

Transport and Engineering Services  
Policy and Procedures Manual

Volume 4 Temporary and Permanent Signing

*December 2001*

Local direction signing is an important part of a town, district or borough's environment and is needed to help visitors to the area to find their way to important locations.

Additionally, travel and tourism is fast becoming the world's largest industry, making vast contributions to the British economy. White on brown tourism signs were, therefore, introduced to help direct tourists to their destinations. Following the introduction of these signs, visitors to many attractions were found to have increased. The perceived promotional benefits of these signs resulted in other types of businesses expressing a desire to achieve eligibility for such signs.

In response to this demand the Government has recently reviewed the statutory definition of a "tourist destination" for use on traffic signs and has published the new ***Regulations and Circular Roads 3/95***.

However, Government has also been recognised that London must be treated as a special case, taking account of:

- The large number and variety of tourist destinations and the number of traffic authorities inside the M25
- Policies to promote walking and cycling, the use of public transport and the quality of the urban environment
- The frequent practical limitations on direction signing at main road junctions.

To this end the Government Offices for Eastern Region, London, the South East and the Highways Agency have issued ***Guidance for Tourist Traffic Signs Inside the M25***, which came into effect on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1997 and which supersedes ***Circular Roads 1/91***.

This Policy document should be read in conjunction with the Government documents and is intended to be sent to applicants for signs to explain the rules, policies and process for local signing within the Authority's area.

The majority of applications received by Local Authorities for traffic direction signs are for what might generally be classified as tourist destinations. However, it has been recognised that, inside the M25 area, it is quite impractical to meet the demand for signing to the range of potentially eligible destinations and the government has, therefore, published a Guidance document to assist in the process of deciding whether or not signs should be provided.

## **So what is a tourist destination ?**

This is broadly defined as a permanently established destination or facility that attracts or is used by visitors to an area and which is open to the public without prior booking during normal opening hours.

The Guidance note, therefore, indicates that, inside the M25, qualifying tourist destinations should be:

**of more than local significance with adequate parking provision and open to the public without prior booking and are restricted to:**

- **Excursion, historic or cultural attractions**
- **Sports venues or leisure centres**
- **Camping and caravan facilities**
- **Nationally recognised Tourist Information Centres**

Further restrictions are imposed, based upon the road category, space availability and proximity to the centre of London. The eligibility criteria for traffic signs are generally based upon the number of annual visitors with the minimum being as follows:

<b>M25/A282:</b>	Traffic signs - 250,000 visitors per year
<b>Other Motorways:</b>	Traffic signs - 150,000 visitors per year Inner London - pedestrian signs only
<b>Primary Routes outside the Inner Ring Road:</b>	Traffic signs - 100,000 visitors per year Inner London - pedestrian signs only
<b>Primary Routes &amp; other roads in Central London or designated "sensitive" areas:</b>	Pedestrian signs only
<b>Other Roads outside Central London:</b>	Local authority signing strategy/policy

Traffic signing would normally be from the nearest one or two Primary Routes or Motorways, or to an "A" road not more than 5 minutes drive from the destination. Pedestrian signs would normally be from the nearest public transport facility or suitable car park.



## SUMMARY TABLE

Sign Type	General	Heritage Sites	Special Events	Pedestrians	Exceptions	Comments
Local Heritage Sites		3		3		Note criteria
Churches & Other Places of Worship		3	3			
Schools, Universities and Colleges			3	3		
General Leisure / Tourist Attractions	3					Must meet visitor number and location requirements + meet English Tourist Board's Visitor' Charter.
Sports Venues and Leisure Centres	3		3	3		Must meet visitor number and location requirements + meet English Tourist Board's Visitor' Charter.
Hotels, Camping or Caravan Facilities	3			3		Provided for licensed facilities not located on "A" class roads.
Commercial premises				3	3	Superstores
Business Premises					3	Trading Estates
New Housing Developments	3					Note criteria
Public Buildings				3		
Charity / Special Needs Organisations	3		3	3		At the discretion of the Council.

## **Council Policy Regarding Street Clutter**

It is Ealing Council's general policy to minimise street clutter wherever possible. This includes permanent directional signing to facilities within the borough.

## **Local Heritage Sites**

Lists of nationally recognised buildings and structures including Scheduled Ancient Monuments and statutory listed buildings are held within Ealing Council's Planning Department. A local list of buildings of architectural or historic interest has also been compiled and forms a part of the Unitary Development Plan.

Direction signing to Heritage Sites will only be provided if all three of the following criteria are met:

- The site must be both regularly and frequently open to the public.
- The site must be included in one of the lists mentioned above.
- The site should not be obviously visible from a main traffic route or not easily identified.

The number of sites likely to meet these criteria is likely to be quite small and directional signing would in normal circumstances be for pedestrians rather than vehicles.

## **Churches & Other Places of Worship**

A maximum of three directional signs may be provided to churches or places of worship at the discretion of Ealing Council. Sites located on main distributor roads are unlikely to qualify for signage however each individual case will be assessed on the information submitted by the applicant. Priority will be given to sites which are difficult to find or provide additional community services.

Temporary directional signs may be permitted for any site for a "Special Event" e.g. for bazaars, special holy days etc.

## **Schools, Universities and Colleges**

Directional signs will not be provided to schools or colleges. The majority of visitors to these sites are invited or are local residents and regular visitors well aware of the location. Temporary directional signs may be permitted for a "Special Event", e.g. open days, fetes etc.

Pedestrian signs from main transport interchanges may be considered for Universities or Colleges likely to attract students / visitors from a wider area.

## **Tourist Attractions**

Tourist Direction Signs will normally only be provided to attractions that meet the requirements set out in the Introduction, in terms of visitor numbers and location. Additionally the applicant must demonstrate that the venue meets the English Tourist Board's Visitors' Charter and agree to abide by its terms. Evidence will also be required that the applicant has taken steps to publicise both the attraction and to inform tourists of the appropriate route to it (English Heritage and National Trust sites are exempted from this requirement).

## **Sports Venues and Leisure Centres**

The basic requirement for signs to be provided will be based upon the annual volume of visitors, bearing in mind that this will generally mean “different” visitors, i.e. private golf clubs are unlikely to meet the criteria, as the majority of the 100,000 to 250,000 visitors annually are likely to be the same golf club members. Additionally the applicant must demonstrate that the venue meets the English Tourist Board’s Visitors’ Charter.

Temporary Directional Signs may, of course, be provided for "Special Events" that are likely to attract the public such as challenge matches or competitions.

Pedestrian signs may be considered appropriate from a nearby transport facility or car park or within town or district centres.

## **Hotels, Camping or Caravan Facilities**

Signs will normally only be provided to Licensed Hotels, as defined and accredited by the English Tourist Board, that are not located on "A" Class roads. Such signing would be from the nearest "A" road and would not name the Hotel. In some instances pedestrian signing may be provided from a major transport interchange. Similarly camping or caravan facilities will normally only be signed if they are licensed under the Caravan sites Control of Development Act 1960 and / or the Public Health Act 1936; if they are members of the British Graded Holiday Park Scheme (the “Q” scheme) and if they have a minimum of 20 pitches available for casual overnight use.

## **Commercial Premises**

Signs to shops and superstores will not be provided. In exceptional circumstances signs to "Superstores" may be provided where confusion is likely to arise regarding access to the store.

Shopping Centres would similarly not normally be signed for traffic, mainly because the car parks to such sites are usually signed as a matter of course. In some instances Pedestrian Signs may be provided from a transport facility or car park in a town or district centre.

## **Business Premises**

Signs would not normally be provided except in the case of Trading Estates, where the whole estate may be signed.

## **Public Buildings**

Council or Government Offices, Libraries and similar public buildings are eligible for pedestrian direction signing from transport facilities or car parks in town or district centres.

## **Charity / Special Needs Organisations / Medical Facilities**

Signage for charities or special needs organisations is at the discretion of the Ealing Council.

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## TEMPORARY DIRECTIONAL SIGNING

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Applications must be made to Ealing Council for authorisation of the use of temporary traffic signs for special events. These signs are ordered and paid for by the event organisers and provided by either the AA, RAC or other similar organisation. Temporary signs will only be authorised provided that:

- They are being provided to direct drivers to a venue and not to advertise the event.
- They are displayed for a maximum of 48 hours prior to the event and are removed within 48 hours of the end of the event.
- They are provided by the AA or RAC or a similar approved organisation which offers a specialist service and provides a suitable indemnity.
- The signing is limited to the immediate vicinity of the venue and is only extended so far as is necessary to direct drivers from the main road network. If the signing extends outside the borough boundary then confirmation will be required that permission has been obtained from the neighbouring Local Authority.
- The signs should normally only bear the name of the venue or the event, except where this might be considered to be advertising. Signs should not normally bear the names or logos of companies or organisations involved in the event. Exceptions to this shall be:

In the case of a conference or similar event; or

- i. Where the name of the venue incorporates the name of the company or organisation and cannot be indicated without including the name; or
- ii. In connection with an exhibition or similar function where no goods are for sale, e.g. a recognised charity event.

### New Housing Developments

Signs in accordance with **Department of Transport Advice Note 8/91** may be introduced providing that the prior approval has been obtained. Ealing Council will only authorise signs provided that:

- The development consists of at least 30 bedrooms.
- Signing is only provided within the close environs of the site, i.e. not more than half a mile or two junctions away.
- They are provided by the AA or RAC or a similar organisation which offers a specialist service and provides a suitable indemnity.
- The signing is removed when 80% of the development has been sold.

### New Facility Openings

Temporary signs may be provided at the discretion of Ealing Council for the opening of new facilities within the borough. The maximum duration of such signing shall be three months.



# FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT AND OWNERSHIP

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**In all instances the full cost of the provision of temporary or permanent signs will be borne by the applicant, not by Ealing Council.**

The application process and the provision of signs is divided into three main stages with different fees payable at each stage.

## **Stage 1 - Initial Assessment**

An application for both temporary or permanent signing must be made to the Engineering Services department of Ealing Council for assessment of the suitability of the signing when considered against this policy document. This will result in a definitive response to the applicant within 21 days.

An application fee of £50 applies for both temporary and permanent sign applications, cheques made payable to the London Borough of Ealing. Any additional expenses, such as the cost of assessment by the Tourist Board, will also be at the applicant's expense.

Generally, applications for temporary signs to be provided by the AA, RAC or similar organisation will not require any further assessment under subsequent stages.

## **Stage 2 - Detailed Design**

The design of the signing scheme will be undertaken by Ealing Council's term consultant, Parkman Limited as directed by a Council officer. All fees associated with the design of the scheme will be borne by the applicant and are estimated at £500. 100% of the estimated fees cost shall be paid in advance by the applicant prior to design work commencing.

Following completion of design and approval by the appropriate Council officer, the Council will provide the applicant with an estimate of the physical cost of the signing scheme.

Double sided, on existing post	£345
Additional post	£50

## **Stage 3 - Provision of Signs**

Supply and installation of signs shall be in accordance with the specifications and standards of the Council.

The Council shall carry out this work on the applicant's behalf. 80% of the works cost shall be paid prior to erection work commencing.

<p><b>Ownership of the signs shall remain with the applicant, as such the applicant shall be responsible for all future maintenance costs including cleaning; replacement and repair of fixings; replacement of signs following accidental damage; theft; general deterioration and removal of signs where the attraction or facility has ceased to meet the standards under which the signs were provided during the life of the signs.</b></p>
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Tourist Traffic Signs Inside the M25 London;		Government Offices for the Eastern Region;  the South East and the Highways Agency
Circular Roads 1/91	Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England 1991	HMSO
Circular Roads 3/95	Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England 1995	HMSO
Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England: Criteria for Signs on Trunk Roads and Motorways (1995)		Highways Agency Network Policy Division
Local Transport Note 1/94	The Design and Use of Directional Informatory Signs	HMSO (ISBN 0-11-551610-7)
Local Transport Note 2/94	Directional Informatory Signs (Interim Design Notes)	HMSO (ISBN 0-11-551611-5)
List of Additionally Approved Tourist Attraction Symbols 1996 (DoT)		Signs Policy Branch
SODD Circular 27/1995	Tourist Signposting	The Scottish Office
TRL Project Report 77	Direction Sign Overload	Helen J Agg
Tourism Signing		English Tourist Board
The Traffic Signs (Amendment) Regulations and General Directions 1995 (1995 SI No. 3107)		HMSO (ISBN 0-11-053719-X)
The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 1994 (1995 SI No. 3107)		HMSO (ISBN 0-11-044519-8)
The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984		HMSO
The Highways Act 1980		HMSO
Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England Society Guidance of Traffic Authorities		County Surveyors'
Traffic Management and Tourism Signing Policy		Devon County Council