**TOURIST SIGNING IN SUFFOLK**

**PRACTICE AND GUIDANCE NOTES**

**A stone castle next to a brick building

Description generated with very high confidenceA large stone building

Description generated with very high confidenceAn old stone building

Description generated with very high confidence A picture containing grass, outdoor, tree, mountain

Description generated with very high confidenceA close up of a flag

Description generated with very high confidenceA castle on top of a grass covered field

Description generated with very high confidenceA group of people standing next to a body of water

Description generated with high confidenceA castle on top of a grass covered field

Description generated with high confidenceA castle on a field

Description generated with high confidence**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **INDEX** |  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  | **PAGE** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** |  |  | **3** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **INTRODUCTION** |  |  | **4** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
| **SECTION 1** | |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **INDIVIDUAL RETAIL OUTLETS, GARDEN CENTRES, SHOPPING CENTRES, RETAIL PARKS AND EXHIBITION / CONFERENCE CENTRES** |  |  | **5** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **URBAN / MAIN TOURIST AREAS** |  |  | **6** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **BY-PASSED COMMUNITY AND GENERAL FACILITY SIGNS** |  |  | **6** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **COLLECTIVE SIGNING OF TOURIST ATTRACTIONS** |  |  | **7** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES (TIC) OR TOURIST INFORMATION POINTS (TIP)** |  |  | **7** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES** |  |  | **8** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **TOURIST INFORMATION POINTS** |  |  | **8** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **TOURIST ATTRACTIONS** |  |  | **8** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **TOURIST FACILITIES** |  |  | **10** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES** |  |  | **15** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **TOWN OR BOUNDARY SIGNS** |  |  | **17** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **PEDESTRIAN SIGNING** |  |  | **17** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **TOURIST ROUTES AND AREAS** |  |  | **17** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **NOTES** |  |  | **18** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
| **SECTION 2** |  |  |  |  | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **SIGNING EXTENT AND CONTINUITY** |  |  | **19** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **EXCESS SIGN DEMAND** |  |  | **19** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **ATTRACTIONS OPEN PART TIME** |  |  | **19** | |
|  |  |  |  |  | |
|  | **DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS** |  |  | **19** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **MAINTENANCE OF TOURIST SIGNING** |  |  | **20** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **REMOVAL OF TOURIST SIGNING** |  |  | **21** |

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Suffolk County Council (SCC), as the Local Highway Authority (LHA) for Suffolk, is responsible for signing and maintenance of all public maintained roads within the county of Suffolk, except for the A11, A12 (south of Ipswich), A14 and A47 (between the Bascule Bridge in Lowestoft north to the county boundary) which are trunk roads and fall under the jurisdiction of Highways England, formerly the Highways Agency.

We have to balance the needs of providing appropriate information to road users visiting the area, against the detrimental effects that having too many signs can have, particularly in our more sensitive areas. This may mean that even though you may meet the eligibility criteria for signing, your application for signing may be refused.

Typical tourist destinations include Tourist Information Centres, theme parks, historic buildings, museums, zoos, exhibition gardens, nature reserves, areas of special interest etc.

Typical tourist facilities include hotels, guesthouses, bed & breakfast establishments, public houses, restaurants, holiday parks, touring and camping parks, picnic areas, country parks, beaches etc.

As a rule, destinations that are easily located on a main road or in a settlement are not eligible for tourism signing.

If you wish to apply for tourism sign(s), please complete the formal application form along with payment of a £180 non-refundable application fee. (See Note 3 on page 18)

The application will then be considered against the criteria contained within these guidelines and the locations requested for signing. If the application is successful a design and construction estimate will be provided, and the applicant will be required to pay the full cost of this estimate to Suffolk County Council before any design work commences. The design and construction estimate will vary for each application depending on the number and type of signing being requested. The design and construction estimate will also include a sum to cover the costs of future sign removal should the destination close or no longer meets the criteria for signing the destination.

Once the signs are erected, the applicant or the owner of the destination / facility will be responsible for the cost of any maintenance or repairs to the signs, or the replacement of the signs if beyond repair. Any necessary works associated with the maintenance, repair or replacement of the signs shall be undertaken by Suffolk Highways unless the applicant or the owner is able to find an accredited contractor to undertake the works and has written authorisation from Suffolk Highways to undertake the works.

If you believe your establishment qualifies for tourist signing please read these guidance notes carefully before making an application.

If you believe your establishment does not qualify for tourist signing after reading these guidelines but you still want to be considered for normal directional signing, please complete the normal directional signing application form. The same **£**180 non-refundable application fee applies to these applications as well.

**INTRODUCTION**

Suffolk County Council (SCC) supports and, as the LHA, is responsible for approving tourist signing on the public maintained roads in Suffolk.

Tourist signs, commonly referred to as ‘brown signs’ or ‘information signs’, are part of the family of highway directional signs. The Department for Transport controls the design and implementation of all traffic signs through the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD 2016 and subsequent updates).

The TSRGD 2016 defines a tourist destination as:

(a) a Tourist Information Centre or Point;

(b) a permanently established attraction or facility (other than a leisure facility) which:

(i) attracts or is used by visitors to an area;

(ii) is open to the public without prior booking during its normal opening hours; and

(iii) is recognised as a tourist attraction or facility by Visit England

(c) a village, town or city that is of particular interest to tourists; or

(d) a route that is of interest to tourists.

The purpose of tourist signing is to help guide visitors from outside the local area to a tourist destination along the most appropriate route at the latter stages of their journey. These signs should supplement rather than duplicate information already provided on existing directional signs.

In general, tourist signing will not be approved where:

(a) the nearest town to the postal address is already signed on normal directional signing;

(b) the village included on the postal address is already signed on normal signing from the nearest town.

(c) the existing direction signing directs traffic along the most appropriate route.

In most situations it is not expected that tourist signing will be provided from a distance greater than 3 miles from its associated destination. An exception to this could be on traffic management or safety grounds. Including situations where:

(a) existing direction signing does not direct along the most appropriate routes - in such cases consideration should be given to providing tourist signing from the point when normal direction signing, or satellite navigation directions become misleading or no longer appropriate;

(b) the tourist destination attracts a high volume of traffic and therefore justifies ‘confirmation’ signing to encourage traffic to follow a preferred route.

Road users are likely to associate tourist signing as being an official approval by the LHA or Visit England of the standards of the tourist destination that is indicated on the sign. Membership of an approved quality assurance scheme is therefore considered an important part of the eligibility criteria.

All requests for signing on trunk roads shall be assessed against the guidelines set down by Highways England. Where signing is being requested on a trunk road or on roads under the control of a neighboring highway authority, the applicant will be required to complete the appropriate application forms from Highways England or the neighboring highway authority in addition to the application form for signing on county roads in Suffolk.

**SECTION 1**

**INDIVIDUAL RETAIL OUTLETS, GARDEN CENTRES, SHOPPING CENTRES, RETAIL PARKS AND EXHIBITION / CONFERENCE CENTRES**

**Individual Retail Outlets** will not be considered for signing

**Garden Centres** do not qualify for tourist signing unless there is a permanently established exhibition that is attached to, or forms part of the garden centre. The exhibition should be of regional importance (national importance for trunk road signing) in horticultural or arboricultural terms and satisfy the guidelines given in notes 1 & 2 (see page 17). If the exhibition meets the above criteria, then only that will be signed and not the garden centre.

**Shopping Centres and Retail Parks** do not qualify for tourist signing but normal local directional signing could be provided at the applicant’s expense if a shopping centre is located away from a town or village centre. The provision of signing will be subject to the demand for other local signing within the area. Adequate off-street parking should be available. Pedestrian signing could also be provided where this differs from the vehicular route. Please complete the application form for normal directional signing instead.

**Exhibition / Conference Centres** do not quality for tourist signing but normal directional signing could be considered. Evidence should be given by applicants to show that existing publicity material provides adequate directional information to the nearest town or village. The publicity should, where appropriate, include information on public transport services and routes available for cyclists. Please complete the application form for normal directional sign instead.

The facility shall have adequate parking or there shall be an agreement with the owner of a nearby off-street car park for the use of that facility.

The applicant shall provide evidence that the facility is of good quality, well maintained and adhere to the accessibility requirements for their use (as recommended in The Equality Act 2010 and subsequent amendments).

The applicant shall provide details of visitor numbers. Whilst no criteria are set down for signing on county roads, visitor numbers will be a consideration for areas where there is likely to be a high demand for signing and will be required as evidence where additional signing is requested on traffic management or safety grounds. Visitor criteria applies to tourist signing on trunk roads.

The applicant shall provide a map showing the location of the establishment, the preferred vehicular route to the establishment and locations of where signing is being requested. Details of the existing signing present at these proposed signing locations should be provided by means of photographs.

**URBAN / MAIN TOURIST AREAS**

**In urban areas, tourist signing will normally only be considered as part of a general signing scheme (For details see Collective Signing of Tourist Attractions)**

The exception to a general signing scheme will be where an individual tourist attraction generates a large volume of traffic and provides adequate off-street parking facilities, or where a tourist attraction is isolated from the main urban central area. In such cases individual signing to that attraction will be considered.

Where a general signing scheme directs traffic to a car park with an information point, adequate tourist information (approved by the local District Council and/or Visit England) will be expected to be provided within the designated car park or will be part of the signing scheme. This information could be backed up with pedestrian type tourist directional signing.

**BY-PASSED COMMUNITY AND GENERAL FACILITY SIGNS**

By-passed community signs are associated with a destination that provides a break during a journey but would not be considered the final destination sought by a road user. The community requesting by-passed community signing will be expected to provide information on local tourist attractions as well as providing information on the normal facilities associated with local facilities.

By-passed community signs will not be considered:

(a) for destinations that are signed as primary destinations;

(b) to duplicate information given on other signs; or

(c) for destinations that have been signed as forward destinations at previous junctions.

Communities will be assessed against the following criteria before any agreement for new by-passed community signing is given:

(a) The location should be a small town or a village with a population of less than 10,000. (Larger communities would be expected to have a full range of facilities and would have been adequately signed together with the larger attractions that are associated with them. (see Collective Signing to Tourist Attractions);

(b) The community must provide information by means of a tourist information centre and/or tourist information point. The “i” symbol should therefore always be present together with approved symbols from Schedule 12 Parts 14, 15 and 16 of TSRGD 2016 (or other approved symbols).

By-passed community signs will not be used where it is appropriate to use “local facilities” signs (i.e. where there is no tourist information centre or tourist information point).

**COLLECTIVE SIGNING OF TOURIST ATTRACTIONS**

On county roads signing to diagram 2215 in Schedule 12, Part 28, Item 8 of TSRGD 2016 may be used to provide information about qualifying tourist attractions in a town, village or geographical area that is reached from the next junction ahead.

Where there are several qualifying tourist attractions in (or close to) a town, village or geographical area, the existing primary or non-primary signing should be sufficient to direct road users to their intended destination.

To prevent duplication, signing to diagram 2215 should **NOT** normally be used where:

1. A town is already signed as a forward destination at previous junctions; or
2. A town is already signed with standard advance and directional signing

The exception may be when a town is signed off a major route at more than one junction and the tourist destinations are reached from one of those signed junctions.

Each destination signed as a tourist destination on signing to diagram 2215 must individually qualify for tourist signing.

The maximum number of tourist destinations must not exceed five and, in the case of a sign being placed on a motorway or high-speed trunk road, must not exceed three.

When demand exceeds the maximum number of permitted destinations, Visit England will initially be asked to recommend priorities for signing.

**TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES (TIC) OR TOURIST INFORMATION POINTS (TIP)**

A Tourist Information Centre (TIC) is a staffed information service centre recognized and supported by Visit England and/or the local District Council.

A Tourist Information Point (TIP) is an unstaffed information display board approved by Visit Britain and/or Visit England and/or the local District Council.

TICs can be used effectively to direct visitors to whole range of regional tourist destinations. This has potential benefits in terms of traffic management and safety, and in terms of economical regional development of tourism within an area.

**TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES (TIC)**

Signing to TICs will normally be provided where the TIC provides adequate off-street parking for its visitors. Where off-street parking is not available then signing will be considered to the nearest public car park where pedestrian signing will be required from that car park to the TIC

The initial signing to a TIC will include the “i” symbol and the wording “tourist information centre”. Further signing must include the “i” symbol but the wording “tourist information centre” is optional if visitors are directed to follow the “i” symbol.

**TOURIST INFORMATION POINTS (TIP)**

Signing to TIPs is helpful when visitors are seeking information outside the hours when a TIC is normally open. TIP signing will conform to either diagram 857A (Schedule 11, Part 2, Item 53 of TSRGD 2016) or diagram 857B (Schedule 11, Part 2, Item 54 of TSRGD 2016). The content of the information will need to be agreed with Visit England.

TIPs will be signed using directional signing with the “P” parking symbol and the “i” symbol in combination and will be used to direct visitors to the appropriate car parks where the TIP is located. The owners of the car park must agree to the signing and the placement of information boards within the car park.

**TOURIST ATTRACTIONS**

These include:

* **Castle of historical interest**
* **Historic house**
* **English Heritage sites**
* **National Trust sites**
* **Flower garden or Horticultural exhibition**
* **Museum or Art gallery**
* **Church or Cathedral of historical or architectural interest**
* **Wildlife park**
* **Windmill of historical or architectural interest**
* **Zoo or Bird garden**
* **Pleasure or Theme Park**
* **Nature Reserve**
* **Bird of Prey centre**
* **RSPB bird reserve**
* **Pottery, Craft centre or Forge**
* **Vineyard**
* **Centre approved by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust**
* **Tower or Folly of historic or architectural interest**
* **Historic building**
* **Brass rubbing centre**
* **Lighthouse open to the public**
* **Pier**
* **National nature reserve**

Additional symbols that have been authorised for use in Suffolk

* **Suffolk Wildlife Centre**
* **Steam Museum (Leiston Longshop Museum only)**

To qualify for signing, a tourist attraction will:

1. be open to the public for a minimum of 150 days per year (see also note 1 on page 18);
2. have membership of, and supply evidence that it is accredited to the appropriate quality scheme operated by Visit England or a similar approved quality scheme recognised by Visit England.
3. have adequate parking or has an agreed alternative arrangement with the owners of a nearby off-street parking facility (where adequate parking is not available applicant should consider pedestrian signing from the nearest public car park).

The applicant will also need to provide evidence that the attraction:

1. has adequate and clear publicity material (e.g. leaflets that include clear and accurate maps or directions available at tourist information centres, web sites or tourist guide books). Publicity should, where appropriate, include information on public transport services and routes available for cyclists.
2. provides a post code for visitors to input into satellite navigation systems that will provide directions to the attraction’s car park or where adequate parking is not available to a nearby off-street car park. This will be checked as part of the assessment process to ensure the directions take visitors along the most appropriate route to the attraction.
3. has available, basic visitor requirements that are or would be expected for such an attraction (i.e. toilets which should be suitable for disabled visitors etc.)
4. Is of good quality, well maintained and adheres to the accessibility requirements for its use (as recommended in The Equality Act 2010 and any amendments).

The applicant shall provide details of visitor numbers. Whilst there are no visitor number criteria set down for signing on county roads within Suffolk, visitor numbers will be a consideration for areas where there is a likely to be a high demand for signing and will be required as evidence where additional signing is requested on traffic management or safety grounds. **There are visitor criteria for signing on trunk roads.**

The applicant shall provide a map showing the location of the establishment, the preferred vehicular route to the establishment and locations of where signing is being requested. Details of the existing signing present at these proposed signing locations should be provided by means of photographs.

Eligibility for signing does not guarantee that signing will be approved. Decisions will be subject to local circumstances such as existing signing demands, environmental impact and the general need on traffic management and safety grounds (see also note 2 on page 18).

The provision of tourist signing will be dependent on the destination removing advertisement or non-prescribed signing giving directional information from the highway or private land adjacent to the highway.

**TOURIST FACILITIES**

These include:

* **Picnic areas**
* **Youth Hostels**
* **Camping and Caravan sites**
* **Holiday parks**
* **Woodland recreation areas and walks**
* **Viewpoint**
* **Restaurants / Hotels / Guesthouses**
* **Country parks**
* **Boat hire**
* **Cycle hire**

**Picnic areas, Country Parks and Woodland Recreation areas**

Evidence should be provided that the picnic site or country park and woodland recreation area is included within road atlases or satellite navigation systems and is promoted as a tourist facility. Visitors will be expected to use normal directional signing to reach the nearest town or signed village.

Tourist signing will only be considered at the entrance and locally within the village or town it is associated with. Signing outside the village or town will only be considered on traffic management grounds or for safety reasons. Therefore, an indication of visitor numbers to the location will be required if figures are available.

**Youth Hostels**

Requests received from the YHA for signing to its hostels will be considered locally where it is necessary to supplement the information provided by normal directional signing.

The applicant should provide evidence that the youth hostel:

1. has adequate and clear publicity material (e.g. leaflets that include clear and accurate maps or directions available at tourist information centres, web sites or tourist guide books). Publicity should, where appropriate, include information on public transport services and routes available for cyclists.
2. has adequate parking or has an agreed alternative arrangement with the owners of a nearby off-street parking facility (where adequate parking is not available applicant should consider pedestrian signing from the nearest public car park).
3. provides a post code for visitors to input into satellite navigation systems that will provide directions to the attraction’s car park or where adequate parking is not available to a nearby off-street car park. This will be checked as part of the assessment process to ensure the directions take visitors along the most appropriate route to the attraction.
4. Is of good quality, well maintained and adheres to the accessibility requirements for its use (as recommended in The Equality Act 2010 and subsequent amendments).

The applicant shall provide details of visitor numbers. Whilst there are no visitor number criteria set down for signing on county roads within Suffolk, visitor numbers will be a consideration for areas where there is a likely to be a high demand for signing and will be required as evidence where additional signing is requested on traffic management or safety grounds. **There are visitor criteria for signing on trunk roads.**

The applicant shall provide a map showing the location of the establishment, the preferred vehicular route to the establishment and locations of where signing is being requested. Details of the existing signing present at these proposed signing locations should be provided by means of photographs.

**Camping and Caravan Sites and Holiday Parks**

Tourist signing to camping and caravan sites and holiday parks will be considered where it is necessary to supplement normal directional information. In most cases the tourist signing provided will be within the town or village associated with the postal address of the site. (It is unlikely that there will be a need for signing beyond a radius of 3 miles from the site).

In exceptional cases additional signing may be considered necessary on traffic management or safety needs. The applicant would be expected to provide evidence of “a traffic management need”.

To qualify for tourist signing:

A **camping and/or caravan site** shall:

1. be registered under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (as amended) and the Public Health Act 1936 (as amended) and be licenced by the local District Council;
2. have a minimum of 20 pitches available for casual overnight use and be accredited to the appropriate quality scheme operated by Visit England or a similar approved quality scheme recognised by Visit England.

A **holiday park** shall be accredited to the appropriate quality scheme operated by Visit England or a similar approved quality scheme recognised by Visit England.

The applicant should provide evidence that the site or park:

1. has adequate and clear publicity material (e.g. leaflets that include clear and accurate maps or directions available at tourist information centres, web sites or tourist guide books). Publicity should, where appropriate, include information on public transport services and routes available for cyclists.
2. Is of good quality, well maintained and adheres to the accessibility requirements for its use (as recommended in The Equality Act 2010 and subsequent amendments).
3. provides a post code for visitors to input into satellite navigation systems that will provide directions to the attraction’s car park or where adequate parking is not available to a nearby off-street car park. This will be checked as part of the assessment process to ensure the directions take visitors along the most appropriate route to the attraction.

The applicant shall provide details of visitor numbers. Whilst there are no visitor number criteria set down for signing on county roads within Suffolk, visitor numbers will be a consideration for areas where there is a likely to be a high demand for signing and will be required as evidence where additional signing is requested on traffic management or safety grounds. **There are visitor criteria for signing on trunk roads.**

The applicant shall provide a map showing the location of the establishment, the preferred vehicular route to the establishment and locations of where signing is being requested. Details of the existing signing present at these proposed signing locations should be provided by means of photographs.

**Viewpoints**

Only viewpoints that are included in atlases or satellite navigation systems and are shown on publicity material will be considered for signing. The viewpoint shall have adequate off-street parking or a lay-by provision available. Signing will normally only be provided immediately in advance of, and at the viewpoint itself.

**Restaurants and Public Houses**

Within towns, restaurants and public houses serving food will only be considered for tourist signing as part of a general signing scheme and will not be individually named. In rural areas, restaurants (and public houses serving food) will be considered for signing where the following conditions are met:

* food should normally be available for tourist/visitors without the need to pre-book
* in the case of a public house serving food, there shall be a separate facility available for family groups including children. Meals should be available during normal lunch and evening times.

The establishment will also:

1. be registered under the Public Health Act 1936 (as amended);
2. is accredited to the appropriate quality scheme operated by Visit England or a similar approved national quality scheme recognized by Visit England.
3. have adequate parking on site
4. have a minimum of 20 covers

Applicant should provide evidence that the establishment:

1. has adequate and clear publicity material (e.g. leaflets that include clear and accurate maps or directions available at tourist information centres, web sites or tourist guide books). A visitor will be expected to be aware of the approximate location of the restaurant or public house from advertisement material and will be expected to follow normal signing for the main part of their journey.
2. provides a post code for visitors to input into satellite navigation systems that will provide directions to the restaurant or public house. This will be checked as part of the assessment process to ensure the directions take visitors along the most appropriate route to the attraction.
3. Is of good quality, well maintained and adhere to the accessibility requirements for their establishment (as recommended in The Equality Act 2010 as amended).
4. Meets or exceeds the minimum covers set as a qualification for signing on a county road. Tourist signing to establishments providing food is not permitted on Trunk Roads.

The applicant shall provide a map showing the location of the establishment, the preferred vehicular route to the establishment and locations of where signing is being requested. Details of the existing signing present at these proposed signing locations should be provided by means of photographs.

In normal circumstances, tourist signing for restaurants and public houses that serve food will only be considered from the point when normal direction signing, or satellite navigation directions become misleading or are no longer appropriate to direct visitors along the most appropriate route to the establishment. The only exception will be a need on traffic management or safety grounds. Establishments located on Class A or B roads will not justify tourist signing unless there is a need on safety grounds.

**Hotels and Guest Houses**

Within towns, hotels and guest houses will only be considered for signing as part of a general tourist signing scheme. Except in very exceptional circumstances they will not be individually named but they could be included within general information available at TICs or TIPs.

In rural areas, hotels and guest houses will be considered for signing where the following conditions are met:

* accommodation should normally be available for tourist/visitors without the need to pre-book.
* is accredited to the appropriate quality scheme operated by Visit England or a similar approved national quality scheme recognized by Visit England and must show evidence of an up to date quality assessment.

The establishment shall have adequate parking or has an agreed alternative arrangement with the owners of a nearby off-street parking facility (where adequate parking is not available applicant should consider pedestrian signing from the nearest public car park).

Applicants should provide evidence that the establishment:

1. is promoted using adequate and clear publicity material aimed at tourists/visitors (e.g. leaflets that include clear and accurate maps or directions available at tourist information centres, web sites or tourist guide books). A visitor will be expected to be aware of the approximate location of the hotel or guest house from advertisement material and will be expected to follow normal signing for the main part of their journey.
2. provides a post code for visitors to input into satellite navigation systems that will provide directions to the hotel or guest house. This will be checked as part of the assessment process to ensure the directions take visitors along the most appropriate route to the attraction.
3. Is of good quality, well maintained and adhere to the accessibility requirements for their establishment (as recommended in The Equality Act 2010 as amended).

The applicant shall provide details of the total number of rooms available and the number of rooms available without a need for pre-booking. Whilst no criteria are set down for signing on county roads, this will be a consideration in areas where there is likely to be a high demand for signing. Signing on trunk roads is not permitted.

The applicant shall provide a map showing the location of the establishment, the preferred vehicular route to the establishment and locations of where signing is being requested. Details of the existing signing present at these proposed signing locations should be provided by means of photographs.

In normal circumstances, tourist signing for hotels and guest houses will only be considered from the point when normal direction signing, or satellite navigation directions become misleading or are no longer appropriate to direct visitors along the most appropriate route to the establishment. The only exception will be a need on traffic management or safety grounds. Establishments located on Class A or B roads will not justify tourist signing unless there is a need on safety grounds.

**SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES**

These include:

* **Water sports facilities**
* **Equestrian centres**
* **Golf courses**
* **Horse racing courses**
* **Motor sport facilities**
* **Cricket grounds**
* **Football grounds**
* **Canoeing facilities**
* **Fishing facilities**
* **Outdoor pursuit facilities**
* **Roller skating parks**
* **Ice skating rinks**
* **Ski slopes**
* **Ten pin bowling alleys**
* **Swimming pools or indoor water sport centres**
* **Cinemas**
* **Theatre or concert halls**
* **Sports centres**

Most sports and leisure facilities are considered to be a local facility rather than a tourist attraction. Where necessary, on traffic management grounds signing to these establishments will be considered for normal local directional signing rather than tourist signing.

The sports and leisure facilities that will be considered for normal local directional signing are listed in List 1.

The sports and leisure facilities that will be considered for tourist signing are listed in List 2.

**List 1**

The following sports and leisure facilities would not normally qualify for tourist signing unless the venue is of regional or national importance and open to visitors. Requests for normal directional signing will be considered on traffic management and safety grounds.

* **Sports and leisure centres**
* **Horse racing courses (except Newmarket which would qualify for tourist signing)**
* **Cricket grounds**
* **Football grounds**
* **Swimming pools or indoor water sport facilities**
* **Cinemas**
* **Theatres or concert halls**

**List 2**

The following facilities are those where localised tourist signing will be considered.

* **Water sports facilities** – where pre-booking is not a requirement
* **Equestrian centres** – where pre-booking is not a requirement
* **Golf courses** – for pay and play courses that are open to the public without the need to pre-book and where golf clubs are available to hire.
* **Motor sport facilities** – nationally recognised circuits or for go-cart tracks where pre-booking is not a requirement.
* **Canoeing facilities**
* **Fishing facilities** – Open to non-members
* **Outdoor pursuit facilities**
* **Roller skating parks**
* **Ice skating rinks**
* **Ski slopes**
* **Ten pin bowling alleys**

Applications for tourist signing to sports and leisure facilities in List 2 above will be expected to provide evidence that the facility:

1. has adequate parking or has an agreed alternative arrangement with the owners of a nearby off-street parking facility (where adequate parking is not available applicant should consider pedestrian signing from the nearest public car park).
2. is promoted using adequate and clear publicity material aimed at tourists/visitors (e.g. leaflets that include clear and accurate maps or directions available at tourist information centres, web sites or tourist guide books). A visitor will be expected to be aware of the approximate location of the sports or leisure facility from advertisement material and will be expected to follow normal signing for the main part of their journey.
3. provides a post code for visitors to input into satellite navigation systems that will provide directions to the facility. This will be checked as part of the assessment process to ensure the directions take visitors along the most appropriate route to the attraction.
4. Is of good quality, well maintained and adheres to the accessibility requirements for their establishment (as recommended in The Equality Act 2010 as amended).

The applicant shall provide details of visitor numbers. Whilst there are no visitor number criteria set down for signing on county roads within Suffolk, visitor numbers will be a consideration for areas where there is a likely to be a high demand for signing and will be required as evidence where additional signing is requested on traffic management or safety grounds.

The applicant shall provide a map showing the location of the establishment, the preferred vehicular route to the establishment and locations of where signing is being requested. Details of the existing signing present at these proposed signing locations should be provided by means of photographs.

**TOWN OR BOUNDARY SIGNS**

TSRGD 2016 permits two alternative boundary signs. Diagram 2403.1 (Schedule 11, Part 2, Item 82 of TSRGD 2016) and diagram 2404 (Schedule 11, Part 2, Item 83).

Diagram 2403.1 indicates a city, town or village immediately ahead, together with extra local information. If tourist information is provided on the sign, each destination included must individually qualify for tourist signing and there must be continuity signing provided thereafter.

Diagram 2404 indicates a city, town, village, an administrative area, a ceremonial area or an historic county area immediately ahead, together with a phrase and image that is representative of the city, town, village or area.

**PEDESTRIAN SIGNING**

Pedestrian directional signing will be considered to an attraction or facility from the nearest appropriate car park within towns where there is no District Council enhanced pedestrian signing scheme. Where such a scheme does exist, the applicant will be expected to seek approval to add their signing to the enhanced signing scheme.

**TOURIST ROUTES AND AREAS**

Signing of linear tourist routes will be considered where the proposed route takes tourists through or passed places of potential interest to tourists. Such routes will not be considered along dual carriageways where speed limits are 50mph or above.

National Parks and collective areas such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will not be signed unless traffic is routed to a permanently established tourist information facility with good access, parking and toilets, and the name appears on maps / atlases or in satellite navigation systems and has signed boundaries with signs to diagram 2404 in TSRGD 2016.

**NOTES**

**NOTE 1: PERIOD OF OPENING CRITERIA**

Tourist facilities that are not open ‘all year’ should be open to the public for a minimum of 150 days to qualify for tourist signing. The days open should be either on specific days or throughout a specific tourist period so that this information can be easily provided on permanently erected signs.

Temporary signs that are erected and maintained by organisations such as the AA, RAC or TMS can be considered for attractions that are open to the public for a period that is less than 150 days. Such signs will be considered for a maximum of three years after which time the attraction will need to consider whether to apply for normal directional signing.

**NOTE 2: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

Suffolk is predominantly a rural county and environmentally sensitive and sign clutter is something we want to avoid. As such we will always look to reduce the size and number of signs we add to our highway network. Our existing policies are aimed at reducing the impact that signing will have in conservation and sensitive areas such as AONBs.

In all AONBs, conservation and other sensitive areas, the presumption will be **against** providing tourist signing to individual attractions or facilities. Instead, the principle will be to direct traffic to preferred and agreed locations such as public car parks where local tourist information has or can be provided. Where an AONB has a management plan, the recommendations of that management plan will be taken into account when considering any application for signing.

In exceptional circumstances, where traffic management or safety needs requires the introduction of traffic signs, full consultations with relevant stakeholders will be carried out prior to agreeing the provision of any signing.

**NOTE 3: ELIGIBILITY APPLICATION FEE**

To establish whether your application is eligible for tourism signing it will be necessary to carry out a detailed desktop assessment. This assessment will be undertaken by Suffolk Highways upon payment of a non-refundable application fee of £180. The application fee is not refundable even if the application is unsuccessful; therefore, we encourage you to check your eligibility before submitting your application.

It is the applicant’s responsibility to provide evidence that the facility meets the necessary eligibility criteria. Please ensure that you submit with your application the requested information and evidence to demonstrate your eligibility. This should reduce the likelihood of your application being delayed (until the necessary evidence and further information is supplied) or refused at this stage.

The decisions on the eligibility of applications against the various eligibility criteria are final. Suffolk Highways retains the right to consult with other organisation on all applications where appropriate. You will be advised of the result of your application at the earliest opportunity and if an application for tourism signing is rejected, in full or in part, you will be given an explanation for the reasons for the decision.

**SECTION 2**

**SIGNING EXTENT AND CONTINUITY**

For most tourist destinations signing will only be appropriate for visitors during the final stages of their journey where existing directional signing is of no further help. This is likely to be within 3 miles of the tourist destination, however, the actual distance from which a tourist destination is first signed should be appropriate to its size, location and traffic management needs.

There shall be continuity of directional signing from the first sign to the destination and in exceptional cases there may be a need for more extensive signing on safety or traffic management grounds.

**EXCESS SIGN DEMAND**

In situations where there is an excess demand on the number of tourist destinations that can safely be signed from one location, Visit England will be consulted. Normally, the basis for the decision on which attractions to be signed will be guided by the need for the traffic management. Therefore, in general, attractions with higher visitor numbers will have a higher claim to be signed.

**ATTRACTIONS OPEN PART TIME**

If a tourist destination is not open all year, then there are two options that can be considered for signing the tourist destination

* Signing indicating the tourist destination with the opening times **clearly** displayed (i.e. May to Sept. or Weekends only etc.) on the signing; or
* Signing that is provided at a safe distance after the first junction signed indicating the name of the destination and with the details of when it is closed. (i.e. “name of destination” closed from October to May, or Tuesdays or Weekends etc.).

A tourist destination that is not open to the public for a minimum period of 150 days can apply for temporary directional signing from either the AA, RAC or TMS to direct visitors, however, these will only be approved for a maximum of three years. Alternatively, the tourist destination can apply for normal permanent directional signing with the same conditions as above.

**DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS**

If the application is successful for the provision of signing, an estimate will be requested from Suffolk Highway’s Professional Services Team. This estimate will cover the costs associated with the design of the signs and the approximate cost of installing the signs.

The cost of design and installation of signing will be different for every location. The size of a sign is often dictated by the type of road and the speed limit on that road where signing is required.

The estimate provided to the applicant will generally cover the following elements:

* a site visit to the locations where signs are requested;
* retrieval and review of statutory undertakers’ records and/or plans to determine if any will be affected by the installation works for the signs;
* detailed design of the required signs including required posts and foundations;
* preparing the necessary work pack including:
  + Plans/drawings
  + CDM info (Hazard Identification, risk assessments and contractors plan)
  + Traffic management planning
  + Preparation of Bill of Quantities (Construction Estimate)
* project handover to Suffolk Highways Operations team to programme the installation works
* supply and Installation of signs, posts and foundations on site.
* supply, set up and removal of temporary traffic management for the duration of the installation works.
* The estimated costs of future removal of the signs should the tourist destination close or is no longer eligible to be signed.

If you are aware of other attractions or facilities, which may wish to be signed on approaches to your premises, it is probably worth contacting them as there may be advantages of cost sharing and co-ordination of signing.

If a new tourist sign involves the alteration to any existing sign at that location, the applicant will be responsible for the cost of any alteration or replacement.

**MAINTENANCE OF TOURIST SIGNING**

All signing will remain in the ownership of Suffolk County Council if located on county roads within Suffolk. Signing located on a trunk road will remain in the ownership of Highways England.

The tourist destination will be responsible for all costs associated with the future maintenance of the signs for their tourist destination, including cleaning and replacement. Sign cleaning shall be undertaken by Suffolk Highways or by accredited operatives with written authorisation from Suffolk Highways to be able to undertake the work.

Where a sign is damaged the tourist destination will be responsible for the replacement costs of the sign. Where multiple destinations are indicated on the sign then the cost will be shared equally amongst all destinations.

A new application will be required from the applicant if the tourist signing needs to be replaced because they have reached the end of their serviceable life (usually ten years from new), or because of alterations to routes.

**REMOVAL OF TOURIST SIGNING**

Tourist signing will be removed by SCC, following a period of written notice, in the following circumstances:

* The destination fails to comply with the eligibility criteria within this document
* Persistent use of advertising signs at or near the location of the tourist signs
* Closure of the tourist destination – it is the responsibility of the tourist destination to notify SCC of closure.
* A lapse of planning approval or essential licenses for the use of the tourist facility
* To accommodate generic or shared signing. If this situation does arise the cost of converting the destination’s sign will be met by the applicant requesting the new and additional signs at that particular location.