

## WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

### Salisbury AREA BOARD (19 April 2012)

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#### Brown Tourism Signs

#### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To provide information on a request that signs indicating Salisbury as a tourist destination be provided on the nearby motorways and trunk roads, including the A303 and the M3.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 At the last meeting of the Salisbury Area Board the following resolution was made (in part);

*In terms of attracting more tourists, it was suggested that brown tourist signs should be erected on the nearby motorways and trunk routes, including the A303 and the M3. It was agreed that a report be requested from officers to outline the cost implications of this.*

#### 3. Main Considerations

- 3.1 Since the 1980s directions to qualifying tourist attractions from the highway network have been provided on brown background signs, either incorporated into regular direction signs or as a standalone tier of signing.
- 3.2 The main purpose of brown tourist signs **“is to guide visitors to a pre-selected destination along the most appropriate route at the latter stages of their journey, particularly where destinations are difficult to find.”** (Ref: TA93/04: *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges – Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England*).
- 3.3 The extent to which such signs are provided is determined by local traffic and environmental circumstances; home traffic authorities have the discretion to limit signing density in order to control such factors as information overload and environmental intrusion, the latter being especially pertinent to Salisbury and its surrounding area.
- 3.4 **“Tourist signs are only an aid to safe and efficient navigation, which complement, but cannot replace, pre-planning material such as maps and atlases. Although signs may be helpful in supplementing marketing initiatives,**

**they should not be used as a substitute for promotional material.” (Ref: TA93/04)**

- 3.5 Tourist signing **“should supplement rather than duplicate the information already provided on existing directional signs. Generally, white on brown signs should only be used where there are clear benefits to the road users (e.g. for safety concerns, where locations are difficult to find, or to encourage visitors to use certain routes).” (Ref: TA93/04)** In this context it is correct and reasonable that Salisbury is already signed conventionally, as a primary destination from the motorway and trunk road network (M3, M27 and A36). Since the city is situated at the confluence of six primary or principal roads (A30, A36, A338, A345, A360 and A354) it can be considered to be quite adequately served (and signed) from all points of the compass. Moreover, the main holiday route to the south west (A303) references Salisbury at no fewer than four junctions: Parkhouse Corner (A338), Countess roundabout, Amesbury (A345), Longbarrow roundabout (A360) and Wylde interchange (A36). It is noteworthy that visitors leaving Stonehenge in any of three possible directions pass signs to Salisbury within two miles of the exit from that attraction.
- 3.6 Department of Transport regulations do not allow for the inclusion of brown panels on blue motorway direction signs; directions to tourist attractions may therefore be provided on a separate sequence of signs approaching the appropriate junction. At the motorway junction nearest Salisbury (M27: Junction 2 / A36) brown signs are already in place directing visitors to “Paultons Park” and “Beaulieu National Motor Museum”. Under “General Safety Considerations” TA93/04 advises that the maximum number of tourist destinations on motorway signing should not exceed three; it therefore follows that the only logical additional legend that could be added to the existing signs would be “Salisbury”. This would be contrary to the previously referenced advice concerning duplication of information.
- 3.7 Since Salisbury is already established so comprehensively within the existing signing provisions of the south of England trunk, primary and principal route network it is considered that a special case for its authorisation on additional brown signing could not be made.
- 3.8 In addition it should be noted that the Motorway and Trunk Road network in England are the responsibility of the Highways Agency rather than local Council’s as the home traffic authorities. Therefore even if special authorisation was granted the agreement of the Highways Agency would be required before any signs could be placed on their roads.

## **4. Implications**

### **4.1. Financial Implications**

None identified at this stage.

### **4.2. Legal Implications**

None identified at this stage.

#### 4.3. HR Implications

None identified at this stage.

#### 4.4. Equality and Diversity Implications

None identified at this stage.

### **5. Recommendation**

It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted.:

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Appendices: None

Background papers: None