

Report for Resolution

Report to	Norwich Highways Agency Committee 27 January 2011	Item 8
Report of	Head of Transportation	
Subject	Proposed Policy on Providing Accesses to the Public Highway from Private Land	

Purpose

To adopt a policy to ensure that the provision of private accesses onto the public highway does not cause issues of highway safety, or exacerbate existing on-street parking issues.

Recommendations

The committee is recommended to adopt the policy as detailed in the body of the report for the assessment of requests for the provision of accesses onto the public highway.

Financial Consequences

There are no direct financial consequences as the council already has to assess requests for vehicular access and crossovers.

Strategic Priority and Outcome/Service Priorities

The report helps to meet the strategic priority 'Aiming for excellence – ensuring the Council is efficient in its use of resources, is effective in delivering its plans, is a good employer and communicates effectively with its customers.

Contact Officers

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Background Documents

Norfolk County Council Vehicle Access Guidance – 6 April 2010

Introduction

1. When an individual or developer proposes to make a new access onto the highway (whether it is a connection for a new road, or a vehicular crossover to provide access to a driveway), they need to seek the permission of the Council. Where the proposed access is onto a classified highway (Class A, B or C roads), planning permission is required.
2. Development Management policies are currently being reviewed for inclusion in the Local Development Framework (LDF). As part of that review, it is proposed to introduce a policy that sets out the criteria for assessing the suitability of the access, to determine whether Planning Permission should be granted.
3. There are, however, access is proposed onto the public highway on roads which are not classified and the Highways Authority is required to make a decision whether to accept, alter or reject any proposal under S184 of the Highways Act. Currently this is done on a case, by case basis, consistent with the approach that has been taken by the County Council.
4. There are, however, additional issues that have arisen which are principally related to the urban character of the City, usually within the Controlled parking Zones consequent on the decision to grant permission for accesses, particularly in locations where on-street parking is at a premium. This is a particular issue as new accesses may result in the effective loss of on street parking provision replacing it with a provision only available to a single resident. Additionally, these accesses adversely affect the street scene and the Council is routinely faced with complaints about obstruction, and requests for double yellow lines, which it is impractical to provide. It has also proved difficult to resist new accesses to premises in locations with potential safety implications, despite the County guidance, as there is no formal policy.
5. The emerging policy, which will form part of the Local Development Framework, considered by the City Councils Executive on the 19th January 2011 is attached as Appendix A. This policy is consistent with the County Councils approach, but includes reference to these additional issues. To ensure consistency in decision making, and to avoid any conflict that may potentially occur by having a different policy to that being used to assess Planning Applications it is suggested that the same policy is adopted by this Committee to inform decision made under S184 of the Highways Act.

Appendix A: Recommended Policy

Policy DM30

Access and Highway Safety

The design of roads and spaces within new developments, and those which are being substantially redeveloped, must take account of the urban environment and overall setting of the scheme.

Opportunities will be sought to remove unnecessary access points onto the principal or main distributor routes (as defined in the NATS route hierarchy). New vehicular accesses onto these routes will only be permitted where there is no practical alternative from a more minor route and accesses to single dwellings will be resisted. Any new access must allow for access and egress in a forward gear.

In other locations, accesses (including private driveways) will be acceptable where:

- a) those onto local access routes can access and egress in a forward gear;
- b) they are not close to an existing junction, the inside bend of a road, within the limits of a pedestrian crossing or the brow of a hill;
- c) they would not result in the loss of street trees, a significant area of verge, or other landscape feature;
- d) there is sufficient space available within the curtilage of the site to accommodate the size of vehicle likely to be used by an existing or future occupier;
- e) in areas with existing on street car parking pressure, the gain in terms of off-street parking would significantly outweigh the loss of any existing on-street parking;
- f) the quality of the street scene is maintained; and
- g) appropriate adjustments are made to existing on-street waiting arrangements, at the developer's expense.

Development within, over or adjacent to spaces or streets that form part of the public realm will ensure that adequate clearance either below or around the structure is available to allow the safe passage of pedestrians, cyclists and, where appropriate, vehicles.