



CITY OF
YORK
COUNCIL

**POLICY ON
TOURISM SIGNING (BROWN
SIGNS)**

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SECTION 1

QUALITY ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- 1.1 A tourist attraction for signing purposes is now defined as a permanently established destination or facility that attracts or is used by visitors to an area, and which is open to the public without prior booking during its normal opening hours.
- 1.2 Within the City of York a tourism attraction should satisfy the following pre-requisites to be considered for tourism signing: -
- (i) All relevant consents must be valid - planning, fire, health and hygiene etc. The applicant would have to sign a declaration to this effect. Random check would be carried out to check authenticity. Failure to comply would rescind any approval.
 - (ii) Be open at least 150 days per year or when appropriate host 10 eligible events per year and have a minimum of 10,000 visitors per year.
 - (iii) Adequate off-street parking must be provided. This should fit in with the Council's interim parking policies. Where off-site parking is provided signing will only be permitted with the agreement of the car park owner and where the car park is within a reasonable walking distance of the destination.
 - (iv) Must be recognised by the Tourist Board or Local Authority as a tourist destination or facility and take part in an appropriate quality assurance scheme (see Tables 1 and 2) and satisfy the Council's quality requirements.
- 1.3 Given the diverse nature of the tourist industry and the demand it caters for the following could be eligible for tourism signing:

Attractions - An attraction is a permanently established destination, the primary purpose of which is to allow public access for entertainment, interest or education, rather than being a primary retail outlet or a venue for sporting, theatrical or film performances. It must be open to the public, without prior booking and should be capable of attracting day visitors or tourists as well as local residents.

All visitor attractions requesting tourist signs must meet the standards of the English Tourist Board's Visitors' Charter or individual Quality Assurance Schemes, examples of which are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

ATTRACTION	QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEME
Theme Parks	International Theme Park Association
Historic Properties and Castles	National Trust, English Heritage
Parks and Gardens	Royal Horticultural Society
Museums and Ancient Monuments	Museum Council, English Heritage
Historic Churches, Abbeys and Cathedrals	English Tourist Board
Areas of Special Interest	English Nature, Civic Society
Beaches, Picnic Areas, View Points	Tidy Britain Awards/Blue Flag Awards

Facilities - The following table applies only to types of facility in **rural areas** which could be eligible for tourist signs (see Annex 2):

Table 2

FACILITY	QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEME
Hotels/ Serviced Accommodation	It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate membership of one of the following: the English Tourist Board's National grading and classification scheme, the AA Scheme or the RAC Scheme. Hotels that cater for the homeless are not eligible.
Chalets/Cabins	Applicants must be a member of the English Tourist Board's Quality Standards for self-catering accommodation scheme.
Caravans/Camping (including Static Caravans)	Applicants must be members of the English Tourist Board's British Graded Holiday Parks "Q" Scheme and/or hold a Caravan Club licence.
Public Houses	Meals must be available at lunchtimes and evenings at least 6 days/week. Facilities must be available inside the pub to allow children to accompany their parents. Where overnight accommodation is provided registration with one of the quality assurance schemes is required. Membership of the Brewers Licence Retailers Association or Tied Pub Owners.
Restaurants/Cafés	Applicants must demonstrate steps taken to cater specifically for visitors from outside the immediate local area, e.g. membership of the Regional Tourist Board and participation in their "Welcome Host" initiative. Where appropriate, Applicants must be members of the Brewers' Association or Tied Pub Owners and must demonstrate evidence of promotion to the tourist market.

Leisure and Sport facilities	Facilities must be open to the public without prior booking during normal opening hours. For sporting events a minimum number of ten events per annum must be held. In this case the application will be considered as a tourist attraction for signing purposes. Membership of the Sports Council is also required.
Theatres, Cinemas and Concert Venues	Membership of the Arts Council
Retail Facilities	To be signed shops must have facilities and features that are aimed specifically at tourists - it is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate this. Exceptions to this requirement will be considered in rural areas in recognition of tourism's importance to the development and maintenance of rural economies. Membership of Chamber of Commerce.
Tourist Information Centres	Must be recognised by the English Tourist Board
Tourist Trails, Leisure Drives and Cycle Routes	English Tourist Board, Sustrans

SECTION 2

LOCATIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

VISITOR ATTRACTIONS (As defined in Section 1)	CRITERIA
<u>Urban Areas</u> (As defined on the attached list)	In urban areas priority will be given to signing to car parks and tourist information facilities rather than individual attractions. For larger visitor attractions signing may be permitted where it is justified for traffic management/road safety purposes. An exception to this will be signing implemented as part of a comprehensive strategy promoted by the City of York Council in the pursuance of its Local/District Planning Policies etc. This should be completed in association with local tourism operators, Yorkshire Tourist Board, Chamber of Commerce and other interested organisations via First Stop York. It is anticipated that these schemes will primarily consist of pedestrian signing to/from car parks and tourist information facilities.
<u>Rural Areas</u>	Provided “Quality” criteria are satisfied signing may be provided in accordance with criteria given in Section 3 - Implementation.

FACILITIES (As defined in Section1)	CRITERIA
<u>Urban Areas</u> (As defined on the attached list)	In urban areas signs to facilities will not usually be provided. As for Visitor Attractions an exception to this rule will be pedestrian signs, provided as part of an overall strategy. It remains unlikely, however, that signs to individual facilities will be provided. Signs approved as part of this process will generally be generic signs to groups of similar establishments, e.g. “Hotels”, “B & B”, “Amusements”, “Shops”, etc. Where traffic management and road safety benefits justify, Highway signing may be utilised for this purpose, as opposed to Brown Signs.
<u>Rural Areas</u>	Provided “Quality” criteria are satisfied, signs may be provided. It should be noted, however, in village situations signs to facilities will not normally be provided. Composite signs at entry points to villages will be permitted to indicate facilities available. In environmentally sensitive areas limitations on the type or location of signs may apply as set out in Annex 3 - Implementation.

See ON for definition of "urban".

**URBAN LOCATIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE LOCATIONAL CRITERIA
(Settlements etc. not necessarily forming contiguous development with the main York urban area).**

Haxby/Wigginton
Strensall
Huntington/Earswick
New Earswick
Osballdwick/Murton
Dunnington
Heslington
Fulford
Wheldrake
Elvington
Bishopthorpe
Copmanthorpe
Nether/Upper Poppleton
Monks Cross *
Clifton Moor *
Naburn (designer outlet centre) *
Rufforth

Note

* = Multiple retail and/or leisure locations which would normally be signed generically and not for individual attraction/retail outlets/leisure facilities.

SECTION 3

IMPLEMENTATION

City of York Council is the Highway Authority for all roads in its area, with the exception of the A64. For this road the Department of Transport's Highways Agency is the Highway Authority. Applications for tourist signs that involve Trunk Roads need to be approved by the Highways Agency. For this reason guidelines for implementation are identified below for City of York roads and Trunk Roads, as already decided by the Highway Authority.

City of York Roads

It is stressed that applications for tourist signs will be considered individually - eligibility under Annex 1 and 2 of the criteria does not confer automatic entitlement to signs.

- (i) Maximum number of tourist destinations at an individual signing location is six. Where more than six applications are received priority will be given to the attraction/facility with greater visitor numbers or where possible generic descriptions will be used e.g. The Castle Area. The maximum number of destinations to be signed may be reduced from six when the signs accommodate additional information or where the number of non-tourist signs is reaching a point where additional signs need to be minimised for environmental or safety reasons. Regardless of the number of signs, advice contained in Local Transport Notices 1/94 and 2/94 regarding sign design is to be adhered to at all times.
- (ii) Signing will normally only be allowed from the nearest main road or settlement, whichever is the shortest distance. Exemptions may be made to this rule for large visitor attractions where this is justified on traffic management/road safety grounds. It should not be assumed that signing would be provided for all directions of access. Generally, a maximum distance of 5 miles will be imposed although longer distances may be appropriate for some larger attractions.
- (iii) Signing will only be agreed where the road network to/from the destination is capable of safely accommodating the level of traffic and type of vehicle that the provision of signing may generate.
- (iv) Where a facility qualifies for tourism signs, any existing signs to that facility of a different type should be removed.
- (v) Signs should be the minimum number and size in accordance with road safety and traffic management needs.
- (vi) Generally, tourist signing will not be provided to facilities that are located on major routes or main streets. However, traffic management and road safety is the primary concern. Therefore facilities located within villages will not normally be signed, however, composite signs may be used at the main entry points, in association with village name signs, to indicate services available. These signs will use generic terms

(e.g. “Hotels”, “Restaurants”, “Tourist Shopping”) or more preferably symbols. For these types of signs the off-street parking requirement will not apply.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

(e.g. Conservation Areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Scheduled Monuments etc.)

- (i) In environmentally sensitive areas priority will be given to composite signs. Where similar facilities are available priority will be given to signs incorporating generic rather than individual terms. Subsequent applicants will be required to pay for the provision of new composite signs where necessary. In schemes requiring signs at more than 2 junctions use will be made of symbols, utilising, where possible, existing signing legends, rather than providing additional continuity signing.

Bypassed Communities

- (i) Bypassed communities may use white on brown tourist signs to welcome visitors and indicate the availability of services and features of particular interest to tourists rather than the availability of services for traffic in general. The signs may include an appropriate short descriptive phrase to highlight features likely to be of interest to tourists, such as ‘Anglo-Saxon Walled Town’ words and/or symbols may be used to indicate facilities/attractions available.

Tourist Trails

- (i) Where there is an alternative route to a destination that goes along a route of special interest, this can be signed, repeating the signs as necessary along the route, until the named destination(s) is reached. The legend ‘Tourist Route’ or ‘Scenic Route’ may be used.

Pedestrian Signing

- (i) Pedestrian signing schemes should include signing to/from car parks within the scheme. Visitor information at the car park in the form of a map marking the key visitor facilities and attractions is recommended.

Trunk Roads - Highway Authority Criteria already set

Traffic signs to Tourist Attractions and facilities in England: Criteria for signs on trunk roads and motorways.

- (i) Criteria for all-purpose single carriageways and dual carriageways with speed limits of less than 50 mph.
 - A tourist attraction should only be signed from a trunk road if it is also signed on the adjacent local road network, under the criteria adopted by the local traffic authority;

- The route onto which traffic is being directed must be the most suitable link between the attraction and the trunk road;
 - Adequate parking should be provided at the attraction or in the vicinity;
 - Signing may be refused because of siting difficulties or where the number of destinations signed at a single junction would be excessive. In general six tourist destinations should be regarded as the maximum that drivers can absorb at a single junction, and less than six where long names are involved, or additional information, including symbols is provided on the sign, or the number of non-tourist destinations signed is approaching overload;
 - Tourist attractions with direct access to an all-purpose trunk road may not need signing if the entrance is visible and identifiable from a distance that allows vehicles to approach it safely. In other cases, (especially on the high speed roads referred to in (ii) below) advance direction signs and/or flag signs may be needed to guide traffic safely to the attraction. Applications for signs should be considered on their merits, and the attractions signed should be least meet the criteria for signing adopted by the local highway authority.
- (ii) Criteria for all-purpose dual carriageways with a speed limit of 50 mph or above
- As above, but additionally:
 - The attraction should normally be within 20 miles of the junction from which it is to be signed;
 - Taking account of the higher speeds of traffic on such dual carriageway roads, the number of tourist attractions signed should not exceed four, so that signs will be legible and of a manageable size.
- (iii) Criteria for motorways and fully grade-separated all purpose dual carriageways
- As at II, but additionally:
 - The attraction should have at least 150,000 visitors a year;
 - The new sign diagrams for tourist facilities and bypassed communities (2,324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328 and 2329) may not be erected on motorways;
 - On All Purpose Trunk Roads nearby groups of attractions and facilities can be signed collectively, using a simplified variant of diagram 2215, if collectively they meet the visitor number criterion. It will probably not be possible to show the name of each individual attraction in full, and in such cases symbols, rather than legends may be used to indicate the types of attraction. Signs will not be provided for individual tourist facilities.

Other Urban Areas

In large urban areas, consideration needs to be given to the form of transport most suited to the attraction. In many cases pedestrian signing from public transport facilities will be more appropriate than vehicle signing, particularly where car or coach access to the attraction is discouraged for environmental reasons.

Choice where more attractions request signing than can safely be accommodated

Where decisions have to be taken about which attraction to sign, the basis for those decisions should be guided by the needs of traffic management - so in general, attractions with higher visitor numbers will have a higher claim to be signed than those with fewer visitors. Proximity to the trunk road may also be used as a selection criterion where visitor numbers alone do not establish a clear ranking.

Alternative Directions of Access

There should be no expectation of signing specifically from each possible direction of access, although where possible and appropriate in traffic management terms, alternative routes may be signed.

SECTION 4

APPLICATION PROCEDURE/FINANCE

It is the responsibility of the Council as Highway Authority to vet applications for tourist signs. The Council may, however, in some instances, wish to seek the views of the Yorkshire Tourist Board, other Councils and First Stop York, when vetting applications.

All signing provided under Circular Roads 3/95 will be at the expense of the applicant. This will include the cost of administration and the provision and erection of the signs. It should be noted that replacement costs, resulting from vehicle damage or general wear and tear must be met by the applicant or the sign will be removed. Applicants will be required to pay for the signs prior to production. The fee level will be reviewed annually.

The following procedure is to be adopted when applying for tourist signs.

- (i) The applicant shall, having considered the attraction/facility against the Eligibility Criteria I and II, apply in writing for the provision of tourist signs. The applicant should provide confirmation of membership of Quality Assurance schemes and/or relevance to tourism, as appropriate. The application will then be considered for signing in accordance with Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the policy.

An administration fee will be payable to initiate the work and investigations. The current charge can be found on the application form. For larger attractions and/or complex signing schemes a larger initial fee will be required, payable to the City of York Council, which will cover the cost of assessment of the application against the policy and site inspection/meeting, as deemed appropriate. The fee is non-refundable, in the event of the application being refused. Where applications are refused an explanation will be given as to the reasons for refusal.

A response will generally be provided within 4 weeks of making the application.

- (ii) Following initial agreement by the Council to signing proposals in (i), the Council will undertake detailed design of the tourist sign(s) in accordance with the appropriate standards. The sign details and detailed costing for their design, provision and erection will be forwarded to the applicant for final agreement.

Stage (ii) will normally be completed within 4 weeks after confirmation by the applicant of wanting to go ahead.

- (iii) On receipt of the agreed payment in (ii) above, orders will be placed with sign manufacturers and when received, the signs erected. Applicants should note that on occasion, dependent on workload, up to six weeks should be allowed for the manufacture of the sign by the sign manufacturer.

Only a contractor employed by the City of York Council will be permitted to erect the signs on the highway.

Signs will normally be erected within four weeks of delivery. It is estimated that simple signs erected on existing pole will cost £250, but more complex signs and/or ones needing new poles may cost considerably more.

- (iv) It is recommended that applicants apply for the signs in the autumn to allow sufficient time for signs to be in place for the following season.
- (v) Further guidance on the procedure, or qualifying criteria, is available from the, City of York Council via the Network Management Section.

SECTION 5

TYPICAL EXAMPLES OF APPLICATIONS AND THEIR TREATMENT

	Description	Response (subject to quality criteria etc. being OK)
(1)	Public House/restaurant set in isolated location NOT linked to a village	Approval acceptable from nearest (one only) main road and at side road. All other signs to be removed
(2)	Public house in small village	Refused, as visitors would expect to find a pub in such locations.
(3)	Caravan/camping site on edge of village/urban area: (a) NOT registered with Caravan Club; (b) Registered	Refused Approved to be signed from nearest main road on which village is signed.
(4)	Several facilities in village (either "urban" or not).	Refused, but generic sign possible at village edge on main access road saying "Facilities", "Services" or equal.
(5)	Large 3 star hotel in centre of York: (a) With car parking; (b) Without car parking.	Refused for (a) or (b):
(6)	A group of guest houses/B&B establishments: (a) On a rural approach road; (b) Off a radial in the urban area	Refused. This type of establishment is of the sort expected in such area by visitors and would lead to a multiplicity of signs and clutter.
(7)	Museum: (a) In or close to City centre with or without own car parking (whether or not mention on signs from A1) (b) In the non "urban" area (i) With own car parking (ii) Without own car parking	Refused, not in criteria. Could/should be included on finger post signing and from car parks. Approved from main road Refused - does not meet criteria.

SECTION 6

Destinations currently sign posted in the City of York Area

(Mainly agreed following completion of the Outer Ring Road (A1237) in 1987)

1. National Rail Museum (NRM)
2. Youth hostel (YHA)
3. € - Linked to car parks and on maps
4. Tourist Information
5. Barbican Leisure Centre
6. Yorkshire Museum of Farming
7. Caravan and Camping sites (Terry Avenue and others)
8. Rowntree Park - linked to campsite symbols
9. York Racecourse
10. Yorkshire Air Museum
11. Beningbrough Hall