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**VOLUME 8 TRAFFIC SIGNS AND LIGHTING**  
**SECTION 2 TRAFFIC SIGNS AND ROAD MARKINGS**

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**PART 3**

**TA 93/04**

**TRAFFIC SIGNS TO TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AND FACILITIES IN ENGLAND**

**GUIDANCE FOR TOURIST SIGNING - GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

**SUMMARY**

This Advice Note provides a general introduction and background to the new guidance on the provision of traffic signs to tourist destinations in England.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE**

This is a new document to be incorporated into the Manual.

1. Remove existing contents pages for Volume 8.
2. Insert new contents pages for Volume 8, dated February 2004.
3. Insert TA 93/04 into Volume 8, Section 2, Part 3.
4. Please archive this sheet as appropriate.

Note: A quarterly index with a full set of Volume Contents Pages is available separately from The Stationery Office Ltd.



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**WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT  
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**THE DEPARTMENT FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
NORTHERN IRELAND**

# **Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England**

## **Guidance for Tourist Signing - General Introduction**

**Summary:** This Advice Note provides a general introduction and background to the new guidance on the provision of traffic signs to tourist destinations in England.

**REGISTRATION OF AMENDMENTS**

Amend No	Page No	Signature & Date of incorporation of amendments	Amend No	Page No	Signature & Date of incorporation of amendments

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## 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 This Advice Note provides a general introduction and background to the new guidance on the provision of traffic signs to tourist destinations in England.

1.2 Two complementary sets of guidance have been produced. An Advice Note has been prepared for local traffic authorities developing their tourist signing strategies and policies, and dealing with applications for tourist signs on the **local road network** [1]. A Standard has been prepared for the Highways Agency (HA) for dealing with applications for tourist signs on the **trunk road network** [2].

1.3 The two documents replace Circular Roads 3/95 (CR 3/95) [3] and the HA supplementary guidance for trunk roads [4], which were issued on 12 December 1995.

1.4 For tourist signing on and within the M25/A282 orbital route, the guidance entitled "Tourist Traffic Signs Inside the M25" [5] published by the Government Offices for the Eastern Region, London, and the South East and the Highways Agency, and which came into effect on 3 February 1997, continues to apply with regard to tourist destinations located inside the M25/A282 orbital route.

1.5 Guidance on the design of traffic signs is contained in Chapter 7 of the Traffic Signs Manual [6], while guidance on the use of directional signing generally is contained in Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/94 [7]. Guidance on the control of outdoor advertisements and on tourism, as distinct from traffic signs, is contained in Planning Policy Guidance notes 19 [8] and 21 [9].

1.6 The 1995 guidance was written in response to previous concerns that the procedures for obtaining tourist signs appeared to be bureaucratic and inflexible, and that the system needed to be reviewed to ensure that the needs of the tourist industry, as well as of traffic management, road safety and the environment, are taken properly into account by highway authorities in dealing with applications for signs. In addition, there was a clear demand that tourist signing should be opened up to a far wider range of establishments, for streamlining of procedures for dealing with applications and for a greater flexibility in determining whether applications should be accepted. The main emphasis of CR 3/95 was to encourage traffic authorities to consider

individual applications on their merits in relation to local conditions, without being constrained by uniform and inflexible criteria.

1.7 A review of tourist signing was undertaken by the County Surveyors' Society (CSS) and their report [10] was submitted to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) and the HA in July 2000. This indicated that the more flexible arrangements introduced with CR 3/95 were generally working well for local roads and tourism. However, the CSS report and an HA/DTLR (Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions) review did identify a number of areas where some improvement of the guidance was necessary. In particular, guidance relating to the more strategic all-purpose and motorway trunk road network needed to be clarified to avoid inconsistencies in interpretation. Consultation with the regional offices of the HA also identified a need for more detailed guidance on dealing with requests for signing.

1.8 The objective of this new guidance is to provide clearer advice on tourist signing appropriate to meet the strategic signing needs of the tourism industry and road users in general, and which is consistent with safe and efficient traffic management and with minimal impact on the environment. Whilst it is recognised that people can arrive on foot or by public transport, this guidance is targeted at signing for visitors arriving by road.

1.9 It is expected that the sections on signing policy and eligibility for signing of different types of tourist destination will be of general interest to those affected, but these documents also include detailed technical guidance for signing practitioners, and Highways Agency staff, who are expected to be familiar with current regulations and Departmental guidance on signing and permitted variants for sign designs.

## 2. GENERAL SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 Signs should comply with The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) [11] and associated guidance [6, 7]. Signs should not contain more information than drivers can read in the time available between first seeing the sign and having to turn their heads sideways to see the sign. The amount of information included on a sign should also have regard to the overall size and environmental impact. The Department's guidance on sign siting and size in relation to traffic speeds, founded on research, is based on drivers having up to 4 seconds to read a directional sign. The more information a sign contains, and the higher the speed of traffic, the larger the lettering (and hence the overall sign size) needs to be for drivers to be able to read it. Limiting the amount of information will help to minimise the reading time and the risks associated with large signs and their support systems.

2.2 In the interests of road safety, and to avoid excessive environmental intrusion, the total number of destinations shown on a directional sign at any junction should not normally exceed six. Because tourist destinations frequently consist of two or more words and because of the inclusion of additional information (symbols), it is recommended that the number of tourist destinations signed on each approach to, and exit from, a junction should normally be limited as follows:

Road Type	Maximum Number of Tourist Destinations
Motorways	3
Roads with a speed limit of 50 mph or more	3
Roads with a speed limit of 30 – 40 mph	4

2.3 In considering the number of destinations to be included on a tourist sign, it is essential to have regard to the cumulative effect of all other signs in close proximity, and not to consider the tourist signs in isolation.

2.4 Continuity and consistency of signing must be maintained from junction to junction (apart from safety considerations, loss of continuity is a major and recurring source of irritation to road users). Once a destination appears on a sign, it must continue to be signed at every succeeding junction until that destination is reached. This limits the distance from which any destination can be signed, and the number of destinations that can be added at subsequent junctions.

2.5 It is also important to ensure that there is consistency and continuity of tourist signing across HA and local authority boundaries – particularly in large urban areas, where there are many local authorities which may have differing policies and strategies.

### 3. DIRECTIONAL SIGNS - CORE PRINCIPLES

3.1 All traffic signs must comply with TSRGD. Exceptionally, where there is a safety or traffic management case, signs which do not comply with TSRGD may be authorised by the Secretary of State.

3.2 Traffic signs on the all-purpose and motorway trunk road network, like the trunk road network itself, are provided to meet the strategic needs of long-distance traffic generally, including goods traffic, business travellers and tourists. A fundamental principle for directional signing throughout the trunk road network is that priority for signing is given to destinations of national strategic importance.

3.3 Directional traffic signs on local roads also have to provide the information needed by business and leisure travellers to reach their chosen destinations. Local traffic authorities have a statutory duty to exercise their functions under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 [12], including the provision of traffic signs, so as to secure the convenient, expeditious and safe movement of traffic, while having regard to the amenity of the area through which it passes. The usefulness of the information on a sign has to be balanced against its impact on the environment.

3.4 The selection of destinations to be signed on local roads is the responsibility of the local traffic authority. It is nevertheless important for adjoining authorities to liaise with each other to maintain consistency of signing across administrative boundaries and to liaise with the Highways Agency to maintain consistency of signing between the trunk and local road networks. The need for continuity, as well as for road users to read and absorb the information on a sign within 4 seconds, still limits the distance from which any destination can be signed, and the number of destinations that can be added at subsequent junctions.

3.5 In conjunction with the consideration of the safety and traffic management aspects of signing, the environmental impacts must also be fully considered. This is particularly necessary in rural areas, so that “the things people value about the countryside, are properly taken into account in planning and similar decisions” (DETR Rural White Paper, 2000) [13]. It is important to minimise the cumulative impacts of signing on the environment and the character of the countryside not only within designated areas but also more generally.

3.6 In urban areas also, signs impact directly on the quality of public space. The Department for Transport (DfT) is committed to encouraging local authorities to take account of the impact of traffic management measures, and the quality and design of signing generally, including signs for tourists and pedestrians, on the overall street environment, and to promoting good design practice.

## 4. TOURIST SIGNS - CORE PRINCIPLES

4.1 White on brown tourist signs are part of the family of directional signs. Their main purpose is to guide visitors to a pre-selected destination along the most appropriate route at the latter stages of their journey, particularly where destinations are difficult to find. Like any form of traffic signing, tourist signs are only an aid to safe and efficient navigation, which complement, but cannot replace, pre-planning material such as maps and atlases.

4.2 White on brown signs for tourist attractions and facilities should supplement rather than duplicate the information already provided on existing directional signs. Generally, white on brown signs should only be used where there are clear benefits to the road users (e.g. for safety concerns, where locations are difficult to find, or to encourage visitors to use certain routes), in addition to any ancillary benefit to the destination signed. Although signs may be helpful in supplementing marketing initiatives, they should not be used as a substitute for promotional material.

4.3 In built-up areas it is often difficult to sign individual attractions and often impossible to sign facilities because there are so many. It is therefore recommended that policies be developed whereby only comprehensive signing schemes are implemented and applications for tourist signing are considered in groups and not individually.

## 5. REFERENCES

1. Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England: Guidance for Tourist Signing – Local Roads. Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 8, Section 2, Part 5: TA 94/04. Issued by the Department for Transport and the Highways Agency, 2004.
2. Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England: Tourist Signing – Trunk Roads. Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 8, Section 2, Part 4: TD 52/04. Issued by the Department for Transport and the Highways Agency, 2004.
3. Department of Transport Circular Roads 3/95 Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England 1995.
4. Highways Agency Supplementary Guidance to CR 3/95: Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England: Criteria for Signs on Trunk Roads and Motorways.
5. Tourist Traffic Signs Inside The M25. Guidance issued by the Government Offices for the Eastern Region, London and the South East and the Highways Agency on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport. February 1997. DTLR and HA. (DfT, 3/21, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 3AH. Tel: 020 7944 2974).
6. Traffic Signs Manual, Chapter 7. The Design of Traffic Signs. 2003. TSO. ISBN 0-11-552-480-0.
7. Local Transport Note 1/94. The Design and Use of Directional Informatory Signs. July 1994. HMSO. ISBN 0-11-551 610-7.
8. Planning Policy Guidance 19. Outdoor Advertisement Control, published in 1992. HMSO. ISBN 0-11-752 555-3.
9. Planning Policy Guidance 21. Tourism, published in 1992. HMSO. ISBN 0-11-752-7262-2.
10. Tourist Signing – Two Years On. December 1999. County Surveyors' Society, Environment Committee, Traffic Management Working Group. S2/GEN/1. (David C Harvey, CSS Honorary Secretary, County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AG, Tel: 01629 58 0000, ex 7111).
11. Statutory Instruments 2002 No. 3113 The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002. TSO. ISBN 0-11-042 942-7.
12. Road Traffic Regulation Act (Section 122), 1984.
13. Our countryside: the future – a fair deal for rural England. DETR White Paper, November 2000. HMSO. [www.defra.gov.uk/rural/ruralwp/default.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/ruralwp/default.htm)

## 6. ENQUIRIES

All technical enquiries or comments on this Advice Note should be sent in writing as appropriate to:

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