

Supplementary Guidance Residential Access

Shetland

Local Development Plan 2012



Shetland Islands Council

Shetland Local Development Plan

Supplementary Guidance – Residential Access

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Introduction

The Shetland Local Development Plan (the Plan), together with any Supplementary Guidance, sets out the policies and criteria against which planning applications submitted in Shetland will be considered.

This Supplementary Guidance sets out detailed policy advice to help you meet the requirements of the Plan. It is therefore recommended that it is read in conjunction with the policies in the Plan and any other Supplementary Guidance relevant to the type of development proposed.

The aim of this document is to offer non-technical guidance to individuals and developers who propose to take a private residential access off the public road. The guidance and policies in this document are intended to provide sufficient information to assist developers with their site selection, but not to specify exactly how access can or should be achieved. It is strongly recommended that you employ the services of a professional Architect or Engineer at an early stage to help you with your project. For technical information; the Council's Roads Service has produced Technical guidance entitled, "Access Guidance, Single Houses and Small Housing Developments - Guidance on Access Standards, Road Safety Considerations and Road Drainage Requirements for Single Houses and Small Housing Developments."

National Policy Framework

"*Designing Streets*"¹ published by the Scottish Government in March 2010, is the first policy statement in Scotland for street design and marks a change in the emphasis of guidance on street design towards place-making and away from a system focused upon the dominance of motor vehicles.

"*Designing Streets*" marks the Scottish Government's commitment to move away from a prescriptive, standards-based approach to road design that tended to result in streets with a poor sense of place.

The document changes the emphasis of policy requirements to raise the quality of design in urban and rural development, to one that better enables designers and local authorities to unlock the full potential of streets to become vibrant, safe and attractive places. Attractive and well-connected street networks encourage more people to walk and cycle to local destinations, improving their health while reducing motor traffic, energy use and pollution.

"*Designing Streets*" requires a design led approach that demands taking into account site-specific requirements and involves early engagement with all relevant parties e.g. Council's Planning Service and the Roads Service, service infrastructure providers, other professionals and agents.

¹ Designing Streets; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/03/22120652/12>

Local Policy Framework

This Statutory Supplementary Guidance (SG) sets out a framework to assess and achieve adequate site accesses. It provides further guidance and is a requirement of **Shetland Local Development Plan Policy TRANS 3**.

TRANS 3: All developments should provide:

- **a safe and adequate access, visibility splay and turning area in accordance with the standards set out in Supplementary Guidance.**
- **adequate car parking and service facilities in accordance with the Council's current standards, which are set out in Supplementary Guidance.**

RESIDENTIAL ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

Shetland Islands Council wishes to promote consistent standards for the construction of all junctions and accesses onto the public road network.

The Main Objectives are:-

Safety

- The Creation and Maintenance of Good Junction and Access Visibility Splays.
- The Provision of Road Widening at Junctions and Accesses where Appropriate.
- Safe and Convenient Spacing from Existing Junctions and Accesses.
- Minimise the Number of Individual Accesses onto the Road Network.

Drainage

- The Provision of Adequate Roadside Drainage.
- The Correct Disposal and Treatment of Site Surface Water Run Off.
- That the Flood Risk to Property is Minimised.

Construction

- Consistent and Appropriate Design.
- Acceptable Construction Standards and Details.
- Compliance with Legislation.

It is recommend that you employ the services of a Professional Architect or Engineer at an early stage to assist you with your project.

Multiple house site developments will need to fully consider the pertinent requirements of Designing Streets, the Scottish Government's Policy Statement on roads design and the creation of place.

This document deals primarily with matters relating to Private Access.

Site Access Location Assessment

When considering the location of the access point for your development you should consider the following:-

- Is the proposed access in the best location?
- Can I share an access with a neighbour?
- Is the proposed access close to a road junction or other property access?
- Is the proposed access close to a blind bend or crest in the road?
- Can I construct a safe access visible to other road users?
- Have I control over all the land required for any necessary improvements?
- Do I need to set back boundary walls or fences?
- Do neighbouring properties obstruct visibility?
- Is the site large enough for the provision of car parking and turning?
- Do I need to extend the existing footpath network to connect my development?
- Is the site liable to flooding or does it have drainage problems?
- How will existing drainage be incorporated into the new site layout?
- Are there underground services in the footpath or verge?
- Are there overhead services that could be hazardous?
- Do I require permission to excavate in the road, footpath or verge?
- Are there Listed structures or protected species likely to affect visibility?
- Do I need to provide an area for refuse and recycling bins?

The above list is by no means exhaustive, the guidance below will assist you when considering your development. There is however little substitute for obtaining appropriate professional advice at an early stage.

Junction and Access Location

In the interests of road safety the Council wishes to minimise the number of individual junctions and accesses onto the road network, and so we encourage the use of shared accesses where possible.

Any new junction or access should not normally be situated within 60 metres of another junction or access on the same side of the road, or within 25 metres of another junction or access on the opposite side of the road. These distances are appropriate for most minor rural roads. On higher speed roads a greater separation distance between accesses and junctions may be required to prevent any negative impact on traffic safety. In an urban or developed setting these distances may be relaxed depending on local conditions.

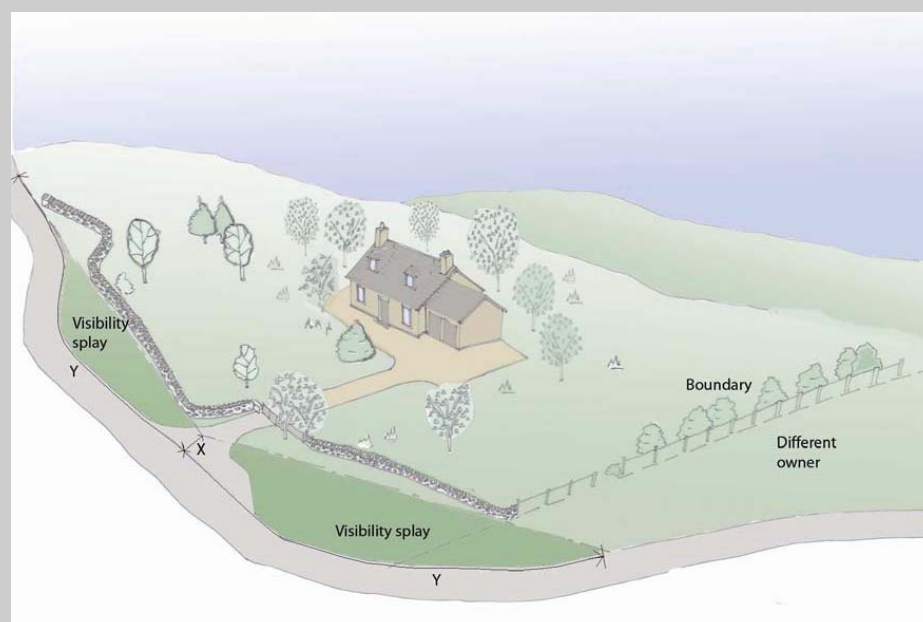
Any new junction or access onto a road must be constructed and completed prior to starting work on other aspects of the consented development. This will assist in the safe delivery of plant and building materials to the site, and allow contractors vehicles to manoeuvre safely on and off the public road. Whether the site is located above or below the road, the slope and shape of the access needs to conform to certain design parameters. This is to ensure that it is safe

and convenient for all potential users. Detailed technical guidance on suitable parameters is available from the Council's Roads Service.

Visibility Splays

A Visibility Splay is an essential safety feature of your junction or access onto the road network. The purpose of a Visibility Splay is to allow anyone using your access to see approaching traffic before entering the road. A Visibility Splay also allows traffic on the road to see any vehicles, cyclists, or pedestrians leaving the development. The longer the visibility splay, the more time other road users have to see you. An unobstructed visibility splay allows you to SEE and be SEEN.

What is a Visibility Splay?



In the sketches above, imagine you are leaving the property about to join the public road, you look to the right and left across the verge and land adjacent to the road to see if there is any approaching traffic. The areas shown by the darker shaded areas are called the Visibility Splays.

How is a Visibility Splay Measured?

There are two key dimensions to a Visibility Splay. These are shown as X and Y in the sketch above.

Firstly, the X dimension, which for a single house or small residential development is 2.5 metres long. This is measured back from the edge of the public road to approximate the driver's sitting position. The viewing point is set at a 'driver's eye height', which for an average car is taken as being 1.05 metres above the road surface level.

Secondly, the Y dimension, which is the distance you need to see along the road edge. This is measured from the centre line of the junction or access,

along the edge of the road towards the approaching traffic. The target point is also set at a 'driver's eye height' - 1.05 metres above the road surface level.

The minimum required Y dimension varies depending on the speed of approaching traffic. The faster the speed of approaching vehicles, the longer the distance required to see and be seen, and therefore the greater the Y dimension. Table A below gives an outline guide of the values for various approaching speeds.

Table A								
Speed (mph)	62	53	44	37.5	30	30*	25	20
Y (m)	215	160	120	90	70	60	45	33
<i>* where the road is local access only, not a higher priority route The speed band used is equal to or greater than the 85% speed of free flowing traffic</i>								

For more detailed guidance on Visibility Splays and other access issues please refer to the Roads Service document "Access Guidance, Single Houses and Small Housing Developments - Guidance on Access Standards, Road Safety Considerations and Road Drainage Requirements for Single Houses and Small Housing Developments."

Determining the Required Visibility Splay

Using Designing Streets as a guide, the visibility splay requirements for residential roads (streets) may be relaxed from the distances given in the Table above. Normally the traffic speeds to be used in the calculation of the Y distance are the same as the speed limits that apply to the public road onto which your junction or access will connect.

On some roads, particularly single track or local roads, traffic speeds can be significantly lower than the permissible limit. The developer should make their own initial assessment of traffic speeds in order to assure themselves that a suitable site access location has been selected. This estimated speed, if lower than the applicable speed limit, should be highlighted in the supporting statement accompanying your planning application.

Maintaining Visibility Splays

When submitting your planning application you must demonstrate that you have, and can maintain control over any visibility splay areas required for the safe operation of your junction or access. You have a responsibility for the maintenance of clear sightlines over the visibility splay area. If this visibility splay area intrudes into your neighbour's land you will need to discuss this with your neighbour.

Site Access and Residential Access Tracks

In rural areas, where properties may be relatively remote from the public road, access drives shall be a minimum width of 3.0 metres with 1.0 metre minimum

width verges to allow emergency service vehicles access. Similarly, gateposts should provide 3.5 metres minimum clearance when the gate is open.

One of the most important considerations in the design of any access is its gradient – that is how steep it is. The steeper the slope the more difficult it will be to use, especially if using a pushchair or wheelchair or just walking up and down it. In poor weather conditions vehicles will also have trouble using it. There is likely to be a greater maintenance burden due to wear by wheel slip and erosion by surface water flow.

The gradient of the access for the first six metres from the road edge shall not exceed 5% slope (or 1 in 20). The surface of the first six metres from the edge of the public road should be finished with bitmac or in certain circumstances, on minor low speed roads, other solid surfaces such as reinforced concrete or concrete block paving may be acceptable alternatives. This requirement is to prevent gravel from the access shedding onto the public road. This surface also protects the structural integrity of the edge of the public road.

Gated Accesses

If a gate is to be installed, it should be set back a minimum of 6 metres from the edge of the public road. If the gate is to be outward opening, then this distance is increased to 10 metres, to allow a vehicle to stand clear of the public road whilst the gate is being opened and closed.

Cattle grids, if provided, must be located at least 10 metres from the public road boundary. For safe passage the maximum recommended gradient across a cattle grid is 8% (1 in 12.5). Cattle grids should not be located on bends or where vehicle paths are likely to be curved.

Site and Access Drainage

Site and access drainage should be designed, provided and maintained to ensure that no surface water from the site or the access into the site shall drain, or run onto, the public road.

Site Drainage Assessment

A Site Drainage Assessment for the site should identify how the site will be drained and how any risk of flooding will be prevented and how this might influence access to and around the site.

For more information on Site Drainage Assessments, drainage, storm water and flooding, you should refer to the Shetland Local Development Plan and its Supplementary Guidance - Flooding and Drainage. These are available on the Council web site at www.planshetland.gov.uk

Road Drainage

Roadside drainage is primarily provided to protect the structure of the adjacent road. You are not permitted to discharge site or development drainage from the site, unless it has been attenuated back to pre-development flow levels.

Where a development site ultimately discharges through a road culvert the Site Drainage Assessment should provide suitable calculations to show that

the culvert has sufficient spare capacity to deal with any increase in flow rates caused by the development. Where an access crosses a roadside ditch, a pipe with headwalls will need to be provided. The minimum size of this pipe will normally be 300mm diameter; this size may be increased depending on local flow conditions. Prospective developers should ensure that they have access to adequate land to carry out any required alterations to the roadside ditch.

On Site Turning and Parking Areas

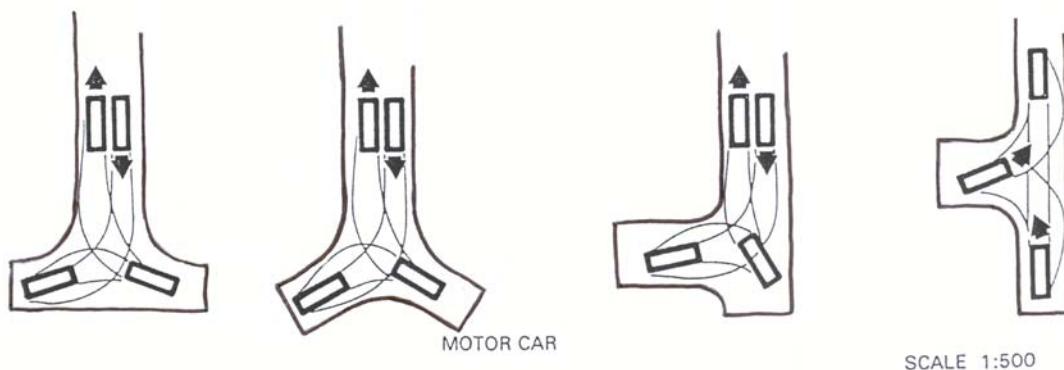
Any vehicle entering a site should be able to park and/or turn around within the curtilage of the site in order that it leaves the site in a forward gear. Vehicles entering a site should not have to reverse back out onto the public road. However, where there are low traffic volumes and speeds, such as within a housing scheme or on residential streets, then direct frontage access may be permitted from parking spaces onto the road.

At an early stage, developers need to consider the route and location of the hard standing parking/turning area in relation to the position of the septic tank, (if installed) and the requirements for emptying and maintenance. Access and turning for fuel delivery vehicles (if required) should also be considered when siting the fuel tank. Scottish Water and fuel suppliers can provide their specific operational distance requirements in such circumstances. Another thing to think about in relation to the layout and position of the parking and turning area is that fire-fighting vehicles need to be able to park within 45 metres of any door giving direct access to the interior of the building.

Turning Areas

Suitable turning provision may take several forms, from a simple 7.6m x 7.6m square area constructed of suitable material to one of the turning head designs as indicated below. Where a parking space abuts any wall, fence, door, gate, slope or pedestrian route a minimum 0.5 metre wide verge or clearance should be provided.

Note – areas provided for turning are in addition to those provided for parking.



Turning Area Gradients

The gradient of the turning and parking area should be;

- 2.5% desirable gradient in both directions
- 5.0% maximum gradient in both directions
- 1.0% minimum gradient for drainage

On Site Parking

All residential development should provide suitable parking provision for both the occupants and visitors. Normally, developers would be expected to provide the full parking provision within the curtilage of the site. Vehicle parking spaces should be provided at the rate of:-

- 1½ spaces per 1 bedroom unit (rounded up to 2 for a single property).
- 2 spaces for 2 and 3 bedroom units.
- 3 spaces for dwelling units with 4 or more bedrooms.

A reduction in the overall parking provision may be reduced within Conservation Areas or where communal parking is provided. Please see Supplementary Guidance - Parking Standards for further information.

Winter Weather Parking

Shetland can experience severe winter weather and for those developments and sites where the access road is particularly steep, consideration should be given to providing parking areas that are clear of the public road and will not impact on the visibility splay, at the top/bottom of the incline. A service bay could provide this function.

Road Works

Before work begins it is likely that you will need to make an opening onto a road, a Road Opening Permit must be obtained from the Council's Roads Service, before you can even arrange to carry out works in or adjacent to the public road, including the verge (roadside) or the footway (pavement).

Contact; Roads Service, SIC Infrastructure Services Department, Gremista, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0PY.

This link will also give you more information; <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/eu-formalities/documents/GuideToApplyingToDoRoadWorks.pdf>

ROAD DESIGN

Supplementary Local Development Plan Policy

SG TRANS 1 - Housing Development – Road Design

All housing development layouts should:

- **provide a road layout which ensures safe and efficient access for all modes of transport, emergency services and other service vehicles but wherever possible gives priority to pedestrian and cyclist movement;**

- **provide a hierarchy of routes (primary routes, secondary routes and tertiary (pedestrian) routes);**
- **be designed for low vehicle speeds to ensure that streets and spaces are comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists to use;**
- **connect with adjacent places and communities; and**
- **ensure good access for and to public transport where available.**

Justification

*Designing Streets*² sets the policy framework for good street design that responds to location rather than the rigid application of standards. Accessibility and ease of movement is one of the Council's objectives for designing successful places. The delivery of sustainable development will require a focus on locating larger residential developments within the Areas of Best Fit and existing settlements; connectivity with surrounding communities and services will be paramount.

Priority should be redirected from the needs of the car to include all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists in order that a more inclusive road layout is designed for all users within the development. It is also essential that road design and public spaces are integrated with the landscape and building design in order to ensure vitality, safety and ease of movement for all.

Scheme Phasing

In a phased scheme, provision must be made for possible upgrading of the service road or access to an appropriate standard. Infrastructure capable of servicing the completed site should be specified from the outset.

Adoptable Roads

There is a requirement that all developments are served by a safe and convenient means of access, there is no legal requirement for a development to be served by a public road. The means of access within a scheme can be kept private, with the ongoing maintenance responsibility remaining with the individual householders and frontagers.

Should there be any expectation or plan for an access to be adopted by the Council at any point in the future then the scheme must be built under Roads Construction Consent to a suitable standard.

For information on the level of provision that is required, please contact the Council's Roads Service, Gremista, Lerwick ZE1 0PX. Telephone 01595 744866.

² *Designing Streets*; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/03/22120652/12>