



Policy & Procedure Guide: RSPPG_E029

Title: The Signing of Tourist Attractions and Facilities

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Notes

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Certification

This document represents TransportNI Policy drawn up in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and is to be implemented with effect from the date of issue.

(Signed) PB Doherty Director of Engineering

Certification Date: 07/10/2014

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1.1 This Policy & Procedure Guide (RSPPG): -

- a) has been developed jointly between TransportNI, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board;
- b) is aimed at all staff involved in the provision of tourist attraction signing.

1.2 Definitions

1.2.1.1 In this RSPPG the following definitions and abbreviations apply: -

- a) DRD – the Department for Regional Development
- b) NITB – The Northern Ireland Tourist Board
- c) DETI - the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
- d) TNIHQ – TransportNI Headquarters
- e) TSR – The Traffic Signs Regulations (Northern Ireland)
- f) RTRO – The Road Traffic Regulation (Northern Ireland) Order
- g) RO – The Roads (Northern Ireland) Order
- h) Cost, sign cost, total cost, etc. - The total cost of design, purchase, erection and illumination or reflectorisation of a sign, including administration charges
- i) B&B – Bed and breakfast
- j) Urban area – A location within a built-up area with a speed limit of 40mph or less
- k) Rural area – A location outside a built-up area where the national speed limit applies or where a 50 or 60 mph speed limit has been introduced
- l) Visitor - a person from outside the immediate locality in which the tourist attraction is located

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m) Tourist destination - A permanently established tourist attraction or tourist facility (both defined following this definition) which:

- attracts or is used by visitors to an area; and
- is open to the public without prior booking.

n) Tourist attraction - a location or place that, in itself, tourists would wish to see or visit. Typically, this would include: -

- NITB funded tourism products;
- Visitor attractions that have received NITB Quality Grading;
- historic buildings;
- museums;
- zoos;
- natural attractions such as nature reserves;
- beaches and viewpoints;
- scenic routes;
- outdoor pursuits centres;
- activity tourism centres;
- golf courses; and
- areas providing fishing.

o) Tourist facility - an enterprise that provides a service primarily for tourists, such as the provision of NITB accredited accommodation and information for tourists and would, typically, include: -

- hotels;
- guesthouses;
- B&B establishments;
- guest accommodation;
- caravan and camping parks;
- hostels;
- bunk houses;
- self catering accommodation;

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- campus accommodation;
 - marinas;
 - public slipways;
 - boat / cruiser hire;
 - motorhome hire;
 - Aire de service/motorhome service facilities;
 - picnic sites; and
 - tourist information centres and tourist information boards.
- p) Utility - a place or service that would be of use to tourists but does not of itself constitute a tourist attraction. Utilities are commonplace and will not be signed, and would, typically, include: -
- banks;
 - doctors' surgeries;
 - chemist shops;
 - hire (cars, cycles, surfing equipment, etc.) shops;
 - sports facilities;
 - antique shops;
 - art galleries;
 - restaurants;
 - garden centres;
 - shopping centres; and
 - individual shops.

Generally, libraries may be deemed to be utilities unless they are individually designated for historical or other reasons as attractions by NITB.

1.3 Background

1.3.1.1 Included in 'A Strategy for the Development of Tourism in Northern Ireland' published by NITB in November 1997 is an agreement that the then Roads Service would work with NITB on a review of the jointly agreed tourist signing policy.

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1.3.1.2 Scott Wilson Resource Consultants were appointed in October 1998 to carry out a review of tourist signing policy. NITB subsequently carried out extensive consultations with local Councils, Government Departments and tourist industry associations to determine overall tourist signing needs. The main findings of these consultations have been taken into account in developing the first version of this policy in 2004. This version of the policy has been produced to reflect changes in the tourism market in the time since 2004.

1.3.1.3 There are three main parties in terms of the operation and implementation of the tourist signing policy in Northern Ireland. These are:

- NITB
- Local Councils
- DRD

1.3.1.4 NITB is the official body responsible for the development of tourism and marketing of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination to visitors within Northern Ireland and from the Republic of Ireland. Tourism Ireland promotes Northern Ireland outside Ireland. NITB's role in terms of tourist signing is to provide expert guidance on tourism products so that only suitable destinations that benefit tourists receive signing.

1.3.1.5 Local councils are responsible for the promotion and development of tourism within their respective local areas. Local councils have it in their remit to provide the following tourist related amenities:

- Coach parking;
- Car parking for leisure or tourism purposes;
- Visitor information/interpretation panels/boards;
- Tourism facilities; and,
- Visitor centres.

1.3.1.6 Councils are best placed to interface with the local tourist industry and to assist with developing any local tourism strategies.

1.3.1.7 The Local Council's Tourism Development or Economic Development Unit is the first point of contact for applicants. The Council is responsible for assisting applicants in completing the application form for tourism signage; for liaising with NITB to establish eligibility for tourism signage on the applicant's behalf; and in liaising directly with TransportNI regarding the production and installation of signage on behalf of the applicant.

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1.3.1.8 DRD has a discretionary statutory power to provide, or permit the provision of, traffic signs which includes ‘white on brown’ tourist direction signs. The Department has a key role in the design and provision of signs, and is concerned with the content and layout of the sign as well as the positioning of it on the road network. As DRD is responsible for road network stewardship it has a final arbiter role in terms of the provision of signs bearing in mind the need to maintain road safety and minimise the proliferation of traffic signs.

1.3.1.9 This policy has been developed and agreed between DETI, NITB and DRD so that eligible and harder to find tourist destinations in Northern Ireland can receive signing. The agreed eligibility criteria is intended to ensure that applications are treated on a fair and balanced basis, and traffic management and road safety considerations are given priority.

1.4 Implementation

1.4.1.1 This policy and procedure guide is to be implemented with immediate effect. Whilst the criteria listed within this policy apply to the provision of new signs, existing authorised signing not complying with these criteria should be allowed to remain until they require replacement for either sign maintenance or traffic management reasons.

1.4.1.2 When sign replacement is required, a new application for signing should be submitted by the operator of the destination in order that it can be confirmed that the destination continues to meet the relevant criteria for the provision of tourist signing. Automatic replacement of tourist signs should not, therefore, be undertaken.

1.4.1.3 The implementation of the policy will be subject of an annual review between DRD/DETI/NITB.

1.5 Costs and benefits

1.5.1.1 As with former policy, this policy and procedure guide places with the applicant the responsibility for bearing the total cost of all signs provided.

1.5.1.2 Some costs will arise from the removal of signs to destinations that no longer comply with the policy. It is anticipated that these costs will be minimal and will generally be borne by TransportNI.

1.5.1.3 The main benefit to derive from implementation of this policy and procedure guide will be clear guidance on the provision of high quality, visitor-focused tourist signing.

2 Policy & Procedure

2.1 Core principles

2.1.1.1 White-on-brown tourist signs constitute one part of the overall family of direction signs. The main purpose of tourist signs is to guide visitors to their desired destinations via the most appropriate route at the latter stages of their journey, particularly where destinations are hard to find. As with all other direction signs, tourist signs are an aid to safe and efficient navigation, to complement, but not replace, pre-planning of the journey and the use of navigational aids such as verbal instructions, maps, road atlases, websites, satellite navigation systems, and mobile phone applications.

2.1.1.2 White-on-brown signs for tourist destinations (Appendix 1 – Tourist destinations) should supplement rather than duplicate information already provided on other direction signs provided for the guidance of all traffic. While recognising that ancillary benefits may accrue to the operator of a tourist destination through increased patronage, white-on-brown signs should only be used where there are clear benefits to the road user, eg. for safety reasons, where locations are hard to find or to encourage visitors to use particular routes.

2.1.1.3 In built-up areas it may not be possible to sign all tourist destinations due to the large number involved. It is therefore recommended that comprehensive signing schemes be implemented, with applications for tourist signs being considered only as part of a group and not individually (see paragraph 2.5).

2.1.1.4 Only businesses in which a tourism element predominates as opposed to a commercial retail focus will be considered for white-on-brown signs. For example a large retail centre which while attracting visitors is primarily providing for the local retail market and will not be eligible for white-on-brown signing.

2.2 Criteria

2.2.1.1 Consideration of applications for the erection of tourist signs is a two-stage process:

- a) eligibility addresses the nature of the destination itself. Only tourist destinations designated as such by NITB will be eligible for tourist signing; and
- b) entitlement takes into consideration compliance with this policy and the satisfactory accommodation of the signing within the overall needs of other traffic.

2.2.1.2 Eligibility will not confer automatic entitlement to tourist signs. Where a tourist destination is deemed by NITB to be eligible for tourist signing the final decision as to whether a destination is signed will be made by TransportNI. Where TransportNI decides not to approve the provision of signing a full explanation as to the reason why will be provided to the local council.

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2.2.1.3 For a tourist destination to be signed it must be permanently established and be open to the public without prior booking. In addition, it should: -

- a) have adequate parking on site or close by. The signs should direct road users to the parking facilities with onward pedestrian signing (see paragraph 4.2.9) to the tourist destination itself;
- b) have adequate toilets on site (where appropriate), including those for visitors with disabilities;
- c) have adequate publicity material (eg. leaflets, within tourist guide books, websites or at tourist information centres), or have a website dedicated to the promotion of their product or make use of social media and mobile phone technology/applications, or be able to demonstrate the use of other on-line channels for promoting tourism such as the discover Northern Ireland web page link as follows <http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/>;
- d) be of good quality, well-maintained and suitable for people with disabilities;
- e) be open continuously from Easter to October (inclusive) each year, as a minimum;
- f) be adequately identifiable in terms of the nature of the tourist destination at the point of entry , as described in paragraph 4.2.7.1;
- g) be a member of an NITB approved quality assurance scheme for tourist accommodation (where appropriate); and
- h) enter into the appropriate financial arrangements as described in paragraph 2.7.

2.2.1.4 Existing authorised signing not complying with this policy should be allowed to remain until it is in need of replacement for either sign maintenance or traffic management reasons. When such signs are to be removed, TransportNI shall advise the operator of the destination concerned and the local Council so that provision may be made for inclusion of the destination on local tourist information boards if deemed appropriate by the local Council.

2.2.1.5 Utilities will not be signed individually, but information pertaining to them may be included on information panels at tourist information boards.

2.3 General principles

2.3.1.1 The primary purpose of tourist signing is to assist in the management of traffic and to ensure the safe operation of the road network. It is not intended that signs be used as advertising for the tourist destination. Signing should not be permitted that will provide an advantage to one commercial enterprise at the expense of another.

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2.3.1.2 On the basis that signs should only be provided for enterprises that are difficult to find, tourist destinations located on A or B class roads will not normally receive any tourist signing, unless there are demonstrable traffic management or road safety reasons for signing or the destination is funded or Quality Graded by NITB and the tourist destination is intended to have a significant impact on the overall tourism offering for Northern Ireland. This may include high visitor numbers as outlined in section 2.4. Further exception may be made for tourist destinations located on A or B class roads carrying less than 1,500 vehicles per day.

2.3.1.3 Signing to a tourist destination shall not be provided until all unauthorised signs relating to that destination are removed from the public road (see paragraph 2.8.1.2i).

2.3.1.4 It is important to ensure that there is consistency across Divisional and local Council boundaries. To this end, signing to a tourist destination should only be developed after consulting bodies controlling adjoining areas to agree consistent arrangements for cross-boundary signing.

2.3.1.5 In some cases it may be difficult to decide whether a particular enterprise is primarily a tourist facility or a retail outlet (for example, craft workshops and potteries). NITB shall be responsible for determining if the tourism element predominates (eg. if the public can watch a demonstration or display without necessarily making any purchases of the products or goods on offer).

2.3.1.6 Properties and sites such as forest parks, country parks, historic monuments and those owned by the National Trust are automatically considered to be tourist destinations, but shall comply with the criteria given in paragraph 2.2.1.3 before signing is provided.

2.3.1.7 Permanent garden exhibitions that are part of, or are attached to a garden centre, should not be considered for tourist destination signing unless the exhibition is recognised by NITB as being of particular significance in horticultural or arboriculture terms.

2.3.1.8 In the interests of road safety, sign proliferation should be minimised by ensuring that, where a tourist destination comprises more than one attraction or facility, only the main attraction or facility is referred to on the signs. An exception may be made, however, where a destination is widely known as, say, 'Hotel and country club'. It is unlikely that a destination would be known, for instance, as 'Hotel and conference centre facilities' and requests of this nature should be refused, as they are basically an attempt to advertise rather than direct. Where there are number of discrete tourist products on offer at the same general tourism location product related symbols can be used to indicate the different ones up to a maximum of four.



2.3.1.9 Service symbols are generally not to be used. Symbols such as those indicating the availability of toilets or accessible parking are not required as tourist destinations have to provide these to receive signing (paragraph 2.2.1.3 refers). Other symbols such as the ‘knife and fork’ or ‘cup’ symbol are used on service areas signs on strategic routes for safety reasons in that they benefit people making longer journeys and on signs to by-passed communities (section 4.1.3 refers). However in the context of tourist signing they have the potential to provide commercial advantage for a tourist destination over a standalone ‘non-tourist’ related business in the general area.

2.3.1.10 In all cases TransportNI shall determine the design, size and siting of traffic signs.

2.4 Extent of Signing and Visitor numbers

2.4.1.1 If deemed eligible by NITB to constitute either a tourist attraction or tourist facility, a tourist destination may be signed from the nearest A or B class road regardless of visitor numbers to that destination. Appendix 4 in paragraph 4.4 provides an indicative map of the A and B class road network in Northern Ireland.

2.4.1.2 Where signing is to be permitted to a tourist destination located on an A or B class road carrying less than 1500 vehicles per day (paragraph 2.3.1.2) signing shall be from the nearest A or B class road carrying more than 1500 vehicles per day.

2.4.1.3 Exceptionally, signing may also be provided from the next nearest A or B road when it can be established that traffic visiting the destination is likely to approach from either direction.

2.4.1.4 For traffic management and road safety reasons signing from main routes beyond the nearest A or B road will generally only be considered for tourist attractions when the relevant stipulations in the following paragraphs apply.

2.4.1.5 The signing of tourist facilities shall not be permitted from motorways.

2.4.1.6 The signing of tourist attractions from motorways shall only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and reserved for strategically significant tourist products that are deemed so, and fully supported, by the local Council and NITB, such as Titanic Belfast.

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2.4.1.7 Before tourist signing from a motorway is considered the adequacy of the existing direction signing to the nearest main destination shall be assessed and improved if appropriate and more local but less extensive dedicated signing be provided closer to the attraction. Where more than one attraction is located at the same geographical destination, only the main attraction shall be signed.

2.4.1.8 Tourist signing shall also only be provided to tourist attractions located less than twenty miles from the nearest motorway junction. The opportunity to provide tourist signing will however be dependent on the existing signing on the stretch of motorway in question. If it is proposed to include the attraction on existing advance direction signs then the standard rules in Local Transport Note 1/94, in terms of the number of units of information that can be included on a sign, shall apply. If there is the opportunity to provide standalone dedicated supplementary tourist signs between existing motorway advance direction signs then up to a maximum of 3 eligible tourist attractions may be indicated from each motorway off-slip where a standard 'stack' type direction sign is used (see sign diagram 2924 below). Where a 'map' type sign is to be used is used which shows either a diverge or a roundabout ahead the number of attractions should be reduced to 2.



Sign Diagram 2924

2.4.1.9 It is accepted, however, that there may be instances where a motorway may be the closest and most suitable route to an attraction (eg. Peatlands Park, Ardress House & The Argory) and that each of these may not meet the revised approach to signing from motorways. Signing in such instances shall be allowed to remain until such times as the existing motorway signing needs replaced or an application is received asking for tourist signing from the same junction when the on-going need/eligibility for the existing signing will need assessed.

2.4.1.10 Signing from a primary route that is not the nearest main road may be provided to attractions with more than 20,000 visitors per annum, up to a maximum of twenty miles from the attraction. Appendix 3 in paragraph 4.3 provides an indicative map of the Northern Ireland Primary Route network. Continuity signing along a primary route from the junction with another primary route may be approved to tourist attractions meeting these criteria. This is designed to cater for traffic approaching the attraction from different directions. Such cases are likely to be rare and will be considered on their individual merits. However, signing may be permissible from two different primary routes if traffic is obviously drawn from more than one direction.

2.4.1.11 The applicant shall provide reliable proof of visitor numbers.

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2.4.1.12 Extended signing from a motorway or primary route should not be based on projected visitor numbers for a new attraction. Initial signing should be undertaken from the nearest A or B class road. Signing can then be extended further to include primary routes or motorways based on actual visitor numbers when achieved. Exceptions to this may be made for tourist destinations supported; Quality Graded; and/or funded by NITB irrespective of visitor numbers or by agreement between TNIHQ and NITB where a new tourist attraction is reasonably expected to have visitor numbers that are at least twice those required to merit such signing.

2.4.1.13 Where a multi-function venue is being assessed for tourist signing, it is important that only the elements eligible for tourist signing are included in visitor number totals. Where the primary purpose of a multi-function venue is clearly commercial, retail or unrelated to tourism, additional signing shall not be permitted. Where the balance between the tourist and non-tourist elements is less clear-cut, TransportNI may arrange to have such surveys carried out, as it considers appropriate to validate a request for additional signing. Applicants shall bear the cost of these surveys and failure to co-operate fully shall invalidate the request for additional signing.

2.4.1.14 Should visitor numbers not meet the required level within three years of the establishment opening, removal of the extended signing should be considered. This is important in order to maintain the validity of sign provision criteria relative to the standard of tourist destinations being signed and to prevent criticism from other attractions where extended signing has been denied on the basis of visitor numbers.

2.4.1.15 Extended signing may be retained where visitor numbers are showing annual increases and there is a likelihood that the required visitor level will be reached within the following three-year period. Signs should be removed, however, where visitor numbers are decreasing annually or are static at or below 80% of the required visitor level.

2.4.1.16 Departures from the above criteria in respect of visitor numbers will require the approval of the Director of Engineering. In all cases, NITB should be consulted regarding visitor levels before any action to remove signs is taken. As it is anticipated that the number of signs requiring removal will be small, TransportNI will bear the cost of removal in the interests of maintaining signing standards.

2.5 Application Process

2.5.1.1 All applications should be made via the local council which has a responsibility for developing tourism in its area.

2.5.1.2 Further details of the application process are contained in Appendix 5.

2.5.1.3 The local council along with NITB will determine the eligibility of a destination for signing. The final decision on the provision of signing will however be dependent on the agreement of TransportNI which will consider all aspects of practical implementation.

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2.5.1.4 TransportNI will determine the type and extent of signing required and whether it can be accommodated along with existing traffic signing in the area. If signing can be provided TransportNI will give an indication of the possible cost of provision.

2.5.1.5 The local Council will act as the sole point of contact with TransportNI regarding the provision and funding of tourist signing in its area and as such, all requests for tourist signing should be directed to it.

2.5.1.6 The local Council shall also be the point of contact with the applicant and is responsible for transmitting all decisions to the applicant, apart from any specific detail in relation to the sign provision. In accordance with paragraph 2.7.1.2 the local council will also organise obtaining the funding for the sign provision from the applicant.

2.5.1.7 When an application is rejected the council shall inform the applicant in writing of the reasons why.

2.5.1.8 When an application is successful the applicant shall be informed of the extent of signing to be offered and that the signing will only be provided after they have deposited the funding to cover the estimated cost with the local Council. Applicants should also be informed that they will need to agree to reconciling actual costs at the end of the process should the out turn figure be over the estimated figures. Where the outturn figure is less than the estimated figure the excess will be returned to the applicant.

2.6 Tourist signing inventory

2.6.1.1 The local Council, in conjunction with NITB, should maintain an inventory of tourist attractions and facilities that have received tourist signing in its area. It is important that this inventory includes all existing approved tourist signing in the council area. Part of the council's responsibility in maintaining the inventory will be to identify any enterprises no longer operating and consequently any signs no longer needed. Councils shall inform TransportNI of any redundant signs and TransportNI will arrange removal.

2.6.1.2 Those items on the inventory not eligible for direction signing may be catered for by means of tourist information boards or specialist literature at tourist information centres.

2.6.1.3 The local Council will be responsible for the co-ordination and assembly of funding for the signing of destinations identified for signing as part of this policy on the provision of tourist signs.

2.6.1.4 If considered necessary by the partners, the tourist signing scheme will be subject to review on an annual basis.

2.7 Financial arrangements

2.7.1.1 In all cases, the applicant shall provide all funding for tourist signing to the destination, whether publicly or privately owned. Regional delivery partners or local Councils should fund direction signing to general tourist attractions such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, scenic routes and viewpoints.

2.7.1.2 All funding shall be directed to the local Council who will act as the funding co-ordinator for tourist signing. This will ensure that the Council is aware of all signing provision within its area.

2.8 Sign erection

2.8.1.1 Signs shall be erected by TransportNI, except in cases where specific agreements are drawn up in accordance with Article 29(3) of RTRO. Where applicants choose to supply signs, they shall comply with the specification contained in the current TransportNI Signs Supply Contract as let by the Central Procurement Directorate.

2.8.1.2 The following shall be made clear in writing to operators of destinations requesting tourist signing. It is anticipated that the local Council will be responsible for issue of a letter covering these points: -

- a) the signs shall become the property of the Department;
- b) the signs shall be removed if the destination fails to meet the criteria set out in this policy document;
- c) TransportNI will carry out normal sign maintenance, but should the signs be severely damaged and become unsightly or a road safety hazard, they will be removed from the site;
- d) the operator shall be responsible for the cost of replacing signs if they become damaged or require renewal due to normal wear and tear;
- e) if TransportNI can recover the cost of damage from a third party, the signs will be replaced at no cost to the operator. Otherwise the operator will be required to meet the cost of a replacement sign, if required;
- f) while estimates may be given, actual costs, whether more or less, shall be charged;
- g) full payment is required in advance;
- h) the signs shall be white-on-brown tourist direction signs and illuminated in accordance with TransportNI policy on illumination and reflectorisation;
- i) unauthorised signing / advertisement of the destination within the road boundary shall be removed by the operator before authorised tourist direction signs are provided; and

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j) subsequent erection of unauthorised signs / advertisements within the road boundary shall result in the removal of authorised tourist direction signs (see paragraph 2.9.1.2).

2.8.1.3 It is anticipated that the number of signs requiring removal will be small and as such the costs associated with this will be borne by TransportNI out of existing sign maintenance funding.

2.8.1.4 Where more than one attraction is shown on a sign, the cost of the sign should be shared proportionally between the attraction operators.

2.8.1.5 The piecemeal addition of individual signs to existing signage is undesirable both in terms of appearance and the clarity of information conveyed to the motorist. Where an extra attraction is to be added to an existing sign, the operator of the additional attraction should meet the full cost of reconstruction of all new signs.

2.9 Unauthorised signs

2.9.1.1 Action should be taken by the relevant Division to have unauthorised signs / advertisements removed quickly. Authority for removal is contained in either Article 35 of RTRO or Article 87 of RO depending on the nature of the signs / advertisements involved. To assist in identifying unauthorised signs / advertisements, Divisions may wish to maintain records of the siting and nature of all approved signs.

2.9.1.2 If unauthorised signs / advertisements to a destination are erected after authorised signs have been provided, TransportNI shall ensure their removal from property under its control. Where those benefiting from the unauthorised signs / advertisements persist in their erection within the road boundary, consideration should be given to the removal of authorised signs to that destination as well. Applicants should previously have been advised of this course of action in the letter of offer for the provision of the signs (see paragraph 2.8.1.2). Should the applicant then agree, in writing, to withhold from the erection of further unauthorised signs / advertisements, authorised signs may be re-erected provided the applicant bears all costs relating to their removal and subsequent re-erection.

2.9.1.3 The procedures for the removal of unauthorised signs / advertisements are set out in RSPPG_S035.

2.10 Variations to the policy

2.10.1.1 Departures from policy as set out in this policy and procedure guide may from time to time be approved to accommodate specific cases. Requests for such departures should be submitted to the Director of Engineering through the Divisional Manager.

3 Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

3.1.1.1 An equality screening analysis has been carried out on the policy contained within this policy and procedure guide. The analysis did not identify a differential impact on any of the groups listed in section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. A full equality impact assessment has consequently not been deemed necessary.

3.1.1.2 A copy of the completed 'Equality Screening Analysis Form' has been signed off and forwarded to the DRD Equality Unit.

3.2 Rural Proofing

3.2.1.1 This policy and procedure guide will be applied equally in the urban and rural contexts for the benefit of all road users, although there is a definite emphasis on providing signing to harder to find rural destinations.

3.3 Impact Assessments (IAs)- formerly referred to as Regulatory Impact Assessments

3.3.1.1 An Impact Assessment is not deemed necessary as this policy and procedure guide will not impose either a direct or an indirect impact on businesses, charities, social economy enterprises or the voluntary sector.

3.4 Lifetime Opportunities – Government’s Anti-Poverty Strategy (replaces New TSN)

3.4.1.1 The intention of this policy and procedure guide is to provide guidance on the provision of permanent direction traffic signs to assist the safe and effective movement of traffic. As such there is no opportunity to assist the Government’s Anti-Poverty Strategy.

4 Appendices

4.1 Appendix 1 – Tourist destinations

4.1.1 Geographical areas of tourist interest

4.1.1.1 Signing of areas of landscape value (such as the Mourne, Causeway Coast, or the Glens of Antrim) or historical cultural value (such as St Patrick's Country or Orchard County) will take the form of boundary signs at the entrance to such areas.

4.1.1.2 It is anticipated that most geographical areas of tourist interest have already been identified and these should not be extended to include marketing or branding initiatives, the signing of which may dilute the impact of those areas already established.

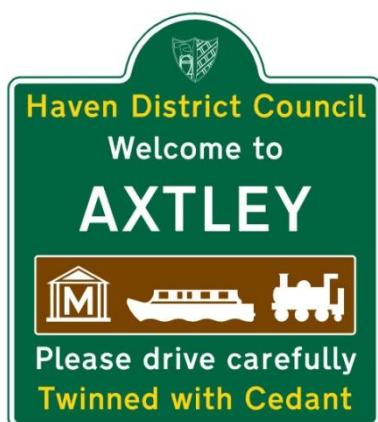
4.1.1.3 In order to maintain consistency in the signing of areas of geographical or historical value throughout Northern Ireland, any new areas shall be agreed by NITB in conjunction with TNIHQ.

4.1.1.4 As Council areas do not in themselves constitute tourist attractions or facilities, it is not appropriate to use white-on-brown signs as boundary signs of Council areas.

4.1.2 Town and village nameplate signing

4.1.2.1 Town and village welcome signs can be dealt with in a number of ways and this section should be read in conjunction with RSPPG E034 'Direction Signs'.

4.1.2.2 Where a request is made to have a town or village signed with more than just its name on a black-on-white sign, this may be accommodated through the erection of a sign similar to that shown below. The content of the sign should be agreed with the local Council.



4.1.2.3 Although not currently in the TSR, this sign has been authorised for use here. Permitted variants shall be as prescribed in diagram 2403.1 of TSRGD, with the maximum number of tourist attraction symbols permitted being three.

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4.1.2.4 The signs should generally be erected on the main approaches to the town or village, in the vicinity of the existing 30mph or 40mph limit signs. As with other tourist signing, the promoter should pay for these signs.

4.1.3 By-passed communities

4.1.3.1 Direction signing to by-passed communities (white-on-green or black-on-white) is primarily addressed in a separate RSPPG E064 “The Signing of Service Areas and Local Facilities in By-passed Communities”.

4.1.3.2 The signs that can be used indicate the availability of a range of basic services in a nearby small town or village lying off the main road to those making longer more strategic journeys and who are unfamiliar with the general area.

4.1.3.3 In exceptional cases the tourist signing alternatives of ‘local facilities’ signs may be used (i.e. sign diagrams 2328^{GB} and 2329^{GB}) where in addition to the requirements for local facilities in RSPPG E064 the town or village has:

- Overnight tourist accommodation; and,
- At least one other tourist attraction.

4.1.3.4 Sample signs are as follows. Where the town or village also has a networked tourist or visitor information centre the Tourist Information Centre ‘i’ symbol should be included.



4.1.3.5 Towns or villages already signed with facility signs in accordance with RSPPG E064 will not be eligible for tourist signing.

4.1.4 Historic monuments

4.1.4.1 Whilst historic sites and monuments designated as such by the Department of the Environment may be classed as tourist attractions, tourist signing to them should only be provided where interpretative panels and adequate parking facilities are available on site or nearby. Where parking is located nearby, vehicular signing should be to the car park, with pedestrian signing from there to the site or monument itself.

4.1.5 Scenic routes and coastal routes

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4.1.5.1 Scenic routes and coastal routes shall not be signed without the prior agreement of TNIHQ and NITB in order to preserve the consistency of such signing throughout Northern Ireland. As in all matters relating to signing, road safety considerations shall be paramount and TransportNI shall be responsible for all decisions in this regard.

4.1.5.2 The signs at the start of a route and those at other major joining points should contain the legend 'scenic route', 'scenic trail', 'tourist route', 'tourist trail' or 'coastal route' as a minimum. In addition, and subject to space being available on the signs, a geographical name may be added to the legend together with a suitable authorised local symbol, if considered appropriate. TNIHQ will consider authorising the use of suitable local symbols, particularly where there is more than one route in an area. Where the route is to be a coastal one and subject to space being available on the signs, a geographical name generally need not be added. Advance direction signs may also be necessary where the route starts at the junction with a main road.

4.1.5.3 In addition, when designing **scenic** routes, NITB will consider the following:

-

- a) avoid congested areas such as stretches of main roads and traffic bottlenecks and avoid urban areas if possible;
- b) link places of minor interest;
- c) possibly avoid major tourist destinations which are already traffic magnets and plan the route to draw traffic out of these locations;
- d) avoid use of Class A roads where possible;
- e) utilise the most attractive roads where possible;
- f) where possible incorporate facilities required by visitors: - eg. toilets, picnic areas, car parks, restaurants, viewpoints etc.;
- g) plan a route distance of from twenty to sixty miles long, capable of being shortened by the tourist to allow flexibility;
- h) plan a circular route, with traffic not encouraged to join or leave at one particular point; and
- i) plan the route so as to use one direction only, preferably anti-clockwise, thus avoiding right hand turns.

4.1.5.4 Continuity or repeater signing along the route should consist of signs bearing the legend 'scenic route' (or variant) and an authorised symbol, if used.

Three types of signs are illustrated below: -

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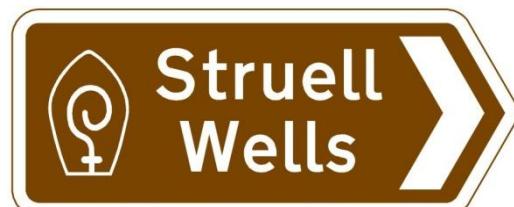
Advance direction sign for a scenic route



Direction sign at the start of a scenic route



Repeater sign along a scenic route



Direction sign showing attraction off a scenic route

4.1.6 Walking and cycling routes

4.1.6.1 The following definitions apply in this section: -

- a) 'National Cycling Network' (NCN) - A UK-wide network of cycle routes designed to provide a safe and high quality environment for all types of cycling and walking journeys.

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b) ‘Local walking / cycling route (or trail)’ - A route primarily intended for use by tourists and recreational walking / cycling. Ideally, it should be located off-road. Otherwise it should generally be located mainly in rural areas and away from busy roads.

c) ‘Cycle lane (or track)’ - Part of a carriageway set aside exclusively or primarily for the use of cyclists, ie. mandatory and advisory cycle lanes respectively. These will be almost exclusively located in urban and semi-urban environments and will generally be utilitarian in nature.

4.1.6.2 The erection of tourist walking / cycling signing should complement and not conflict with general signing for pedestrians and cyclists. A consistent approach to the signing of local walking / cycling routes throughout Northern Ireland is important to assist their integration into the existing road infrastructure and to avoid conflict with signing of the National Cycle Network. To help ensure this the Department’s Cycling Unit should be consulted when considering any request for tourist walking/cycling signing. The Unit should be able to advise on any planned cycling routes in the vicinity and whether the proposed route opens up any other opportunities to promote and provide for walking/cycling in the area. Only routes that meet the following criteria should be signed. To avoid sign proliferation, guidance on the appropriate levels of signing should be adhered to.

4.1.6.3 The National Cycle Network shall be signed in accordance with principles detailed in ‘Cycle-Friendly Infrastructure – Guidelines for Planning and Design’, published by Department for Transport. Urban walking / cycling networks shall be signed as set out in Chapter 3 of the Traffic Signs Manual using signs as prescribed in the current TSR or otherwise authorised by the Department.

4.1.6.4 Exceptionally, where urban walking / cycling routes have been clearly identified as having tourist use as their prime purpose or where these form part of a local walking / cycling route, additional signing in accordance with the guidance in paragraph 4.1.6.6 may be provided.

Eligibility criteria

4.1.6.5 To be eligible for tourist signing, local walking / cycling routes must satisfy the following criteria: -

- a) They must be primarily for use by tourists and recreational walkers / cyclists.
- b) Only local routes recognised by NITB as being of tourist merit may be signed with white-on-brown tourist signs.
- c) Approved routes will generally be located in rural areas and away from busy roads. Consideration should be given to locating the start and finish of a local route within a rural town or village. This will increase access to useful facilities (eg. car parks, toilets and public transport) for those using the route. Allowing for this, the aim should be to have no more than about 30% of any local route, on a route mileage basis, located in urban areas.

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- d) The promoter shall demonstrate that the proposed routes will be adequately marketed. The general availability of leaflets / maps in tourist information offices will be deemed to satisfy this requirement.
- e) Care should be taken to ensure that the proposed signing of the local cycle route does not cause confusion with that of the National Cycle Network. TransportNI Divisions should consult with the Departmental Cycling Unit and Sustrans on this matter.
- f) To ensure a co-ordinated approach avoiding duplication, conflict and unnecessary sign proliferation, TransportNI Divisional Cycling Officers should liaise with the Department's Cycling Unit to ascertain the proximity of the proposed local cycle route to any other cycle routes either existing or proposed.

Guidance for signing

4.1.6.6 The following should be taken into consideration with regard to the location and signing of local walking / cycling routes: -

- a) Routes need not necessarily include any tourist destinations, as recognised by NITB, but should link places of local interest (such as viewpoints) and local facilities (such as restaurants, picnic areas and toilets).
- b) Routes should generally be of a rural nature and away from busy roads.
- c) The use of A Class roads should be avoided where possible, except where designated cycling facilities have been provided.
- d) The most attractive lower class roads should be used where possible.
- e) The location of a route should be agreed with the TransportNI Divisional Cycling Officer for the area, bearing in mind the important road safety benefits derived from a route that circulates in an anti-clockwise direction, thus avoiding right turns.
- f) The minimum of signing should be provided, consistent with safety and the need to ensure clear directions. It will generally be necessary to erect signing at all main junctions / changes of direction along the route and at natural start and joining points, if applicable.
- g) Route confirmatory signing should not generally be necessary. Where it is required, it is not anticipated that signs will be needed at intervals of less than two miles.
- h) Walking routes should be interlinked as far as possible with other walking routes. Cycle routes should be similarly linked. Care must be taken to ensure that the signing of routes is properly integrated to avoid confusion between different cycle routes or between different walking routes.

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- i) For cycle routes, direction signing to / from the National Cycle Network should be provided where possible up to a distance of ten miles.
- j) Direction signing and distances to towns, villages, tourist destinations, etc. should be included where appropriate on off-road sections of the route.
- k) Thought should be given to the provision of car parking at starting and joining points to the route, where appropriate. Under Article 45 of the Access to the Countryside (NI) Order 1983: - 'a district council may provide parking places for the purpose of facilitating the use of public paths and other public rights of way and access to open country by members of the public'. Also the district council: - 'may acquire land compulsorily for that purpose'.
- l) Where a number of routes are concentrated in a local area, route numbers should be used in preference to trail names.

4.1.6.7 While the general principles set out above should be adhered to, due to the variable nature of local cycling / walking routes it may be necessary to depart from specific points. Records should be kept to explain the background to such departures.

Sign Design

4.1.6.8 The following guidelines should be followed: -

- a) As appropriate to individual circumstances, signs may include a route name, route number, walking / cycling symbols and direction arrow(s). With the approval of TNIHQ, a logo may be added in addition to the pedestrian symbol. Signs incorporating such symbols shall require authorisation by TNIHQ, however, use of these should be kept to a minimum and use made of existing symbols where possible.
- b) Signs shall be white-on-brown. In rural areas they should generally be small and approximately square in shape with a 150mm maximum width.
- c) To reduce their environmental impact in the countryside and in environmentally sensitive areas, signs shall generally not be mounted more than 1m high on posts made of natural materials where possible.
- d) Signs / posts should not encroach into junction sight lines or grass mowing strips and the local TransportNI Section Engineer should be consulted to agree locations before erection. If local circumstances allow, signs may be erected on walls or other appropriate street furniture with the consent of the owner.
- e) In urban areas, signs should be mounted at normal traffic sign mounting height.

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Where essentially rural walking / cycling routes penetrate urban areas, the above principles may be adapted for incorporation into conventional directional signing.

4.1.7 Golfing facilities

4.1.7.1 Golfing facilities (which include golf courses, par-three courses, driving ranges or pitch and putt courses) will be eligible for tourist signing provided that: -

- a) non-members can access the facilities on offer; and
- b) there is clear evidence of promotion and marketing to the tourist market. (NITB should be consulted to confirm the amount of tourist marketing undertaken by the facility.); and,
- c) the facility is a member of NITB's Golf Quality Assurance Scheme or is recognised by NITB as providing a tourism offering to visitors.

4.1.7.2 In the case of a golf course (par-three or otherwise), the name of the club may be included on the sign together with the golf symbol. Other facilities should only contain the golf symbol and the type of facility (pitch and putt or driving range) on offer.

4.1.7.3 The extent of signing should be as for other tourist destinations (see paragraph 4.2.3).

4.1.8 Leisure facilities

4.1.8.1 Equestrian facilities approved by the British Horse Society and NITB shall be eligible for tourist signing.

4.1.8.2 Leisure facilities such as cinemas, ten pin bowling, and snooker halls, are primarily aimed at the domestic market and are not eligible for tourist signing. They may, however, be catered for by inclusion on tourist information boards.

4.1.9 Theatres/Arts Centres

4.1.9.1 Theatres/arts centres approved by NITB may receive tourist signing appropriate to their location due to their important role in presenting local culture.

4.1.9.2 To be eligible for tourist signing the venue must:

- be of cultural significance; and,
- be able to demonstrate that events attract substantial numbers of visitors from outside of the local area; and,
- have a minimum seating capacity of 150; and,
- have performances scheduled for at least 9 months of the year; and,
- meet visitor servicing requirements (e.g. provide refreshments); and,

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- provide an internet based event listing / promotional material and booking contact details; and,
- have a physical box office and provide a messaging service when box office is not open.

4.1.9.3 Theatres / arts centres that do not meet these criteria may instead be eligible for standard ‘black-on-white’ directional signing as detailed in RSPPG E034.

4.1.9.4 Theatre groups and companies are not eligible for tourist signing.

4.1.10 Gardens

4.1.10.1 Purpose built gardens can be historically significant in the local, and indeed wider Northern Ireland, context. A garden may be signed with tourist signs when:

- it is of horticultural importance e.g. it specialises in rare, unique or traditional plant species;
- it has a visiting season in line with the main tourist season (Easter to October), gardens that only open by appointment are not eligible for signing;
- It has clearly marketed and demonstrable opening arrangements;
- There is evidence of promotion through the tourism sector; and,
- It has interpretation/information panels throughout the site and/or tours available; and,
- Has visitor facilities such as toilets, parking etc.

4.1.11 Sports facilities

4.1.11.1 Unless designated by NITB as a tourist attraction, public sports facilities owned and operated by local Councils are not eligible for white-on-brown tourist signing. They may, however, be eligible for black-on-white direction signs if considered appropriate by TransportNI for traffic management or road safety reasons.

4.1.11.2 Private sports facilities such as football / gaelic / cricket / hockey / rugby / athletic grounds, horse / greyhound racecourses and tennis / badminton / squash clubs are primarily directed at the domestic market. Similarly, unless specifically designated as tourist attractions by NITB, they shall not be eligible for tourist signing. They may, however, be catered for by inclusion on tourist information boards. Major events should be catered for by the erection of temporary black-on-yellow signs.

4.1.12 Activity Tourism Centres

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4.1.12.1 Activity tourism centres and providers may be signed where it can be established that the centre is largely aimed at the tourism market. The types of centre could include:

- diving schools;
- surf schools;
- off-road driving;
- mountain bike trails;
- go-karting;
- off-roading;
- motor sport facilities;
- paint balling;
- dry ski; and,
- water sport facilities.

4.1.12.2 To qualify for signing the enterprise must:

- Be recognised by NITB as having sufficient ‘visitor offering’ focus on the tourist market;
- Possess an industry recognised safety and quality accreditation such as ‘Adventuremark’;
- Have a permanent, fixed base;
- Be actively promoted in the tourism sector and be able to demonstrate same.

4.1.13 Churches

4.1.13.1 Tourist signing to churches / cathedrals may only be provided if they are likely to be of historical interest to tourists. In addition, to be eligible for tourist signing they shall be required to be open continuously from Easter to October (inclusive) each year, as a minimum. Information regarding churches not meeting the above criteria may be provided by means of tourist information boards. The direction signing of other church buildings (black-on-white signs) is addressed in RSPPG E034.

4.1.14 Conference centres / facilities

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4.1.14.1 Conference centres / facilities are not eligible for tourist signing as they do not attract passing trade and in general those availing of the facilities do so by invitation with accompanying directions being issued. In any case, most conference centre / facilities form part of a larger hotel / Council office complex whose main business may be eligible for tourist or general direction signing respectively.

4.1.15 Cross-Border attractions

4.1.15.1 If recommended by NITB, signing to certain cross-Border tourist attractions may be merited from Northern Ireland. TransportNI will consider signing to such attractions on the same basis as Northern Ireland attractions.

4.1.16 Restaurants / Tea Rooms / Cafes / Coffee Shops

4.1.16.1 Due to issues of inequity that would arise from signing some eating establishments and not others, together with the potential proliferation of signs that would result from signing the full range of premises involved, the signing of this type of enterprise shall not be permitted.

4.1.17 Accommodation signing

4.1.17.1 To operate legally, all tourist accommodation establishments must be certified by NITB in Northern Ireland. Current NITB certification shall, therefore, be a prerequisite to the signing of such premises.

4.1.17.2 To reduce the proliferation of signs and maintain accommodation standards, providers shall submit to and pass a regular inspection of premises by NITB.

- a) NITB shall advise those failing to pass or re-submit for a regular inspection that traffic signing to their premises will be removed if they do not pass an inspection within three months. Advice to this effect shall be included with any quotation for new sign provision being provided to applicants.
- b) NITB shall notify TransportNI Divisions annually of all premises failing to pass or resubmit for inspection after the three-month notification period.

4.1.17.3 Signing at or near the entrance to tourist accommodation shall be as set out in paragraph 4.2.7.

4.1.17.4 To be eligible for signing, accommodation shall be available for tourist bookings from March to October (inclusive) each year, as a minimum.

4.1.17.5 The 'bed' symbol shall be the prime feature of all accommodation signs.

4.1.18 Rural accommodation

4.1.18.1 Rural accommodation that is certified by NITB may be signed at the request of the operator.

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4.1.18.2 Signing will normally be from the nearest A or B class road and shall be consistent with the guidance given in paragraph 4.2.3.

4.1.18.3 Named signing may be provided for hotel, guesthouse, B&B, self-catering and hostel accommodation on initial and subsequent signs. Consideration should be given to the use of solely the 'bed' symbol on subsequent signing until the destination is reached.

4.1.18.4 Where multiple establishments are to be signed at a rural junction, those of the same type should be grouped and the number and type of premise shown on the sign. Preference shall be given to hotels and guesthouses (in that order), on the assumption that they will generally generate more traffic than the purely B&B establishments.



Direction sign to multiple tourist accommodation establishments

4.1.18.5 Where signing to rural accommodation is to be erected within an urban area, signs should take the same form as urban accommodation signing, ie. a 'bed' symbol only for B&Bs and guesthouses. The names of the B&Bs or guesthouses may be added to subsequent signs sited outside the urban area.

4.1.18.6 Existing named signing in urban areas directing to rural accommodation should remain until the signs are life-expired or are (or are likely to be) challenged by urban accommodation providers in the vicinity whose premises will receive solely a 'bed' type sign. Where for this reason a sign is removed that has been erected within the three years preceding introduction of this policy, the operator will be entitled to reimbursement of the cost of provision on the following basis: -

<i>Age of sign: -</i>	<i>Reimbursement of cost of sign provision: -</i>
over 3 years	Nil
2-3 years	$\frac{1}{4}$
1-2 years	$\frac{1}{2}$
<1 year	$\frac{3}{4}$

In this instance TransportNI shall bear the cost of replacement signs in the revised urban format where this is not covered by new urban accommodation signing provision.

4.1.19 Urban accommodation

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4.1.19.1 Accommodation signing within an urban area should not commence further from the premises than the nearest urban distributor road or nearest point on a one-way system. TransportNI shall determine the roads in an urban area from which such signing shall commence.

4.1.19.2 Named signing may be provided for hotel accommodation. Signing to guesthouses, B&B and self-catering accommodation should not display the name or type of individual premises, but should solely depict the 'bed' symbol to convey that accommodation may be found in the direction indicated. Such signing should continue at subsequent junctions until the street on which such accommodation is located has been reached.



Example of urban accommodation signing

4.1.19.3 Accommodation signing is not considered necessary for establishments having direct access from urban distributor roads or one-way circulatory systems within an urban area. Such establishments should be identified as outlined in paragraph 4.2.7.1.

4.1.20 Campus Accommodation

4.1.20.1 Accommodation based on campuses provides key accommodation stock particularly for visitors attending larger events.

4.1.20.2 To be eligible for signing the accommodation must be available for at least 4 months of the year. Signing will not be provided to accommodation located on campuses, or in other locations, that are already signed.

4.1.21 Caravan and camping parks

4.1.21.1 To be eligible for tourist signing, a caravan site shall: -

- a) comply with the Model Conditions for Holiday Caravan Sites as set out by the Department of the Environment in 1992 (or as subsequently amended) where the site is owned and operated by a local Council;
- b) be licensed under the Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 1963 where the site is privately owned and operated;
- c) have a minimum of ten pitches for casual overnight use without pre-booking; and

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- d) have received at least a one-star rating in the UK Caravan & Camping Park Star Quality Grading Scheme.

4.1.21.2 Touring caravan and camping sites shall provide the same level of facilities, as those required for static caravans. Similarly, dedicated camping sites should, where practicable, provide facilities to the same standard, as those required for caravan sites. NITB shall determine whether the standard of facilities available merits tourist signing. The extent of signing shall be as indicated in paragraph 4.2.3.

4.1.21.3 Where necessary for traffic management or road safety reasons, for example where there are a number of sites in close vicinity, the name of the park may be included on the sign although applicants should be made aware of impact this will have on the cost of the sign.



Examples of signs using the caravan and camping symbols

4.1.22 Aires de Service / Motorhome Service Facilities

4.1.22.1 Aires de Service are purpose built stopping areas for motor home users and can be signed a long as they are fully supported by the local Council and at a minimum provide:

- A fresh water fill point;
- A waste water emptying point;
- A chemical toilet emptying point; and,
- Rubbish disposal facilities.



Example of Aires de Service / motor home service facilities sign

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4.1.23 Hostels

4.1.23.1 Signs may only be provided to hostels certified by NITB. The extent of signing shall be as indicated in paragraph 4.2.3.



Examples of signs giving direction to a hostel

4.1.24 Motorhome Hire Outlets

4.1.24.1 A motorhome hire outlet may be signed when:

- It can prove a minimum cumulative rental of 300 weeks per annum, applicant must supply documented evidence of same to NITB to verify;
- The logistics of the hire operation must show necessity for tourists to visit site with camper van i.e. solely airport pickup and return would not qualify;
- It is well established and in operation for over a year with a significant proportion of its business coming from outside of NI; and,
- It is able to prove that it is extensively marketed outside NI, to be verified by NITB.

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4.1.25 Tourist/visitor information centres & tourist information boards

4.1.25.1 The signs below are examples of those that should be used when directing traffic to tourist information *boards*. When signing to a networked Tourist / Visitor Information Centre the legend ‘Tourist information centre’ or ‘Visitor Information Centre’ should be used where possible, particularly on initial signs, however this may be shortened or omitted on subsequent signs where space is limited. NITB will advise as to which centres form part of the overall network.



4.1.25.2 Vehicular signing should only be provided to either a tourist / visitor information centre or tourist information board where adequate car parking is available at the centre or board.

4.1.25.3 Only tourist information boards conforming to a standard design approved by NITB should be signed.

4.1.25.4 Traffic signing for vehicular traffic should only be provided to tourist information *boards* located in rural areas where adequate safe parking is available. Signing to tourist information boards within urban areas may be by means of pedestrian signing, if considered appropriate.

4.1.25.5 Networked tourist / visitor information centres should be signed on all main approaches to the town or village in which they are located. This may be at the speed limit / entrance to small villages or the nearest main junctions within a larger urban environment. The signing examples shown above may be reduced to solely the **i** symbol where sign space is restricted.

4.2 Appendix 2 – Tourist signing principles

4.2.1 Sign design

4.2.1.1 It is important to achieve a balance between assisting tourists, maintaining safety (by preventing an overload of information on a sign that could not be read and understood safely by a driver passing at normal speed) and minimising environmental intrusion.

4.2.1.2 Sign design shall conform to the rules of traffic sign design prevailing at the time of erection (currently Chapter 7 of the Traffic Signs Manual and Local Transport Note 1/94) and will feature: -

- a) white legend, borders, arrows and chevrons on a brown background to 411 of BS 381C 'Middle Brown'.
- b) the use of Transport Medium alphabet in upper or lower case legend as appropriate; and
- c) a legend x-height that is the same as for normal direction signing on the route. This will be the appropriate size for the 85th percentile speed of traffic on the road.

4.2.1.3 The decision regarding illumination or reflectorisation of the signs (or neither) will rest with TransportNI, and will be in accordance with current policy on the illumination of traffic signs.

4.2.1.4 Because tourist destinations tend to have longer names than other destinations and because of the inclusion of additional symbols, the number of tourist destinations on any stand-alone sign shall be limited as follows: -

<i>Road type</i>	<i>Maximum number of tourist destinations</i>
Motorway	3*
Road having a speed limit of 50mph or more	3
Road having a speed limit of less than 50mph	4

* Only tourist *attractions* can be signed from motorways

4.2.1.5 With the exception of premises where names are permitted under this RSPPG, commercial names should not be used. It is particularly important to avoid commercial names that might encourage the use of products or services not directly connected with the destination.

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4.2.2 Minimising visual and environmental intrusion

4.2.2.1 As many tourist destinations are located in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or in conservation areas in towns, particular care must be taken when siting direction signing. These apply to tourist signing as much as to other directional signs.

4.2.2.2 Where possible, advance direction signs to tourist *attractions* should be combined with those to other destinations (see examples in paragraph 4.2.4).

4.2.2.3 Where flag type direction signs are used, multiple tourist destinations (up to the maximum number given in paragraph 4.2.1.4) may be included on a single flag sign (depending on the lengths of the legends), rather than provide a separate sign for each tourist destination in that direction.

4.2.2.4 In the interests of road safety, the names of tourist destinations should be as succinct as possible and shortened to a form acceptable to TransportNI before being used on traffic signs. The onus for providing an alternative destination name shall rest with the applicant.

4.2.2.5 Where new signing is to be added to existing tourist or general direction signing, it is important that new composite signs be provided rather than permitting the growth of a collection of individual signs. This latter would be undesirable in terms both of overall appearance and of clarity of information conveyed to the motorist.

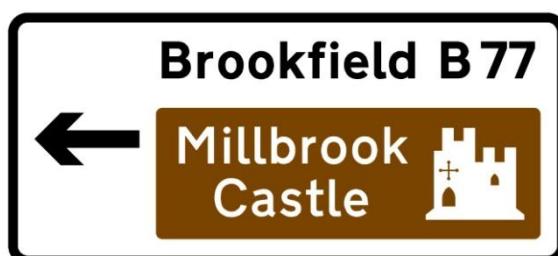
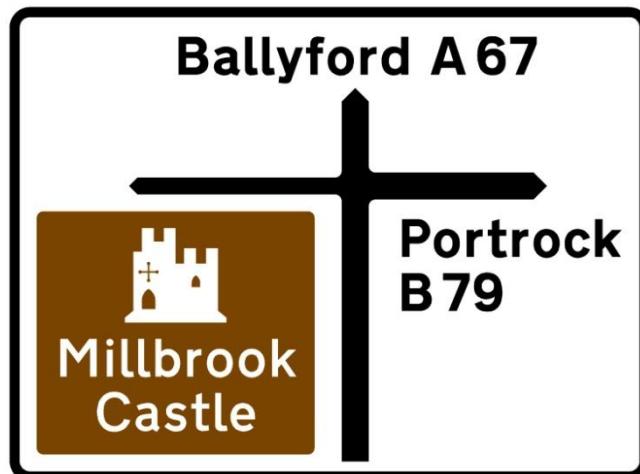
4.2.3 Extent of signing

4.2.3.1 Except where there are good traffic management or road safety reasons for signing from further away, signing should generally commence from the nearest A or B class road (see paragraph 4.2.7). In addition: -

- a) TransportNI Divisions should be satisfied that the route onto which traffic is directed is the most suitable link between the tourist attraction and the main road where the signing begins.
- b) Where clear guidance is given by other direction signing, tourist signs will not be necessary until the general area of the tourist attraction is reached.

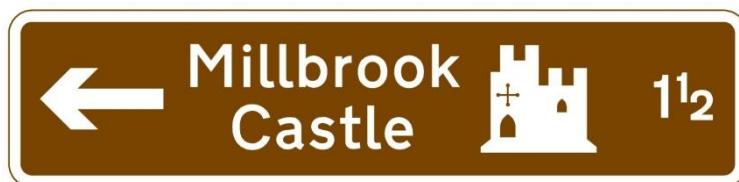
4.2.4 Advance direction signs (ADS)

4.2.4.1 On general direction signing, tourist facilities (with the exception of tourist information centres and points) should not form part of ADS unless there are good traffic management reasons for their inclusion. To avoid sign clutter, white-on-brown ADS should wherever possible, be combined with standard ADS by including a white-on-brown panel to either the map-type or stack-type white or green background sign. For example



With the exception of the specific case covered by paragraph 4.2.10, white-on-brown *panels* are not permitted on motorway ADS unless the signs are located on a motorway off-slip.

4.2.4.2 Where it is necessary to use a separately mounted white-on-brown ADS as shown below, particular care should be taken with its siting to ensure that it does not obscure or become obscured by other traffic signs, street furniture or grass / foliage.



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4.2.5 Direction signs

4.2.5.1 At a road junction, a white-on-brown flag type sign (as shown below) may be sited below other flag type signs for the appropriate arm of the junction. This may necessitate new posts to obtain the required mounting height either to clear the footway or avoid the sign being obscured by long grass in the summer (the time of year when the tourist signs will be needed most).



4.2.5.2 In the interests of tidy sign assemblies, all tourist destinations signed in a particular direction should be shown on a single flag sign. This is preferable to providing a separate sign for each tourist destination.

4.2.5.3 Paragraph 4.2.8 gives advice on the use of symbolic continuity signing along the route to a tourist destination.

4.2.6 Route confirmatory signs



Route confirmatory sign

4.2.6.1 On long routes to tourist attractions it can be useful to provide route confirmatory signs following junctions. With the exception of tourist information centres and tourist information boards, tourist facilities shall not form part of route confirmatory signs.

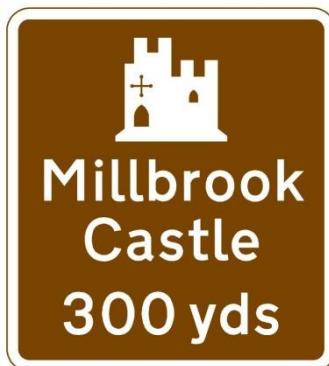
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4.2.7 Signs at or near the entrance to a tourist destination

4.2.7.1 At the entrance to a tourist destination it shall be the responsibility of the applicant to provide sufficient indication as to the nature of the destination to make its presence obvious. Such indication shall: -

- a) be within the boundary of the premises;
- b) comply with Planning Service requirements; and
- c) be in place before white-on-brown tourist signing is provided.

4.2.7.2 Direction signs should not normally be provided at the entrance to a tourist destination. Consequently, tourist destinations located on A or B class roads will not normally receive any tourist signing. However, a flag type direction sign may be provided at or opposite the entrance to a tourist destination where there is insufficient forward sight distance to give adequate indication of the destination ahead. In the interests of road safety, it may also be appropriate on high-speed roads to erect an advance direction sign as shown in paragraph 4.2.4.1 or as shown below.



4.2.7.3 A flag type direction sign may also be provided where the frontage of a destination is insufficient to allow the operator to erect adequate indication of the attraction within the frontage, eg. a destination reached via a narrow laneway not owned by the operator or where land adjacent to the laneway is not owned by the operator.

4.2.8 Alternative (or symbolic) signing method

4.2.8.1 The use of white-on-brown informative tourist signs with messages of the type 'For tourist attraction X follow place Y' can be used successfully and precludes the need for any continuity signing until close to the attraction. Display of the symbol on its own on subsequent continuity signs will serve to reduce sign size, cost and clutter without appreciable loss of direction signing effectiveness. The use of symbols in this way may also serve to discourage applications based on a desire for the name of the premise to be displayed essentially for advertising rather than traffic management purposes.



4.2.8.2 The above sign types should only be used when: -

- a) The sign includes only one tourist destination (or two, if their names are short (ie. they will fit onto one line each) and are reached along the same route).
- b) On the approach to a junction from one direction: -
 - i. no more than one of the signs shown above is used; and
 - ii. the signs are not used in conjunction with the route confirmatory sign shown in paragraph 4.2.6

In addition, the symbol, placed on a brown panel, may be added to a map type advance direction sign. The use of the above signs can facilitate a reduction in sign overload at heavily signed junctions.

4.2.8.3 Where multiple tourist destinations are signed along a particular route and individual tourist destinations are reached by turning off the main road, signing can be simplified by only using symbols for ahead destinations on junctions along the route, but giving worded descriptions as well for the tourist destination on the side road. For example: -



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4.2.8.4 The first sign encountered along a route should, however, include the full list of worded legends, but the words 'For tourist attraction X follow place Y' may be omitted from the sign to simplify the design even though only the symbols are used for ahead destinations on subsequent signs.

4.2.8.5 Where space on a sign is limited, the combination of a reduced legend plus a symbol may be appropriate, eg. 'Millbrook Castle' could be shown as 'Millbrook' plus the castle symbol.

4.2.9 Pedestrian signing

4.2.9.1 All pedestrian signs to tourist attractions shall include a walking figure symbol as shown in TSR or otherwise authorised for use in Northern Ireland. An example of a standard pedestrian sign is shown below. An attraction symbol may also be included. Normally, only flag type signs are necessary for pedestrian signing but there may be situations where more elaborate pedestrian signing schemes involving stack type signs will be required.



Pedestrian sign to a tourist information board



Pedestrian sign to a tourist attraction

4.2.9.2 Many tourist attractions in town centres do not have adequate adjacent parking provision. In such cases, vehicles should be signed to public car parks in the first instance, with onward signing being by way of pedestrian tourist signs. This policy may necessitate the erection of an explanatory sign to this effect at town boundaries. Such signs should be in conventional white-on-blue pedestrian signing except where the car park is specifically associated with an attraction, in which case they should be white-on-brown as shown below: -



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4.2.10 Motorway gantry signing

4.2.10.1 The following policy shall apply to the use of white-on-brown panels on motorway gantry signs:

- a) White-on-brown panels on motorway gantry signs shall be restricted to the signing of strategic tourist signing packages, including the signing of strategic tourist trails. These will be few in number and shall be agreed individually between TNIHQ and NITB.
- b) Written requests for site-specific approval for the erection of new tourist panels on motorway gantry signs should be made to the Director of Engineering through the Divisional Manager.
- c) White-on-brown panels on motorway gantry signs shall only be considered when the normal visitor number and distance criteria for motorway signing (see paragraph 2.4.1.1) have been met.
- d) As stated in Local Transport Note 1/94 published by The Stationery Office, once a gantry mounted advance direction sign has been used on the approach to a motorway junction, subsequent verge mounted advance direction signs shall not be used for that junction.
- e) Logos or symbols shall not be incorporated on tourist panels on motorway gantry signs.

4.2.10.2 Situations may arise where existing gantry signs are fully utilised with general, non-tourist destinations. The layout of the motorway junction may place constraints on the way that available space can be used. Also, gantries are normally designed for a 3.3m high sign envelope and this places a restriction on the number of lines of legend that can be displayed. Situations may arise, therefore, where it will not be possible to accommodate tourist destination panels on gantry signs. In such cases, departure from normal good practice of not mixing verge-mounted signs with gantry signs will not be permitted and the request for tourist route signing will be refused.

4.2.10.3 White-on-brown panels shall not be permitted on verge mounted motorway signs.

4.2.11 Signing of low bridges on routes to tourist attractions

4.2.11.1 Use is sometimes made of double deck buses for excursions to tourist attractions. To reduce the risk of bridge strikes, therefore, attention shall be paid to the signing of low bridges and to route selection in tourist areas.

4.2.12 Use of symbols

4.2.12.1 Symbols provide a convenient means of conveying to tourists the generic nature of tourist destinations. While they can be of benefit to the premise operator as well as to the motorist, the prime objective of symbols is not that of marketing individual attractions or facilities. Accordingly, while tourist signs containing

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destination-specific symbols may be authorised in individual cases, the presumption shall be that generic symbols will serve the direction signing needs of most tourist destinations.

4.2.12.2 Up to four symbols shall be allowed for each attraction. Where, for example, a forest park also has a number of features such as waterfalls, outdoor pursuits, mountain bike trails, up to a maximum of four may be depicted on the sign as well as the name of the forest. The operator should decide which will go onto the sign, but should be advised that the addition of each will increase the size of the sign and consequently increase its cost. Service symbols such 'knife and fork' or 'cup' shall only be used in the limited circumstances outlined in paragraph 2.3.19 and the numbers used must be accommodated within the maximum allowable of four symbols.

4.2.12.3 Where a suitable symbol is included in Schedule 14 of TSR, it shall be used in preference to specially designed alternatives. Where no suitable symbol exists, either: -

- a) the symbol should be omitted; or
- b) application should be made to TNIHQ to have a sign containing the new symbol considered for authorisation. All applications should be accompanied by an example of the proposed symbol on a grid approximately 14 units by 14 units in JPEG format, together with an explanation as to why the need cannot be met by using an existing symbol.

4.2.12.4 Where a symbol for a particular type of destination has already been prescribed or authorised, the same design shall be used at other similar destinations unless it is specifically associated with one particular tourist attraction. Where possible, the design of new symbols should be compatible with those used in maps and guidebooks and should not be limited to use at a specific site or attraction.

4.2.12.5 Accommodation, camping and caravan parks, picnic sites and lay-bys may be signed using symbols only, without worded legends.

4.2.13 Colour of symbol

4.2.13.1 Symbols shall be coloured white (except where TNIHQ approves otherwise) and applied directly to the brown background of the sign.

4.2.13.2 The tourist information **i** symbol is always enclosed in a white box border when used on brown background signs, it may also be incorporated into pedestrian and cycle route signs in addition to the walking figure and / or cycle symbol.

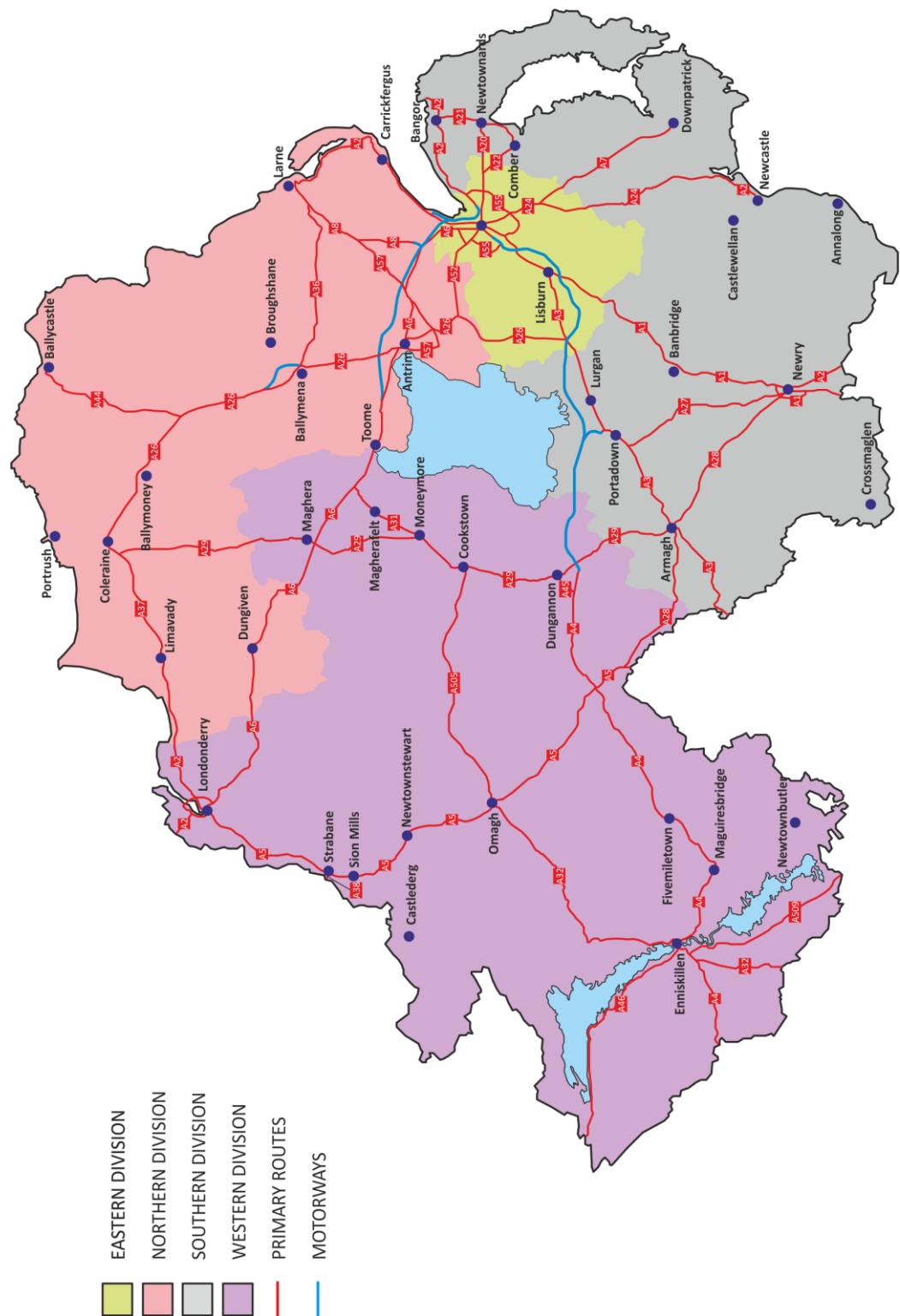
4.2.14 Location of symbols

4.2.14.1 Sign design shall be in accordance with the design rules prevailing at the time. Unless these rules indicate otherwise, symbols should be positioned as follows: -

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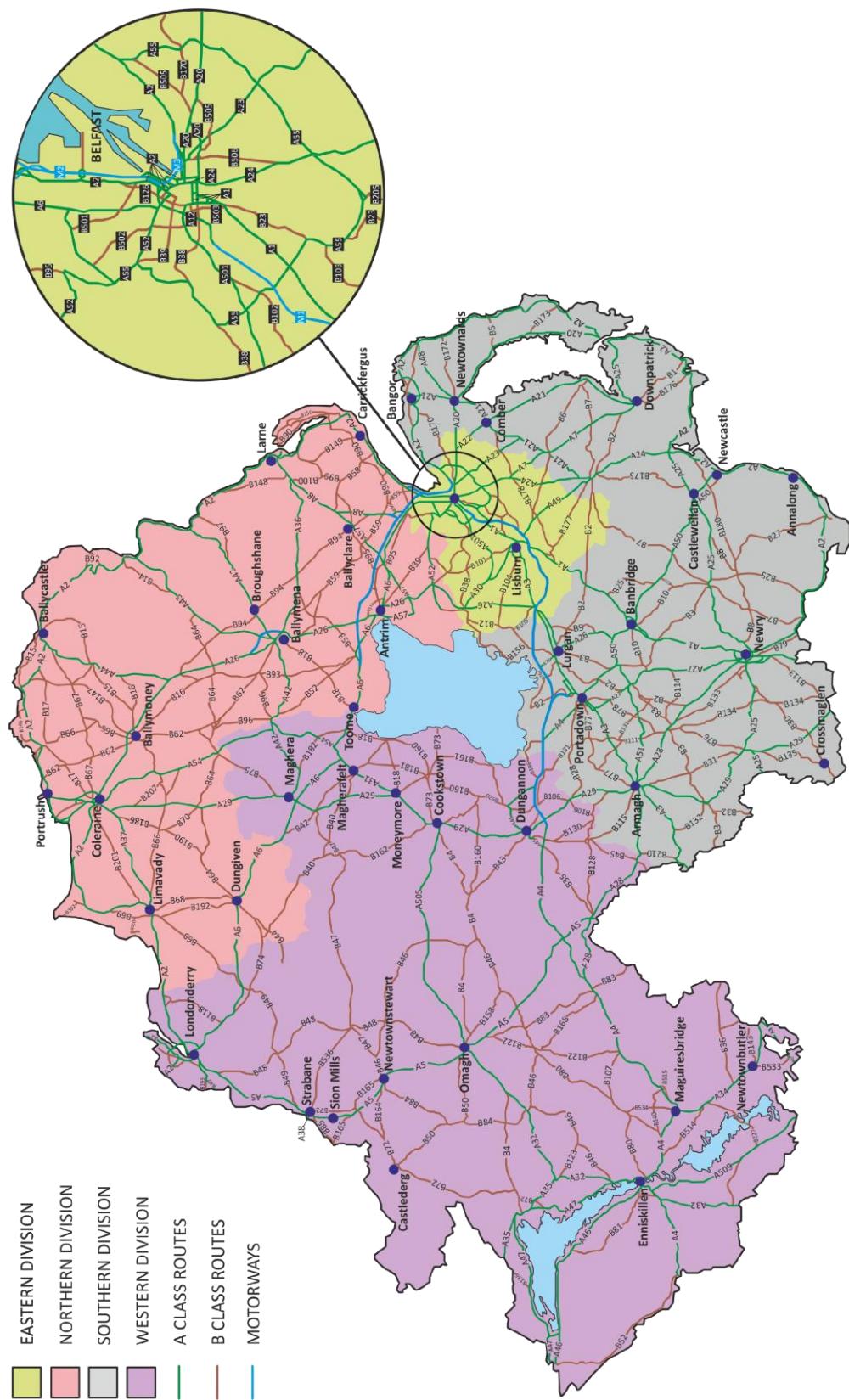
- a) tourist attraction-type symbols should be positioned at the opposite end of the sign from the arrow or chevron;
- b) on pedestrian and / or cycle direction signs, the walking figure and / or cycle symbol shall appear furthest from the arrow or chevron; on pedestrian and / or cycle direction signs, the walking figure and / or cycle symbol shall appear furthest from the arrow or chevron.
- c) where symbols alone are used to indicate a number of attractions, they shall appear in the order in which the attractions or relevant road junctions are reached. Where symbols alone are used on a sign, the number of symbols should not exceed four; and
- d) symbols which have a directional element (eg. steam railway, zoo) shall face the same general direction (horizontally left or right) as any arrow or chevron on the sign. When the arrow points straight ahead the symbol shall face left.

4.3 Appendix 3 - Northern Ireland primary route network



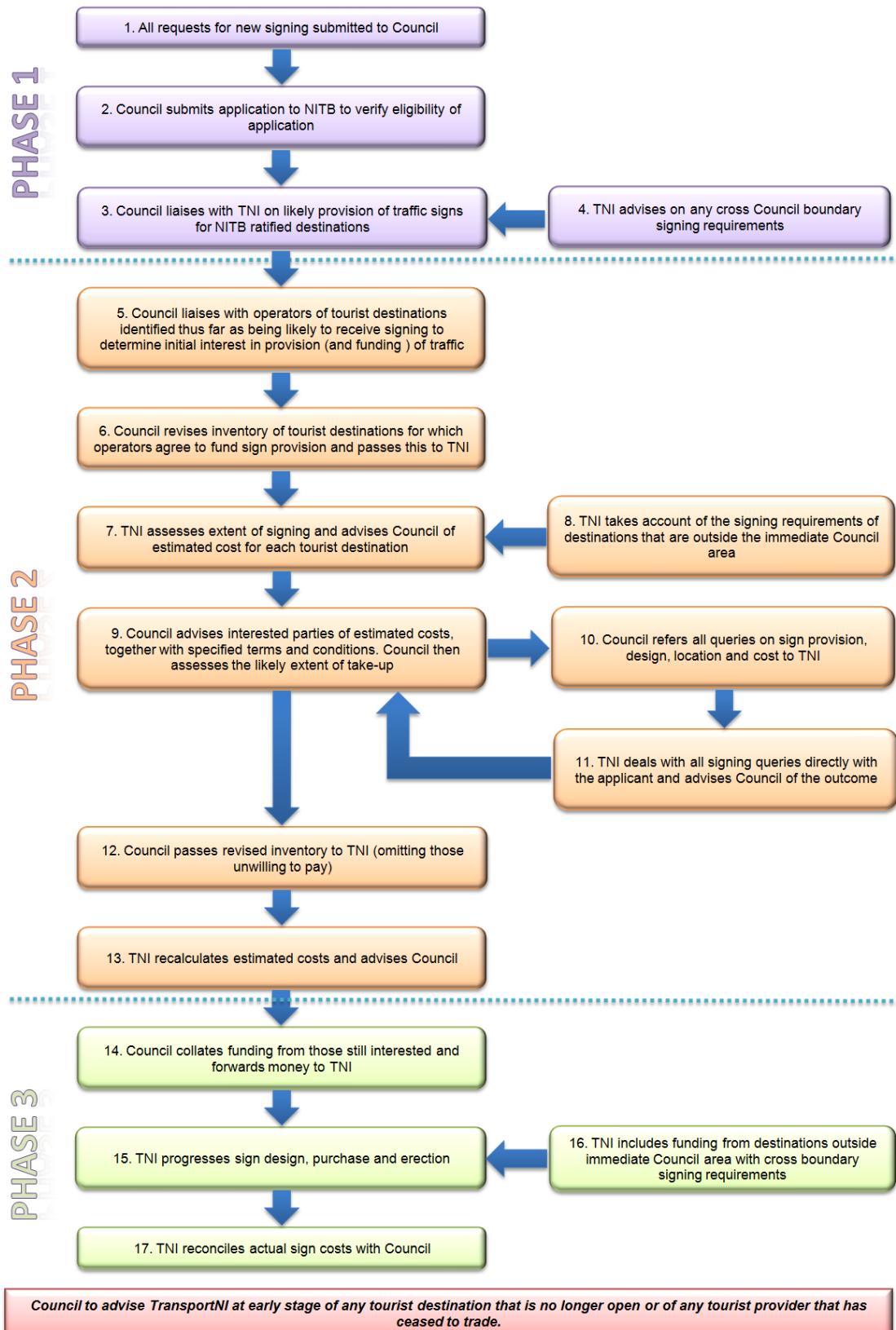
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4.4 Appendix 4 - Northern Ireland A & B class road network



4.5 Appendix 5 - Tourist signing application process

NOTE: Reference should be made to the accompanying explanatory notes.



Explanatory Notes on activities within the Tourist Signing Plan Flowchart

Phase 1

1 All requests for new signing submitted to Council:

Local Councils have a responsibility to develop tourism within their areas. As part of this function, it is important that they take the lead in developing with TransportNI and NITB an integrated strategy for the signing of tourist destinations in accordance with the standards set out in this policy. Accordingly all applications must be made through the local Council.

The local Council can maintain an accurate picture of the potential tourism development and will be best placed to use this information in the compilation of items for inclusion on tourist information boards, particularly with regard to those requests that are not suitable for traffic signing.

2 Council submits application to NITB to assess eligibility as a tourist destination:

NITB shall confirm in writing the eligibility or not of all applications.

3 Council liaises with TNI on likely provision of traffic signs for NITB ratified destinations:

Discussions at an early stage between the local Council and TransportNI will help to develop an understanding by the local Council of those destinations likely to be eligible to receive signing. This will reduce the extent of wasted effort, avoid raising unrealistic expectations regarding the provision of signing and ensure that operators of tourist destinations are approached with a realistic indication of what may be achieved.

4 TransportNI advises on any cross Council boundary signing requirements:

TransportNI will advise on the potential for signing within the local Council's area generated by destinations located outside the area. Whilst these signs will be funded by the destinations concerned, their presence may have an impact on sign design and, in particular, the number of destinations that can be accommodated on signing at any given location.

Phase 2

In phases 2 and 3 of the flowchart, an agent acting on behalf of the local Council may fulfil the role of the Council, provided both NITB and TransportNI have approved the agent.

6 Council liaises with operator of tourist destination identified thus far as being likely to receive signing to determine initial interest in provision (and funding) of traffic signing within agreed policy:

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The local Council should seek to determine from destination operator identified as being likely to receive signing their interest (in principle) in paying for the signs. It will not be possible at this stage to provide an estimate of sign cost other than in very broad outline.

7 Council advises TransportNI that the operator has agreed to fund sign provision:

At this stage, agreement to pay for signs will still be in principle only as detailed estimates cannot be developed until the overall extent of operator agreement is known.

8 TransportNI assesses extent of signing and advises Council of estimated cost for each tourist destination:

TransportNI will assess the extent of signing provision permitted, design the signing required and provide the local Council with a detailed estimate of costs (taking into consideration pro rata sharing of cost where more than one destination is shown on signs) and the nature / extent of proposed sign provision for each destination within the revised inventory.

9 TransportNI takes account of the signing requirements of destinations that are outside the immediate Council area:

TransportNI will liaise with those involved with tourist signing inventories in neighbouring local Council areas to determine the extent of signing requirements across local Council areas.

10 Council advises interested parties of estimated costs, together with specified terms and conditions. Council then assesses the likely extent of take-up:

The local Council shall forward these cost estimates to the interested parties in the form of a letter of offer setting out the following terms and conditions: -

- (a) the signs shall become the property of the Department;
- (b) the operator must accept that the signs will be removed if the attraction fails to meet the criteria set out in this policy or if the signs are damaged and become a road safety hazard;
- (c) TransportNI will carry out normal sign maintenance, however, the operator is responsible for the cost of replacing signs if they become damaged or require renewal due to normal wear and tear;
- (d) if TransportNI can recover the cost of damage from a third party, the signs will be replaced at no cost to the operator. Otherwise the operator will be required to meet the cost of replacement signs, if required;
- (e) where estimates are given, actual costs, whether more or less, will be charged;
- (f) full payment is required in advance;

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- (g) the signs will be white-on-brown tourist direction signs
- (h) any illegal signing at or to the destination must be removed by the operator before authorised tourist direction signs will be provided; and
- (i) subsequent erection of illegal signs will result in the removal of authorised tourist direction signs.

The local Council should then prepare a revised inventory of those parties willing to provide funding on the basis of the estimates provided.

11 Council refers all queries on sign provision, design, location and cost to TransportNI:

In discussions with the operators of tourist attractions and facilities, the local Council should clarify its role as being that of tourism promoter and that it will not be responsible for decisions on the provision, extent and design of signs or their location. Responsibility for these matters rests with TransportNI and queries or complaints regarding them should be forwarded to TransportNI, who will deal directly with the party lodging the query.

12 TransportNI deals with all signing queries directly with applicant and advises the Council of the outcome:

On resolution of a query, TransportNI will advise the local Council of the outcome so that the tourist signing inventory may be updated accordingly.

13 Council passes revised inventory to TransportNI (omitting those unwilling to pay):

The local Council should forward a revised inventory to TransportNI (or otherwise confirm that the former inventory of destinations remains unchanged) as a reduced uptake may affect the sign estimates previously given.

14 TransportNI recalculates estimated costs and advises Council:

TransportNI will recalculate the costs of sign provision for each operator and forward this to the local Council together with details of any revision to sign design. Items 10 to 14 above may constitute an iterative process until all applicants are content with the estimates given.

Phase 3

15 Council collates funding from those still interested and forwards money to TransportNI:

The local Council should assemble funding from those parties still interested in the provision of signing and forward the total amount to TransportNI.

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16 TransportNI includes funding from destinations outside immediate Council area with cross boundary signing requirements:

TransportNI will liaise with those involved with tourist signing inventories in neighbouring local Council areas to ensure the timely delivery of their funding for cross Council area signing.

17 TransportNI progresses sign design, purchase and erection:

TransportNI will arrange manufacture and erection of signs for which funding has been provided. Every attempt will be made to have this process completed in advance of the incoming tourist season.

18 TransportNI reconciles actual sign costs with Council:

When actual sign costs are known, TransportNI will reconcile with the local Council any overpayment (or underpayment) made at item 15 above. Local Councils will similarly reconcile costs with the applicants.

Any or all of the above items may be varied or omitted for individual tourist signing plans with the agreement of TransportNI, NITB and the local Council for the area concerned. Where no such agreement is reached, the items above should be implemented.

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Policy & Procedure Guide: RSPPG_E029

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Version	Amendments
2	1.2 Definitions – updated 1.3 Background – roles and responsibilities clarified 2.1 Core principles – updates 2.2 Criteria – updated 2.3 General Principles – clarified and approach to symbols amended 2.4 Extent of signing – clarified and commentary enhanced 2.5 Application process – simplified 2.6 Tourist signing inventory – new replacing annual tourist signing plan 4.1.3 By-passed communities – expanded 4.1.9 Theatres/arts centres – new 4.1.10 Gardens – new 4.1.12 Activity tourism centres – new 4.1.17 – 21 Accommodation – updated 4.1.23 Aires de Service – new 4.1.25 Motor-home Hire – new Appendix 5 Application Process – updated/simplified