

# MORAY COUNCIL



## TOURIST SIGNPOSTING POLICY October 2013

**Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013**

## **Introduction**

This document sets out the policy for tourism signposting on the road network in Moray. The policy defines the criteria for the provision of tourism signposting, the application procedures and where the financial responsibilities lie.

**Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013**

**Contents**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Policy Statement</b>
<b>Chapter</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Tourist Attractions and Tourist Facilities</b>
<b>Chapter</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Main Settlements</b>
<b>Chapter</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Settlement Information Signs</b>
<b>Chapter</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>National Tourist Routes and Tourist Trails</b>
<b>Chapter</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Tourist Signposting on Trunk Roads</b>
<b>Chapter</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Applications and Administrative Procedures</b>
<b>Chapter</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Technical Specifications and Criteria</b>
<b>Chapter</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Appendix	A	:	Map of Main Tourist Traffic Roads
Appendix	B	:	List of Contact Addresses and Numbers
Appendix	C	:	Standard Letter of Agreement

# **Chapter 1**

# **Policy Statement**

## **1.1 Importance of Tourist Signposting**

Signposting is an essential part of the basic tourism infrastructure in the Moray area. Effective signposting can make an important contribution to the economic health of the tourism industry, enhancing the visitors' experience and have a key role in guiding visitors to their chosen destination(s), avoiding confusion and encouraging them to stay longer.

## **1.2 Giving Clear Directions**

Tourist signs are traffic signs and as such their purpose is to guide those wishing to visit a tourist destination along the most appropriate route. They normally contain the name of the attraction, the prescribed thistle symbol and the distance in miles or yards. Signposting alone is not a substitute for effective marketing and it is expected that establishments which obtain signposting will also use other marketing techniques such as promotional print, which ideally will include clear travel directions and a simple map. **Tourist signs are not advertising signs.**

Signing will be limited to provide information which is considered necessary to guide visitors in a safe and clear manner on the last part of their journey. Undue proliferation of signs is detrimental to road safety and the visual environment and can lead to the deterioration of the attractiveness of an area, which may be the very reason for the intended visit.

This policy is based on Circular SODD 27/1995 including the subsequent clarification issued by the Scottish Executive in April 2001 which covers those areas of signposting policy which have not been clearly defined within the Circular.

The regulation of traffic signs is as detailed in Part V of the general provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 (TSRGD). This policy complies with these documents and it is not within the powers of the Moray Council to vary anything within them.

## **1.3 Assuring Quality of Signposted Establishments**

Moray Council, the remaining 31 Local Authorities, Transport Scotland and VisitScotland must promote a quality image which provides consistent information for the tourism industry in Scotland. Tourist attractions, accommodation and eating establishments wishing to apply for tourist signs will require to be accredited by VisitScotland and the thistle logo will be used for the majority of signs although alternative symbols may be used subject to compliance with the TSRGD 2002. It will be a condition of accreditation that establishments:

**Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013**

- join and remain in membership of the relevant Quality Assurance Scheme (QA) operated by VisitScotland **and**
- Comply with all relevant planning requirements.

In the event that there is no relevant QA scheme for the type of establishment a site visit will be carried out by a VisitScotland representative. When a relevant QA scheme becomes available, the establishment will be expected to apply to join such QA scheme in order to retain any brown tourist sign provision. VisitScotland will determine eligibility and requirements for the relevant QA scheme.

In order to meet the legal requirements to qualify for signing, caravan and camping sites must be licensed under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and have a minimum of 20 pitches for casual overnight use. Establishments will be encouraged to join VisitScotland and attain accreditation so that the recognised quality symbol of the Thistle Logo can also be included on their signs.

There are a small number of destinations which have their own symbols. Recognition from VisitScotland is not a legal requirement and the Thistle Logo is not necessarily a permitted variation. The symbols approved for use in Scotland are shown in TSRGD ~ Schedule 14 (Part I & IV).

## **Chapter 2**

## **Tourist Attractions and Tourist Facilities**

**2.1** A **Tourist Attraction** is, for the purposes of this Policy, a permanently established destination whether natural, geographical or commercial, which attracts or is used by visitors to Moray, is open to the public without prior booking during its normal opening hours and is recognised by VisitScotland. Some examples of a tourist attraction would include

- Visitor Centres
- Theme parks
- Historic buildings and properties
- Ancient monuments
- Museums
- Zoos
- Parks and gardens
- Natural attractions (such as nature reserves, beaches, picnic sites and viewpoints)
- Tourist shops
- Leisure/ Sports centres
- Golf courses
- Garden Centres

Further guidance can be provided by VisitScotland if advice is required on individual examples.

**2.2** **Tourist Facilities** shall include:

- Accommodation establishments (hotels, guest houses, bed and breakfast establishments and hostel accommodation which are members of the appropriate VisitScotland Quality Assurance Scheme).
- Caravan / camping parks which are licensed by Moray Council and have a minimum of 20 pitches for casual overnight use. To qualify for the Thistle Logo, they must also be members of the VisitScotland Quality Assurance Scheme.
- Eating establishments (cafes, restaurants etc) which are members of the VisitScotland Food Quality Assurance Scheme.
- Youth Hostels managed by the Scottish Youth Hostels Association.
- Picnic and Woodland recreation areas

**Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013**

- 2.3** VisitScotland will use their Quality Assurance Schemes to ensure that the **tourist attraction** or **tourist facility** to be signed with the Thistle Logo is of an acceptable standard.
- 2.4** **Tourist Attractions**, as defined in 2.1 can be signed both outwith **main settlements** and within **main settlements**. However within **main settlements** it could be considered impractical on grounds of safety and visual amenity, to provide signs for every qualifying establishment – too many signs may confuse the visitor as much as too few. Therefore it may not be acceptable for the Roads Authority to approve all applications within **main settlements**.
- 2.5** **Tourist Facilities**, as defined in 2.2 will normally only be signed outwith **main settlements**. However consideration will be given to signing **tourist facilities** within **main settlements** where:
- (a) signs to touring caravan / camping parks within a **main settlement** are justified on traffic management grounds or
  - (b) the most logical signing to an establishment which is outwith a **main settlement** includes signing within a **main settlement**.
- 2.6** **Accommodation, eating places and retail establishments** which are eligible to be considered for signing but are located within a listed settlement would not normally be permitted signing. From a motorist's point of view there are usually more than enough dangers and distractions on town roads with only the absolute minimum of essential statutory signing. On the grounds of road safety and visual amenity alone, there are very few instances when signs for individual premises can be justified, even when constraints of space are not too severe.

## **Chapter 3**

## **Main Settlements**

- 3.1** Main settlements have primarily been chosen based on the population, the existing infrastructure and the traffic flows within them. For the purposes of this policy document, Appendix A shows the Main Tourist Traffic Roads and the majority of settlements within Moray

The towns considered to be **main settlements** within Moray are:

Buckie  
Elgin  
Forres  
Keith  
Lossiemouth



## **Chapter 4 Settlement Information Signs**

**4.1** Settlements not on, but within 3 miles of a Main Tourist Traffic Road, may be eligible for Settlement Information Signs provided they offer visitor services and facilities which could be missed by a visitor if not signposted, and has an element which is attractive to visitors. The signs can be divided into 2 categories **tourist based signs** and **facility based signs** although a combination of the 2 types may be appropriate.

**4.2** Tourist based signs can offer the following as applicable:-

- Name of settlement
- Descriptive phrase of the settlement
- Tourist information logo
- Key tourist attraction with thistle logo

**4.3** Facility based signs can offer the following as applicable:-

- Name of settlement
- Descriptive phrase of the settlement
- A maximum of 6 symbols which may include the words “shop” or “hotels” and “B&B” where appropriate, denoting the services available within the settlement
- These signs cannot include the names of individual facilities

## Chapter 5

# National Tourist Routes and Tourist Trails

**5.1** **Tourist Trails** are signposted routes linking tourist destinations of a particular theme, and are supported by printed promotional material. Within the Moray area they include:

- Malt Whisky Trail
- Coastal Trail

**5.2** **National Tourist Routes** are alternative routes for tourists between major destinations e.g. the Highland Tourist Route between Aberdeen and Inverness.

**5.3** **Main Tourist Traffic Roads (MTTR)**, identified for this Policy, are shown in Appendix A. These are the routes within the area which have been deemed by Moray Council to carry significant amounts of tourist traffic.

## **Chapter 6**

## **Tourist Signposting On Trunk Roads**

- 6.1** All signing on the Trunk Roads in Moray requires the permission of Transport Scotland. Requests for tourist signposting on the Trunk Road where the destination is accessed directly from the route must be made by the applicant to the Trunk Road Authority directly. An application for a destination signed from the Trunk Road which is accessed from the local road network must be made by the Moray Council as Home Traffic Authority to the Trunk Road Authority on behalf of the applicant. E.g. A new tourist attraction at Inchberry, meeting all the necessary criteria, would be signed from the Trunk Road (A96) but the application should be made to the Moray Council who will then apply to Transport Scotland on the applicant's behalf. For the same new attraction at Cowfords accessing directly from the Trunk Road (A96) roundabout the applicant would go directly to Transport Scotland. If the applicant is in doubt, they should contact the Moray Council in the first instance for the appropriate advice.
- 6.2** All tourism signing on the Trunk Road will be based on the current "Trunk Road and Motorway Tourist Signposting Policy" as published by Transport Scotland.
- 6.3 Application Procedure for Trunk Roads**
- 6.3.1** The applicant should contact the Trunk Roads Authority whereupon they will be advised on Transport Scotland's Policy on Tourist Signing and requirements within the document.
- 6.3.2** The applicant must then approach VisitScotland for membership of the Quality Assurance Scheme and an accreditation letter for tourist signing before the matter can be progressed further.
- 6.3.3** The applicant should forward a copy of the accreditation letter to the Trunk Roads Authority along with a completed copy and supporting documentation of the Standard Application Form "Tourist Destination Information" which can be found in Transport Scotland's "Trunk Road and Motorway Tourist Signposting Policy" Annex B – Section A at [www.transportscotland.gov.uk/files/documents/reports/j7818.pdf](http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/files/documents/reports/j7818.pdf)
- 6.3.4** The Trunk Roads Authority will check the completed form "Section A". Officers will assess the application, provide details of the sign designs, supports, locations, and an estimated cost for the works including consultation, design, materials and supervision of the works.
- 6.3.5** The Trunk Roads Authority will notify the applicant of their decision. If successful a formal letter of agreement will be sent to the applicant by the Trunk Road Authority. On receipt of acceptance, the signs will be manufactured and erected by the Trunk Road Authority or a suitable appointed contractor.

## **Chapter 7**

# **Applications and Administrative Procedures to Moray Council**

### **7.1 Eligibility**

- 7.1.1 It is strongly recommended that prior to undertaking the application procedure set out below in 7.2 or 7.3 that the applicant seeks guidance on the eligibility of their establishment for tourist signs taking into account the conditions laid out in this Policy.
- 7.1.2 The Roads Authority can check initial eligibility against the policy and inform the applicant of the outcome.

### **7.2 Application Procedure for Non Trunk Roads**

- 7.2.1 The applicant should contact the Roads Authority whereupon they will be advised on the Moray Councils Policy on Tourist Signing and requirements within the document.
- 7.2.2 The applicant must provide an accreditation letter from VisitScotland for tourist signing before the matter can be progressed further.
- 7.2.3 The applicant should forward a copy of the accreditation letter to the Roads Authority along with a letter indicating the legend to be on the sign and a meeting will then be arranged to discuss the application in detail.
- 7.2.4 The Roads Authority will assess the application based on the criteria detailed in section 8.2. Officers will then provide details of the sign designs, supports, locations, and an estimate of cost for the works including consultation, design, materials and supervision of the works. If the proposal is acceptable to all parties the Roads Authority will issue a letter of agreement.
- 7.2.5 If they wish to proceed with the signing the applicant must return a signed copy of the letter of agreement to the Roads Authority. On receipt of the letter arrangements will be made to have the signs manufactured and erected.

### **7.3 Application Procedure for combined Trunk and Non Trunk Roads**

- 7.3.1 The applicant should be aware that permission from the Roads Authority for signing on the local road network does not automatically mean that permission will be granted by the Trunk Road Authority for signing on Trunk Roads.

**Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013**

- 7.3.2 Paragraphs 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 apply.
- 7.3.3 The applicant should forward a copy of the accreditation letter to the Home Traffic Authority along with a completed copy and supporting documentation of the Standard Application Form “Tourist Destination Information” which can be found in Transport Scotland’s “Trunk Road and Motorway Tourist Signposting Policy” Annex B – Section A at [www.transportscotland.gov.uk/files/documents/reports/j7818.pdf](http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/files/documents/reports/j7818.pdf)
- 7.3.4 The Roads Authority shall check the completed form “Section A” and discuss the requirements with the applicant. Officers will then provide details of the sign designs, supports, locations, and an estimated cost for the works including consultation, design, materials and supervision of the works and discuss this with the applicant. If an agreement in principal is reached the Roads Authority will complete Section B of the application form and submit all documentation to the Trunk Roads Authority for consideration.
- 7.3.5 The Trunk Roads Authority will notify the Moray Council of their decision. If successful a formal letter of agreement will be sent to the applicant by Moray Council. On receipt of the letter arrangements will be made to have the signs manufactured and erected.

**7.4 Timescale**

- 7.4.1 Applicants should be aware that single attraction applications will take approximately 3 months between obtaining membership / accreditation from VisitScotland, the Roads Authority assessing the application, the applicant accepting the costs to ordering and erecting the signs.
- 7.4.2 Applicants should therefore allow at least 3 months when deciding to apply for tourism signposting to their establishment.
- 7.4.3 Approval for Trunk Road signs may take longer than Moray Council approval due to the additional stages to be gone through.

## Chapter 8

## Technical Specifications and Criteria

### 8.1 The Roads Authority will determine such matters as

- road safety aspects of proposed signing
- practicality of additional tourist signing to be provided
- sign clutter and environmental impact of proposed sign
- size of lettering, acceptable legend and technical specifications of signs
- number and locations of signs

### 8.2 The following guidelines will apply when signs are being designed:

- Tourist signs in general will include the Thistle symbol. The exceptions are Tourist Information (*i* symbol) sign, Settlement Information Signs, and those organisations with symbols approved in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Direction 2002 (as amended).
- Commercial or generic names (eg “Seaview Guest House” or “café”) may also be included up to a maximum of five words. No other wording will be permitted. Where the full commercial name and Thistle are used, a symbol is not generally required.
- If appropriate, one of the prescribed Symbols from The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 ~ Schedule 14 (Part I & IV) approved for use in Scotland, eg caravan, National Trust for Scotland, Historic Scotland, fork and spoon, or bed, may also be used.
- Attractions on a Themed Trail as agreed by VisitScotland and provided they are members of the appropriate VisitScotland Quality Assurance Scheme will be permitted to include the recognised symbol for the Trail on their signs.
- The name of the establishment will be restricted to its trading name only **as defined on the VisitScotland letter of approval**, though differentiation between parts of the business trading under separate names would be permitted (eg “Bridge Hotel” and “Bridge Fishery” would be permitted, but not “Bridge Hotel and Lounge Bar”).

**Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013**

- In all cases the minimum number of words will be used to convey the attraction/service that is on offer (a maximum of four words may be enforced).
- It is essential that establishments are appropriately named so as not to mislead visitors e.g. the Edinburgh Hotel must have hotel rooms.
- Family names (e.g. Mrs Smith's B&B) will not be permitted.
- The distance mile/yards to the destination will be included on all tourist signs unless deemed unnecessary by the Roads Authority.
- A maximum of six attractions may be included at any one location. This may be reduced to four on high speed principal roads (ie A941, A98) and may be reduced further to comply with TSRGD 2002 depending on the specific sign which is being designed.

**For guest houses and bed and breakfast businesses:**

- No signing will be permitted within a listed settlement.
- Where there is no commercial name the sign will show only the Thistle and "B&B".
- Where more than one Guest House and B&B share a sign, it may be appropriate to use generic sign (ie show no commercial names); however at the point where routes diverge and signs are specific for one business, these may include the commercial name if the applicant wishes.

**For caravan and camping parks:**

- Caravan and Camping Parks will use the relevant symbol and the name of the establishment but not the words "Caravan Park". E.g. Hillheugh Caravan Park which is accredited by VisitScotland would be signed with the optional thistle, the caravan symbol, tent if appropriate and the word "Hillheugh" with a mileage.
- It is a requirement of the Traffic Signs Regulations that before a site can be signed that there are a minimum of 20 pitches for casual overnight use and that the site is licensed under the Caravan Sites and Control Development Act 1960.

**Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013**

**8.3 It will be a condition of signposting that:**

- There will be no private directional or advertisement signs related to the establishment, with the exception of those at the entrances concerned.
- All unauthorised signs both within the road boundary and on private land must be removed at the owner's expense prior to tourist signs being erected.

**8.4** The Roads Authority will have absolute and final discretion to grant consent for, remove, or temporarily cover signs which it considers are no longer satisfactory for any reason. In taking such decisions, the Authority may take advice from VisitScotland and or Transport Scotland.

**8.5** Signs will remain the property of the the Roads Authority or in case of Trunk Roads, the property of Transport Scotland.

**8.6 Location of signs will be based on the following guidelines:**

- (i) Signing to **tourist attractions or services** will be signed from the nearest and/or most logical points on the Main Tourist Traffic Road (MTTR).
- (ii) Signing will be required at any junction, where the route changes direction, after the first sign has been located.
- (iii) In addition, for those that are approved, consideration may be given to signposting from an adjacent **Themed Trail**.
- (iv) If an attraction is a similar distance from more than one **MTTR** it may be signposted from all the appropriate roads.
- (v) Advanced signs on each side of the entrance to the **tourist attraction** may at the discretion of the Roads Authority (and on road safety grounds only) be permitted.



## **Chapter 9**

## **Costs**

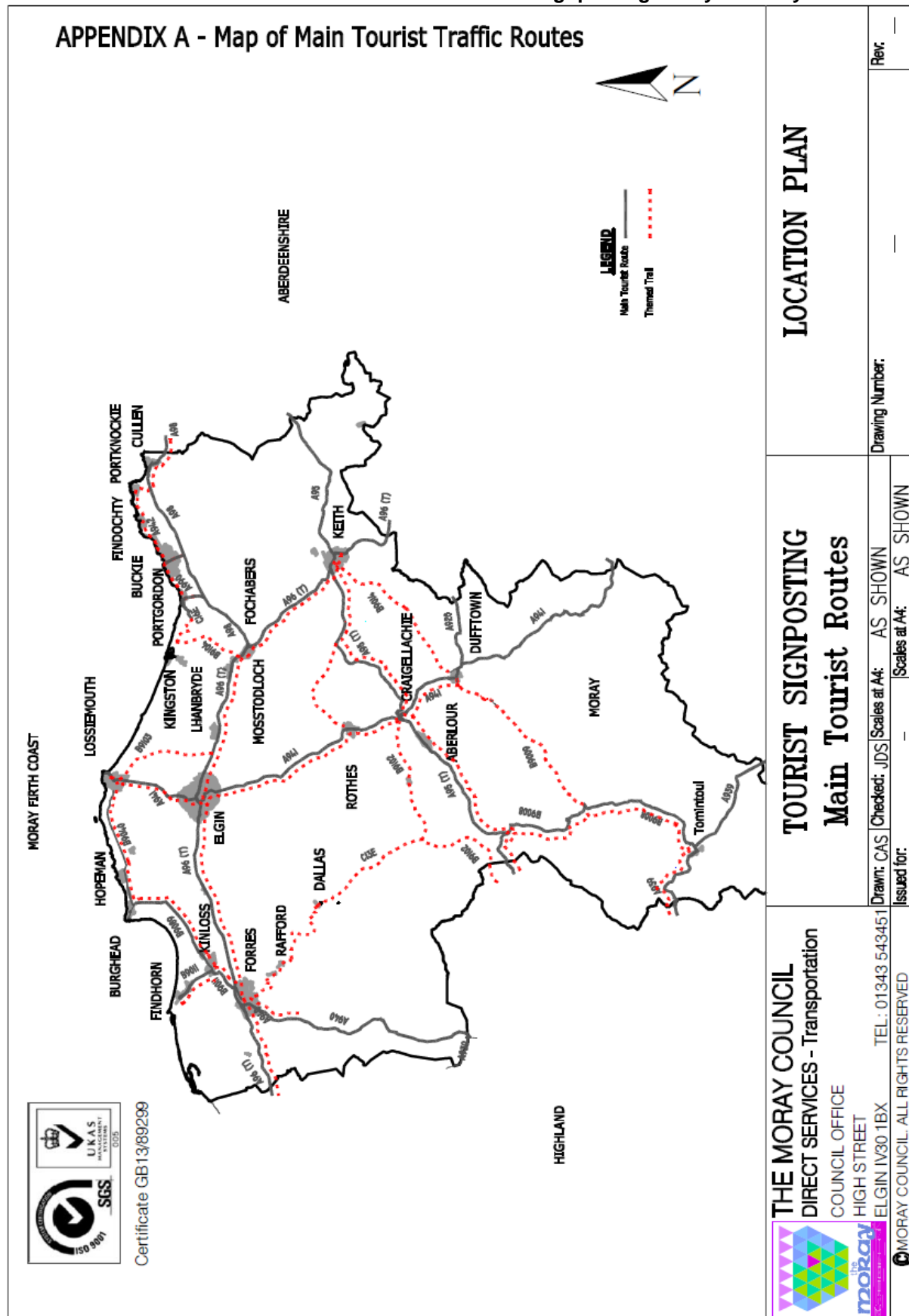
### **Local Road Network**

- 9.1** The costs of design, manufacture, erection, relocation, maintenance, and removal of signs will be borne in full by the establishment or establishments concerned.
- 9.2** The costs relating to composite signs ie signs shared by more than one attraction will be divided proportionately between the applicants.
- 9.3** In the event of the signs being damaged by a third party and no recharge being able to be made, or requiring replacement due to normal wear and tear the applicant will be responsible for the cost of the replacement. The applicant will be responsible for removal of signs if they do not retain their membership with VisitScotland, cease trading or any other non-compliance. The Roads Authority will inform the applicant of the cost before any work commences.

### **Trunk Road Network**

- 9.4** The applicant will be responsible for the costs of design, manufacture, erection, supervision of works, lane rental charges (if applicable), safety fencing (if required) and if necessary removal of the signs.
- 9.5** The Trunk Road Authority will be responsible for maintenance and repair of Trunk Road signs including cleaning and the operation of variable flaps or covers. The cost of this will be represented in the initial cost of provision.
- 9.6** The applicant will be responsible for the costs of replacement of the sign when it reaches the end of its serviceable life.
- 9.7** The costs relating to composite signs ie signs shared by more than one attraction will be divided proportionately between the applicants.

Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013



**Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013**

**APPENDIX B: List of Contact Names and Addresses**

**Moray Council**

Transportation Service  
PO Box 6760  
ELGIN  
IV30 9BX

Tel 01343 563812  
Fax 01343 563990

**VisitScotland**

Thistle House  
Beechwood park North  
INVERNESS  
IV2 3ED

Tel 01463 716996  
Fax 01463 717255

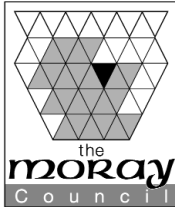
**Bear Scotland Ltd**

BEAR House  
Inveralmond Road  
Inveralmond Industrial Estate  
Perth  
PH1 3TW

Tel 01738 448600

**Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013**

**APPENDIX C**



**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

**James Smith**

**Engineer**

**PO Box 6760, Elgin, IV30 9BX**

**Telephone: 01343 563812**

**Fax: 01343 563990**

Address

**E-mail: james.smith@moray.gov.uk**

**Website: www.moray.gov.uk**

**Andy Duff**

**Senior Engineer**

**Telephone: 01343 563780**

Your Reference:

Our Reference: ARD/JDS/

Date

Dear

**APPLICATION FOR TOURIST SIGNPOSTING TRAFFIC SIGNS -  
NAME OF ATTRACTION**

Following your recent application I am now in a position to formally offer an agreement for **Name of Attraction** to be permitted tourist signing.

I hereby offer to authorise, erect and maintain traffic signs indicating the direction/location of **Name of Attraction**. You shall agree to pay within 28 days of invoice the total cost of £..... (plus VAT) for the costs associated with the tourist signing.

The traffic signs will remain the property of The Moray Council Roads Service as Roads Authority.

The Roads Service reserves the right to remove, reposition, or alter the design of the traffic signs at its absolute discretion in the interests of road safety, traffic management or for the purpose of accommodating other traffic signs at or in the vicinity of those locations.

In the event of traffic signs being damaged or requiring replacement due to normal wear and tear, you undertake to bear the cost/share of cost of repair or replacement,

**Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013**

failing which The Moray Council Roads Service will be entitled to remove the traffic signs and recover from you the costs of removal of the signs. In the event of more than one tourist attraction being indicated on traffic sign your liability under this clause will be shared equally with the other operators whose tourist attractions are indicated on the traffic sign.

If you cease trading, withdraw from Visit Scotland's Visitor Attraction scheme or fail to achieve an award from Visit Scotland, directional signing will be removed, altered and replaced as necessary at your expense, with no net detriment to others in the case of composite signs. In addition to the Visit Scotland Visitor Attraction Scheme, caravan and camping sites must provide a minimum of 20 touring pitches to be eligible for tourist signing.

If you agree to the above conditions please sign, date and return one copy of this letter to myself and retain one for your records.

Yours faithfully

**James Smith**  
**ENGINEER**

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**Docquet of Acceptance**

On the (1) ----- on behalf of (2) -----

I (3) ----- hereby accept your offer and the above conditions in respect of tourist signposting and conclude the agreement between us

(4) -----

- Insert (1)     Date  
          (2)     Attraction/Facility name  
          (3)     Authorised person's name (printed)  
          (4)     Authorised person's name (signed)