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Transport Planning Society

The Transport Planning Society's response to the consultation to update the Strategic road network and the delivery of sustainable development (circular 02/2013)

Transport Planning Society response

About the Transport Planning Society

[The Transport Planning Society \(TPS\)](#) is the only professional body focusing entirely on transport planning in the UK. The aim of the Society is to raise the profile of transport planning and chart a course for the profession.

Introduction

The Transport Planning Society welcomes the release of this update to Circular 02/2013 and the opportunity to respond through the consultation. Overall, we are pleased with the tone and direction of this document and recommend its publication as soon as is possible. Our responses are limited to questions 1 to 4 only.

[Link to the full consultation document for reference.](#)

Question 1 – Introduction

This section updates the introductory paragraphs of C02/2013 by setting out the role of National Highways (NH) and the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and how the Circular should be applied, as informed by the wording in NH's Licence and Road Investment Strategy 2. It also sets out that the SRN plays a vital role in growing the economy, levelling up the country and strengthening the Union.

For more information, please refer to section 3.2 of the consultation.

Do you agree or disagree with the changes proposed in the introduction section?

The update clearly puts the onus on local authorities and developers to locate and design new developments that are or can be made sustainable (sections 12 and 13) and we strongly agree.

Question 2 – New connections and capacity enhancements

The revised text reflects changes to the planning system since the Circular's publication, the publication of National Highways' Licence, and makes a small number of other minor changes.

For more information, please refer to section 3.3 of the consultation

Do you agree or disagree with the changes proposed in the new connections and capacity enhancements section?

Various other sections repeat the position that National Highways has taken, that it needs to be satisfied that all reasonable options have been exhausted before considering new connections to the SRN (section 19), and we agree.

Question 3 – Engagement with plan making

The revised text reflects changes to the planning system since the circular's publication, the national planning policy framework (NPPF) and planning practice guidance (PPG), and makes a small number of other minor changes

For more information, please refer to section 3.4 of the consultation

Do you agree or disagree with the changes proposed in the engagement with plan-making section?

The Society agrees that plan-making must not compromise the SRN's prime function to enable the long-distance movement of people and goods (section 29), and that local plans and spatial development strategies explore all reasonable options to reduce reliance on the SRN (section 32). The Transport Planning Society urges National Highways to fulfil this position conscientiously. We are encouraged that the proposed update to the Circular states (section 37) that planned improvements to the SRN must include the development of safe and integrated networks for pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders where appropriate.

Question 4 – Engagement with planning decision making

The revised text reflects changes to the planning system since the Circular's publication, the statutory requirements, updates general principles to prioritise sustainable transport opportunities, and makes a small number of other minor changes

For more information, please refer to section 3.5 of the consultation.

Do you agree or disagree with the changes proposed in the engagement with decision-taking section?

National Highways should actively contribute to the Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan's principles. An example is where the company should take an active role in ensuring that new developments should give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and facilitate access to high-quality public transport; and that the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility are appropriately addressed in relation to all modes of transport (section 43).

We are encouraged that the proposed update to the Circular states that due consideration should be given to home and street layouts, broadband infrastructure, safe and secure cycle parking, and access to local amenities and open space in support of these aims (section 44). Again, we encourage National Highways to use its powers positively, not just from a SRN perspective, but also reflecting its responsibility to contribute to the government's wider economic, social, and environmental objectives, in particular the enabling of sustainable economic growth.

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