transport Scotland where developments impact on the trunk road network before they make their decision, and in accordance with the detailed legislative provisions as set out in Schedule 5 (5) of the [Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2013](#)¹.

Transport Scotland responds to Planning Authority planning application consultations on behalf of Ministers. In responding we must ensure that any impact of development on the trunk road network has been fully considered and addressed where appropriate.

1.2 Transport Scotland and the Trunk Road Network

Transport Scotland is an executive agency of the Scottish Government. It is responsible, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, for delivering a safe, efficient, cost-effective and sustainable transport system for the benefit of the people of Scotland, playing a key role in helping to achieve the Scottish Government's purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish. This covers a range of modes including trunk roads, rail, major transport projects, the national concessionary travel schemes and the planning and operation of selected air and ferry routes.

The [trunk road network](#)² connects all parts of Scotland and the safe and efficient operation is fundamental to delivering the Scottish Government's single purpose of

¹ http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2013/155/pdfs/ssi_20130155_en.pdf

² <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/road/maintenance/key-facts-about-trunk-road-network-scotland>

sustainable economic growth. Its primary purpose is to provide for the safe and efficient movement of strategic long distance traffic between major centres, although in rural areas it also performs important local functions.

1.3 Transport Assessments

[Scottish Planning Policy](#)³ states that where a new development or a change of use is likely to generate a significant increase in the number of trips, a transport assessment should be carried out. The assessment should set out how the development will affect the performance and safety of the trunk road network, including any potential cumulative effects, and what, if any, mitigation measures are required.

The [Transport Assessment Guidance](#)⁴ sets out the principles, requirements and preparation of transport assessments that should be followed in Scotland. It also sets out indicative thresholds of development which, if met or surpassed, generally require a transport assessment. These are reproduced here in Table 1.

Depending on site specific factors, there may be cases where development falls below these thresholds and still requires a transport assessment. Therefore we advise that you consult with Transport Scotland before submitting an application.

³ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453827.pdf>

⁴ http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/private/documents/tsc-basic-pages/Planning_Reform_-_DPMTAG_-_Development_Management_DPMTAG_Ref_17_-_Transport_Assessment_Guidance_FINAL_-_June_2012.pdf

Table 1 - Indicative Thresholds for a Transport Assessment

| Land Use | Parameter | Transport Assessment Required |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Food retail | Gross Floor Area (GFA) | > 1,000 sqm |
| Non-food retail | GFA | > 1,000 sqm |
| Cinemas and conference facilities | GFA | > 1,000 sqm |
| Leisure facilities | GFA | > 1,000 sqm |
| Business | GFA | > 2,500 sqm |
| Industry | GFA | > 5,000 sqm |
| Distribution and warehousing | GFA | > 10,000 sqm |
| Hospitals | GFA | > 2,500 sqm |
| Higher and further education | GFA | > 2,500 sqm |
| Stadia | Seats | > 1,500 |
| Housing | Dwellings | > 100 |

2 Consulting Transport Scotland

We encourage developers to provide details of the development and discuss proposed applications with our Development Management Team at the earliest opportunity. We can provide early views on the general acceptability of proposals and advise what supporting evidence needs to be submitted with the planning application.

Early engagement also provides all parties with more time to understand the potential impacts on the trunk road network and resolve any potential issues before a planning application has been submitted. The benefits are that your transport assessment will have been appropriately scoped and informed with regard to trunk road issues and based upon relevant up to date data. These discussions can help us to respond to the Planning Authority more quickly and assist in avoiding abortive work.

This guidance sets out the general principles of how Transport Scotland engages in the development management process with regard to planning applications affecting the trunk road. However, it cannot cover all issues; therefore, if you require further advice or wish to discuss any aspect of your application, you should contact the Transport Scotland Development Management Team (Major Applications) using the contacts on our website.

2.1 Processing Agreements

Transport Scotland will sign up to processing agreements when requested to do so. Our response relies on the right information being submitted with the application, therefore we will seek to ensure that appropriate scoping discussions and an agreed timescale for submission of a transport assessment are clearly set out within any agreement we sign up to.

2.1 Data and Models

[Transport Scotland's Land Use and Transport Integration in Scotland](#)⁵ suite provides information on the data we hold and models we maintain. Our data and models can be made available, often free of charge, saving time and money on commissioning surveys and building models.

⁵ <http://www.transport.gov.scot/latis>

3 Transport Scotland Considerations

Where an application for development may potentially affect the trunk road network, the main issues we will require to be examined through a transport assessment include:

- number of trips generated and travel mode share
- operational performance
- safety
- cumulative assessment
- phased development
- travel plans
- new trunk road junctions
- other considerations

These are in addition to the general requirements as set out in the [Transport Assessment Guidance](#)⁶. There may be other requirements specific to your development type and location which should be scoped with Transport Scotland before preparing a transport assessment.

A robust evidence base is required to underpin Transport Scotland's decisions in relation to the trunk road network. We are proportionate in the evidence we seek, however, we cannot make decisions in the absence of appropriate information regarding the impact of development on the trunk road network.

3.1 Trips and Mode Share

The effect of people trips or journeys generated by the development on the transport network as a whole, including public transport, cycling and walking, should be fully assessed. The relationship between the number of journeys by each mode and the level of provision should be clearly established.

3.2 Operational Performance

A transport assessment should fully assess development proposals that have the potential to affect the operational performance or safety of the trunk road. Traffic effects will be considered principally in terms of the continued operational effectiveness of the trunk road. Where delays occur at present, or where a trunk road is approaching operational capacity, attention will be focussed on increases in queuing or delay. This may be at both junctions and trunk road links between junctions as appropriate. Most delay occurs at peak periods and in most circumstances analysis should be concentrated on these.

⁶ http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/private/documents/tsc-basic-pages/Planning_Reform_-_DPMTAG_-_Development_Management_DPMTAG_Ref_17_-_Transport_Assessment_Guidance_FINAL_-_June_2012.pdf

Where the assessment indicates that the development will have adverse impacts on the operation of the trunk road, mitigation measures will require to be identified by the developer and agreed with Transport Scotland. This mitigation required to ensure the continued safe and efficient operation of the trunk road network will be funded and delivered by the developer, in line with [Scottish Planning Policy](#)⁷. Where no issues around operational performance or safety arise, mitigation measures will not be sought.

3.3 Safety and Road Safety Audits

Road safety is of paramount importance in the current and future operation of the trunk road network. We will not compromise on road safety. Developers require to play their part in ensuring that their proposals will not have an adverse impact on trunk road safety for existing users and those that will work at, live in or visit their development. This includes both car and non-car users. Any development that has the potential to significantly increase the movement of non-car users either adjacent to or across the trunk road should consider the safety implications and ensure that these are identified and addressed.

Road safety needs to be fully considered where changes to the trunk road network are being proposed. Road Safety Audits are required for new or permanent changes to the existing trunk road layout or features. 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, to minimise the risk of accidents.

Where alterations to the trunk road are proposed to mitigate the effects of development, a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit, undertaken in accordance with the [Design Manual for Roads and Bridges HD19/15](#)⁸, will be required before we can formally respond to the Planning Authority on an application.

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 a multi-stage process carried out at different phases 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.

⁷ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453827.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/dmrb/vol5/section2/hd1915.pdf>

3.4 Cumulative Assessment

We will generally request that an assessment of the cumulative impact of development proposals is undertaken where phased or multiple development proposals are likely to impact on the trunk road network at a specific junction or area. This may be undertaken by the Planning Authority, a developer, group of developers or parties working together.

This will identify the impact and appropriate mitigation required on an area-wide basis. [Scottish Planning Policy](#)⁹ states that, in preparing development plans, planning authorities are expected to appraise the impact of their spatial strategies and that development plans should identify any required new transport infrastructure. Consideration should also be given to the deliverability of this infrastructure with development plans and associated documents indicating how new infrastructure is to be delivered, phased and how and by whom any developer contributions will be made. Where this has not occurred it will require to be undertaken as part of the planning application process. Appropriate measures will require to be identified to mitigate the cumulative impact and thresholds established for individual development impact. How identified mitigation will be funded and implemented should be addressed through the use of appropriate planning conditions, planning obligations or other appropriate agreement.

3.5 Phased Development

Some larger developments, particularly housing, are often brought forward as a number of smaller applications which, when considered individually, do not justify significant infrastructure improvements. We will consider such cases on their merits, but will generally seek to identify the overall effect of the entire development on the trunk road network, determine appropriate mitigation and then, if required, agree thresholds for the phasing of development with the provision of appropriate mitigation at each phase.

3.6 Travel Plans

A travel plan framework should be considered as part of the transport assessment and be developed as required to a full Travel Plan in advance of and during the operational phase of the development. It is essential in translating the theoretical work of the transport assessment into operational reality. As such, the Travel Plan will need to develop over time to take account of changing circumstances and ensure that it continues to remain focused on providing up to date information on transport choice. For further information relating to travel plans refer to the [Transport Assessment Guidance](#)¹⁰.

⁹ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453827.pdf>

¹⁰ http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/private/documents/tsc-basic-pages/Planning_Reform_-_DPMTAG_-_Development_Management_DPMTAG_Ref_17_-_Transport_Assessment_Guidance_FINAL_-_June_2012.pdf

3.7 New Trunk Road Junctions

Taking account of the primary purpose of the trunk road network to provide for the safe and efficient movement of strategic traffic, [Scottish Planning Policy](#)¹¹ states that new junctions to serve developments on the motorway and trunk road network are not normally acceptable. We seek to promote the use of existing points of access and minimise the number of trunk road junctions. This also reflects our commitment to road safety, given that the greater the number of junctions and accesses, the greater the risk of accidents arising from the conflicting turning movements at these locations.

We recognise, however, that in certain locations the trunk road will be the only means of access to development. Where a new access may be considered the developer will be expected to undertake an appropriate level of appraisal to enable Transport Scotland to take a fully informed view on the justification of such a strategy and ensure that the safety of trunk road users is not compromised.

Ideally new accesses should be identified in the development plan. However, in the absence of such an approach, consideration will require to be undertaken as part of the planning application process. The scope for the justification of a potential new access will be related to the location and scale of development. It could, however, include the support of the development plan, where supported by appropriate appraisal, and/or where significant economic growth or regeneration benefits can be demonstrated.

Other Considerations

This guide is not an exhaustive list of what requires to be considered. A number of other considerations can be found in Appendix A.

4 Design Standards

Where the transport assessment indicates that alterations are required to the trunk road to mitigate the effect of development, these 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)¹². It should be noted that these may be different from non-trunk road design standards. The context of design is important and in certain locations, such as where the trunk road is a small High Street, design that follows the principles of Designing Streets may be appropriate. In such cases, advice should be sought from Transport Scotland.

4.1 Applying for Departures from DMRB Standards

In exceptional situations, we may be prepared to agree to a Departure from Standard from the DMRB where the standard, including permitted Relaxations, is not

¹¹ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453827.pdf>

¹² <http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/ha/standards/dmr/index.htm>

realistically achievable. Any applicant faced by such situations and wishing to consider pursuing this course must discuss this with us at an early stage in design.

Our Development Management Team will be the applicant's point of contact and can facilitate discussions with our Standards Team as appropriate. The applicant should prepare a Departure from Standards form. On behalf of the applicant, our Development Management Case Officer will then submit proposals to adopt Departures from Standard to Transport Scotland's Head of Standards for formal approval. This should be undertaken before incorporation into a design layout that is to be submitted as part of the planning application. Transport Scotland's [Departures from Standard - Advice and Procedures Guide](#)¹³ can be found on our website.

4.2 Roads for All: Good Practice Guide for Roads

Transport Scotland's [Roads for All: Good Practice Guide for Roads](#)¹⁴ contains our requirements for inclusive design in the construction, operation and maintenance of road infrastructure. This inclusive design is an approach which aims to create environments that can be used by everyone regardless of age or ability and should be considered when designing any changes to the trunk road as a result of development.

5 Transport Scotland's Planning Application Consultation Response

We audit transport assessments received in support of a planning application to ensure that trunk road impacts have been appropriately assessed and that they provide an adequate evidence base to inform our response to the planning application consultation. Transport Scotland responds to the Planning Authority using a form which sets out our recommendation to the Planning Authority. Transport Scotland can recommend to the Planning Authority that an application is granted, granted subject to condition or refused. However, the decision whether to grant consent lies with the Planning Authority.

Where the Planning Authority grants consent contrary to the advice given by Transport Scotland, or does not propose to attach planning conditions that have been recommended by Transport Scotland, they are required to notify Scottish Ministers. Further information what happens thereafter can be found in [Circular 3 2009 Notification of Planning Applications](#)¹⁵.

5.1 Mechanism for Delivery of Mitigation Measures

Where measures are required to mitigate the effect of a development on the trunk road these will be defined within planning conditions in our formal response to the Planning Authority.

¹³ <http://www.transport.gov.scot/report/departures-standard-advice-and-procedures-guide-9003>

¹⁴ http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/rrd_reports/uploaded_reports/j256264/j256264.pdf

¹⁵ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2009/03/27112705/0>

In preparing our formal response, it will often be necessary for us to discuss with the applicant and the Planning Authority in some detail the predicted impact on the trunk road, the measures necessary to mitigate it, and how these can be delivered.

These discussions may result in the negotiation of detailed planning conditions or, in some cases, matters to be the subject of a legal agreement between the Planning Authority and the developer. In the latter case, we will advise the Planning Authority accordingly as part of our consultation response.

Some planning authorities are taking area-based approaches to seeking combined (or cumulative) developer contributions for infrastructure required to mitigate the impact of development plan proposals. Where these relate to the trunk road network, these are based on the appraisal of the cumulative impact of development plan proposals on the trunk road network. If the planning application is for a development which has been identified as needing to make a contribution, we will work with the developer and the planning authority to agree the level of contribution for your application. Such mechanisms can help to provide greater certainty for all parties concerned at the planning application stage, and can enable us to respond to the planning authority more quickly.

6 Permissions Following Planning Consent

6.1 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](#)¹⁶ 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. They will also supervise the works as they are undertaken.

6.2 Additional Permissions

In certain cases, it may be necessary for the developer to sign either a standard “Minute of Agreement” or a “Letter of Agreement”. A Minute of Agreement contains details of the conditions that a developer will require to adhere to if work is to be carried out on the trunk road and if the completed works are to be incorporated as part of the trunk road. Applicants are advised to allow sufficient time for the drafting of the Minute of Agreement and approval of the detailed design and construction drawings which require to be submitted to Transport Scotland well in advance of the start of works on site. Applicants should note that the Minute of Agreement contains a mechanism to allow the recovery of all reasonable costs incurred by Transport Scotland as a result of the works on the trunk road.

¹⁶ <http://www.transport.gov.scot/road/maintenance/operating-companies>

7 Contact Us

For further advice on any aspect of this note please contact the Transport Scotland Development Management Team. Up to date details can be found on our website.

Appendix A – Other Transport Scotland 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.

Transport Scotland will ensure that any development which takes direct access from the trunk road has sufficient parking to ensure that there is no adverse safety impact on the trunk road due to overspill parking. Maximum parking standards are set out in [Scottish Planning Policy](#)¹⁷, however the local roads authority can advise on what local standards they consider appropriate.

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 or development 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 or development 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 lighting within the development does not point directly at, thereby affecting, traffic on the trunk road. In some circumstances screening may be required to address this.

¹⁷ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453827.pdf>

Landscape and Environmental Mitigation

Any landscaping or environmental mitigation, such as noise barriers, require to be contained, and be able to be maintained, within the curtilage of the development. These features should not be constructed within the trunk road boundary or require access from the trunk road to maintain them.

Transport Scotland has developed a [Landscape policy](#)¹⁸ statement to address the landscape design and management of our transport corridors making sure any operations or interventions consider landscape appropriately.

Transport Scotland welcomes the opportunity to work with developers and consultants to consider the impact of traffic noise within their developments in line with best practice.

¹⁸ <http://www.transport.gov.scot/environment/landscape-policy>



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