



Department of Planning,  
Lands and Heritage



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DRAFT **DC Policy** **5.1**

Regional roads (vehicular access)



DRAFT **Development Control Policy 5.1**  
Regional roads (vehicular access)

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## Contents

<b>Background notes</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Policy objectives</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3 Policy measures</b>	<b>2</b>
3.1 Safety	2
3.2 Function	2
3.3 Development requirements	3

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website: [www.dplh.wa.gov.au](http://www.dplh.wa.gov.au)  
email: [corporate@dplh.wa.gov.au](mailto:corporate@dplh.wa.gov.au)

tel: 08 6551 8002  
fax: 08 6551 9001  
National Relay Service: 13 36 77  
infoline: 1800 626 477

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## Background notes

1. This policy addresses matters relating to the control of development adjacent to regional roads. The policy provides information and guidance in planning for, and determining applications which include, vehicular access to regional roads. It supersedes the previous policy adopted by the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) in June 1998.
2. Related Development Control Policy (DCP) and other policy of the Commission are:
  - DCP 1.7 - General road planning
  - Liveable Neighbourhoods (2009)*

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out the principles to be applied when considering proposals for vehicle access to or from developments abutting regional roads. It is intended to inform government agencies, local government and prospective developers of these principles and to act as guidelines for the exercise of development control powers in this regard.
- 1.2 For the purpose of this policy, the following terms have the meanings assigned to them:
  - 'Access' means both entry to and exit from either a road, right-of-way/laneway or abutting development by a vehicle.
  - 'Driveway' is the portion of the paved vehicle access way between a car parking area and the property boundary, excluding any associated landscaping or pedestrian path on either side.
  - 'Intersection' is the meeting point of two or more roads.
  - 'Regional Road' means any road reserved under the Metropolitan Region Scheme, Peel Region Scheme and the Greater Bunbury Region Scheme that is classified as Primary Regional Roads and Other Regional Roads or any road that has the designated functions of a Primary Distributor or Integrator Arterial

in the regional network in accordance with *Liveable Neighbourhoods* functional road classification.

- 1.3 It is clearly inappropriate to use the term driveway for accesses to large developments which justify their own system of internal access roads leading to car parks. Paragraph 3.3.4 describes the internal road system for such developments.

## 2. Policy objectives

- To outline planning principles to be applied in the determination of proposals for vehicle access to regional roads.
- To ensure that vehicle access to regional roads and the type of abutting developments is controlled and conforms with sound land use and transport planning principles.
- To improve traffic flow and safety on all regional roads, either new or existing, by minimising the number of intersections or driveways.



### 3. Policy measures

#### 3.1 Safety

3.1.1 A safe environment and an efficient road system require compatibility between development abutting the road and vehicular and other traffic movement (including pedestrian and cyclist). As regional roads are principally for through traffic movement, ideally there should be no direct vehicular access to or from abutting properties with the exception of cyclists.

3.1.2 However, many existing regional roads perform two functions: they carry through traffic and, at the same time, give direct access to properties fronting the road. Furthermore, there has been a tendency for frontage properties to be developed for commercial uses which attract higher volumes of turning traffic than do residential uses.

3.1.3 With the continued growth of traffic in the metropolitan region and those regions subject to regional planning schemes, it is clear that the provision of direct access is not compatible with the requirements of safe vehicular movement for the following reasons:

- Turning traffic (both leaving and entering the road) causes conflict and is thereby a contributory cause of accidents. Research shows that the

majority of accidents happen adjacent to intersections and driveways where most turning movements occur. Accident rates are consistently higher on roads where access is permitted than on roads with full or partial access control. Furthermore, the road accident rate increases as the number of access points along the road increases.

- Intersections and driveways contribute to delays and congestion, as turning vehicles both slow and interrupt the flow of vehicle traffic. Where commercial development abuts the road, these effects are greater because commercial development generates more turning traffic than residential developments.

3.1.4 In summary, the capacity of regional roads to carry traffic, the safety of that traffic, and the flow of traffic are all related to access - the fewer the number of driveways and intersections, the smoother the traffic flow and safer the road.

#### 3.2 Function

3.2.1 The functional classification of roads and streets is an essential first stage in the establishment of a network which can satisfy the requirements of both traffic movement and development. The WAPC has adopted the functional road classification system contained in *Liveable Neighbourhoods*,

namely Primary Distributors, Integrator Arterials, Neighbourhood Connectors and Access Streets.

3.2.2 The access control requirements of this policy apply to Primary Regional Roads and Other Regional Roads, which includes all categories of regional roads designated in the Metropolitan Region Scheme, Peel Region Scheme and Greater Bunbury Region Scheme.

3.2.3 There are three categories of regional roads:

Category 1 road means that frontage access is not allowed (control of access);

Category 2 road means that frontage access may be allowed subject to approval; and

Category 3 road means that the subject regional road reservation is not accurately defined or is subject to review by the agency that is responsible for planning of the regional road.

3.2.4 Integrator Arterials are not shown and reserved in region schemes. The control of access to and from development on these roads is the responsibility of local governments.



### 3.3 Development requirements

- 3.3.1 In considering applications for access on regional roads, the effects of the land development proposals on traffic flow and road safety will be the primary consideration. The more important the regional road in the road hierarchy, the greater the importance attached to these factors. In general, the WAPC will seek to minimise the creation of new driveways on regional roads and rationalise existing access arrangements.
- 3.3.2 Where regional roads are constructed or planned to freeway standards, no access to frontage development is permitted. On regional roads not constructed or planned to freeway standards, there is a general presumption on traffic and safety grounds against the creation of new driveways or increased use of existing accesses to these roads. Where alternative access is or could be made available from side or rear streets or from rights-of-way or laneways, no access shall be permitted to the regional road unless special circumstances apply.
- 3.3.3 An arrangement whereby adjoining owners enter into cross-easement agreements to provide reciprocal rights of access across adjacent lots may be required as a means of rationalising access to the regional roads.
- 3.3.4 The types of development that would be allowed access to a regional road include large traffic generators such as major shopping, recreation or community centres. These would justify either a neighbourhood connector or access road, leading from an intersection with the regional road to car parks servicing the centre.
- 3.3.5 In determining applications for development involving the formation, laying out or alteration of a means of access to regional roads, the following must be considered:
- i) the effects of the development on traffic flow and safety, the character and function of the road, the volume and speed of traffic, the width of the carriageway and visibility; and
  - ii) the ultimate volume and type of traffic generated by the development.
- 3.3.6 Where access is permitted, conditions may be imposed prescribing the location and width of the intersection or driveway to ensure adequate visibility and to provide for the safe and convenient movement of vehicles both entering and leaving the traffic stream. In determining design requirements for junctions and driveways, the WAPC has regard to standards recommended by both the AUSTRROADS and Main Roads Western Australia.