

**REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE 15 JUNE 2010**

**SUBJECT: INTERIM DESIGNING STREETS POLICY INTERPRETATION FOR
NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report brings to the attention of the Committee the new Designing Streets Planning Policy.
- 1.2 Interim interpretation of the policy is required to provide clarification to those involved with street design and development proposals. This will enable Transportation Officers to respond to consultations on development proposals and planning applications .
- 1.3 The Report is submitted to Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the function of the Council as Roads Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- (i) note the publication of Designing Streets Planning Policy;**
- (ii) approve the Designing Streets Interim Interpretation Note set out in Appendix B;**
- (iii) note that a report will be brought to a future Committee to present new 'Design Procedures and Standards for Streets'.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Government published the new national planning policy document Designing Streets in February 2010. This document is the first policy statement in Scotland for street design and supports the existing publication Designing Places.
- 3.2 The Council has produced supplementary guidance to the policies contained in the Development Plan. The Planning & Regulatory Services Committee 09 February 2010 approved the Urban Design supplementary guidance (paragraph 5 of the minute refers). The Urban Design guidance makes reference to Designing Streets.
- 3.3 Designing Streets is aimed at everyone who plays a part in creating or determining the quality of streets; politicians, local authorities, planners, architects, engineers, and developers. Designing Streets sets out a number

of key considerations for street design hierarchy against the six qualities of successful places (distinctive; safe & pleasant; easy to move around; welcoming; adaptable; and resource efficient). Designing Streets aims to shift the focus firmly on the creation of successful places through good street design.

- 3.4 Designing Street policy is expected to be used predominantly for the design, construction, adoption and maintenance of new streets, but it is also applicable to existing streets subject to re-design.
- 3.5 A copy of the Designing Streets publication has been made available on the Members Portal. Extracts from the publication are attached at **Appendix A**.
- 3.6 The document states that information on principles, layout and street geometry which is not consistent with Designing Streets should be revised.
- 3.7 A full review of the existing design procedures and standards for new developments is a significant exercise and will require input from specific officers concerned with road safety, road maintenance, street lighting, flooding and drainage. A full review has not yet begun.
- 3.8 The Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) was consulted during the preparation of the Designing Streets policy. SCOTS has set up a working group to look at best practice for dealing with street design and other implications arising from Designing Streets policy.
- 3.9 A number of proposals are coming forward for new residential developments in Moray. It is considered necessary to provide interim interpretation of the Designing Streets policy to clarify the situation for decision makers, officers and those involved with presenting new development proposals.
- 3.10 A Designing Streets Interim Interpretation Note has been prepared. A copy of this document is attached at **Appendix B**.
- 3.11 The Interim Designing Streets Interpretation Note includes reference to the following design aspects:

Stopping Sight Distance (SSD)

This is the criterion which determines, amongst other things, the length of visibility splays required, and is normally related to vehicle speeds. The Designing Streets policy has based the SSD changes on research undertaken by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL Report No. 661). A copy of this report has been made available on the Members Portal and a copy of the executive summary is attached at **Appendix C**.

Turning Areas

Vehicle tracking for appropriate vehicles will be accepted rather than applying a series of standard layouts.

Parking

Designing Streets states that parking should be accommodated by a variety of means to provide flexibility and lessen visual impact. This introduces the concept of allocated and unallocated parking provision.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan

This report contributes to:

SOA 8. Roads/Transport.

SIP 2.2 Improving the Transport Infrastructure.

(b) Policy and Legal

This report relates to interim interpretation of Designing Streets policy.

Once approved the Designing Streets Interim Interpretation Note will become a material consideration when assessing planning applications.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

None.

(d) Consultations

The Planning and Development Manager has been consulted. Comments received have been incorporated in the report and he is fully supportive of the proposal to recognise the implications of Designing Streets policy.

Alistair McEachan, Principal Solicitor (Commercial & Conveyancing) has been consulted and has no comments.

Scott Mann, Traffic Inspector of Grampian Police has been consulted and has no comments.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Designing Streets is the first policy statement in Scotland for street design.

5.2 This policy document highlights the need for local authorities to review their existing documents containing principles, layout and street geometry which is not consistent with Designing Streets. This is a significant exercise that has not yet begun. There is a need for interpretation of the policy during the interim period.

5.3 The Designing Streets Interim Interpretation Note at Appendix B is presented to Committee for approval. Once approved the publication will become a material consideration when assessing planning applications.

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Background Papers:

Ref: GRH/RG/