

Report for Resolution

Report to Norwich Highways Agency Committee
25 September 2008

Report of Head of Transportation and Landscape

Subject The Way Forward for the Introduction of a 20mph Speed
Limit on all Unclassified Residential Roads in Norwich

Item

9

Purpose

To propose to members an appropriate way forward to introduce signed only 20mph speed limits on all unclassified residential roads in Norwich.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

1. agree to introduce the 20mph signed only speed limit on unclassified roads in three pilot areas.
2. ask the Head of Transportation and Landscape and Head of Legal Services to carry out the necessary statutory procedures to introduce a 20mph speed limit in the following areas:
 - Jex Road as shown on plan number PL/TR/3355/783/2
 - Vauxhall Street / Newmarket Street as shown on plan number PL/TR/3355/783/1
 - Borrowdale Drive as shown on plan number PL/TR/3355/783/3
3. ask the Head of Transportation and Landscape to carry out extensive evaluation of the 3 pilot areas and report back to the September 2009 meeting with the results of that evaluation and proposals for extending the scheme.

Financial Consequences

The financial consequences introducing a signed only 20mph speed limit on all residential unclassified roads is likely to be in excess of £350k. It is proposed to spend £40k from the Local Transport Plan budget in 2008/09 to progress 3 pilot areas. The full financial consequences are discussed within this report.

Strategic Objective/Service Priorities

The report helps to achieve the corporate objective to make Norwich safe and secure, building strong and proud local communities and the service plan priority of improving safety on roads and providing realistic sustainable transport options

Contact Officers

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Background Documents

Report

Introduction

1. At your meeting in May 2008 you agreed to recommend the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit ('signed only') throughout the unclassified, residential road network in Norwich, and to request the officers to draw up plans and costs for its implementation. This resolution was in response to a motion passed by the City Council in 2007 calling for 20mph speed limits in all residential areas.
2. The plan attached as appendix 1 shows the streets that would be included within such a signed only 20mph speed limit.
3. The City Council's Executive will be considering this report at its meeting on 17 September 2008. The Executive is being asked to endorse the approach recommended in this report and to inform this Committee accordingly.

Budget Implications

4. In the current financial year there is no allocation within the Speed Management / Traffic Calming budget in the Local Transport Plan to progress the introduction of the City Wide 20mph speed limit. Within that budget for 2008/09 there are funds available to implement schemes in Mount Pleasant, Rosary Road and Bowthorpe Road and fees for designing and consulting on schemes for the Jex Road Area and the Vauxhall Street area. Additionally there are fees to develop and start implementing a scheme in the Silver Road area. These were specifically allocated to mitigate any effects of the banned right turns at the Barrack Street / Silver Road junction that was required by the Barrack Street widening
5. As the schemes for Mount Pleasant, Rosary Road and Bowthorpe Road are well progressed and have been consulted on, it is proposed that these are implemented as planned. Also as the Silver Road monies were allocated for a specific purpose, it is proposed that this is also progressed.
6. However it is suggested that the £40k fees currently allocated to the Jex Road and Vauxhall Street areas be used to introduce the signed only 20mph speed limit in 3 pilot areas in the City, so that the effectiveness and impact of the restriction can be fully assessed.
7. This is considered necessary as the practice of signed only 20mph speed limits in areas where it cannot be demonstrated that existing speeds are close to 20mph, is currently contrary to County Council policy and experience elsewhere in the country calls into question their effectiveness. Also Local Transport Plan expenditure needs to be justified to government to ensure future budget streams are maintained.

8. By looking at 3 pilot areas the 20mph limit could be fully evaluated. This would involve looking at the following factors:-
- Vehicle speeds and volumes
 - Public perception to the restriction,
 - The impact on the streetscape of the additional signs
 - The implications for maintenance of the additional street furniture.
 - Accident Statistics

Pilot Areas

9. The 3 areas recommended for the pilot schemes are the original Jex Road area, which includes Hellesdon Road and Marl Pit Lane, expanded to include the Knowland Grove area, the Vauxhall Street area, expanded to include the Newmarket Street area, and the Borrowdale Drive area. These are highlighted on the plan attached as appendix 1. The Borrowdale Drive area has been included as this is currently bottom of the existing traffic calming priority list and will allow an assessment to be made of whether the signed only 20mph limit has a different affect in an area which is not a current priority for traffic calming compared to areas that are.
10. By using these 3 areas almost every type of unclassified residential road would be included, from heavily parked narrow terraced streets, through local authority housing areas where some on street parking takes place, to areas with little on street parking. It would also include a road that under all current advice is unsuitable for a 20mph speed limit without traffic calming; Hellesdon Road between Dereham Road and Marlpit Lane. This is a long, straight road approx 7m wide with frontage development on one side only and current average speeds in excess of 33mph
11. If the Committee agree to proceed with these 3 areas, the SRO (Speed Restriction Order) would need to be advertised and public consultation carried out in the autumn, along with the before monitoring. Objections could then be considered at your January meeting and the 3 areas, if approved, could be implemented in March 2008, using the £40k suggested above. This figure would cover the before surveys, the implementation of the signs and legal orders and a publicity and education campaign. A further £15k would need to be sought from the 09/10 budget for the after surveys and evaluation.
12. In order to properly evaluate the scheme it is suggested that monitoring is carried out in the month immediately after implementation and then 4-6 months later.
13. This would allow a full report to be presented to the September 2009 meeting of this Committee on the effectiveness of the scheme, with recommendations on how to implement the proposal City wide, if appropriate, starting in 2010/11. However it would also allow for traffic calming schemes to be developed for the Jex Road and Vauxhall Street areas to be introduced in 2010/11, if the signed only limit proved not to be effective in reducing speeds.

Signing Implications

14. Under Department for Transport rules, the signed only 20mph speed limit will require a 600mm diameter 20mph speed limit sign on the near side as you enter the area where the limit starts, and a 600mm diameter 30mph speed limit sign on both sides of the road as you exit the area. These must be placed at the same point on both sides of the street and it is likely that in most cases new posts will need to be provided. Additionally within the area covered by the limit a 300mm diameter 20mph repeater plate will need to be provided on alternate sides of the road so that a driver never travels more than 400m without seeing one. These can be erected on existing street lighting columns. The table below shows the numbers of signs that will be required in each area

Location	20mph Entry Signs	30mph Exit Signs	20mph Repeater Plates	New Posts
Jex Road	4	8	30	8
Vauxhall Street	8	16	60	16
Borrowdale Drive	3	6	6	6

15. The plans attached as appendices 2, 3 and 4 show the indicative positions for the signs within the proposed areas.

16. While the presence of more 30mph speed limit signs in the City may help to re-enforce the 30mph limit on the classified road network, these additional signs may have a significant impact on the streetscape, and will need to be placed sensitively, particularly in conservation areas. Consideration will also need to be given to not obstructing footpaths, particularly in terraced streets, and not placing signs where they may be covered by overgrowing foliage, presenting an on-going maintenance issue.

Future Phases

17. If the signed only 20mph speed limit proves successful in all pilot areas it is suggested that for the following 3 years £100k is allocated from the Traffic Management / Traffic Calming budget within the LTP to rolling the scheme out across all unclassified residential roads. The remaining potential of approximately £150k from that budget should be used for works on the classified road network.

18. However if the speed limit proves successful in some areas and not others consideration will need to be given on whether to continue with a City wide rollout, to or to opt for a more measured approach, with a mixture of traffic calming measures and speed limits.

19. Both options will be considered in detail once the pilot areas have been completed.

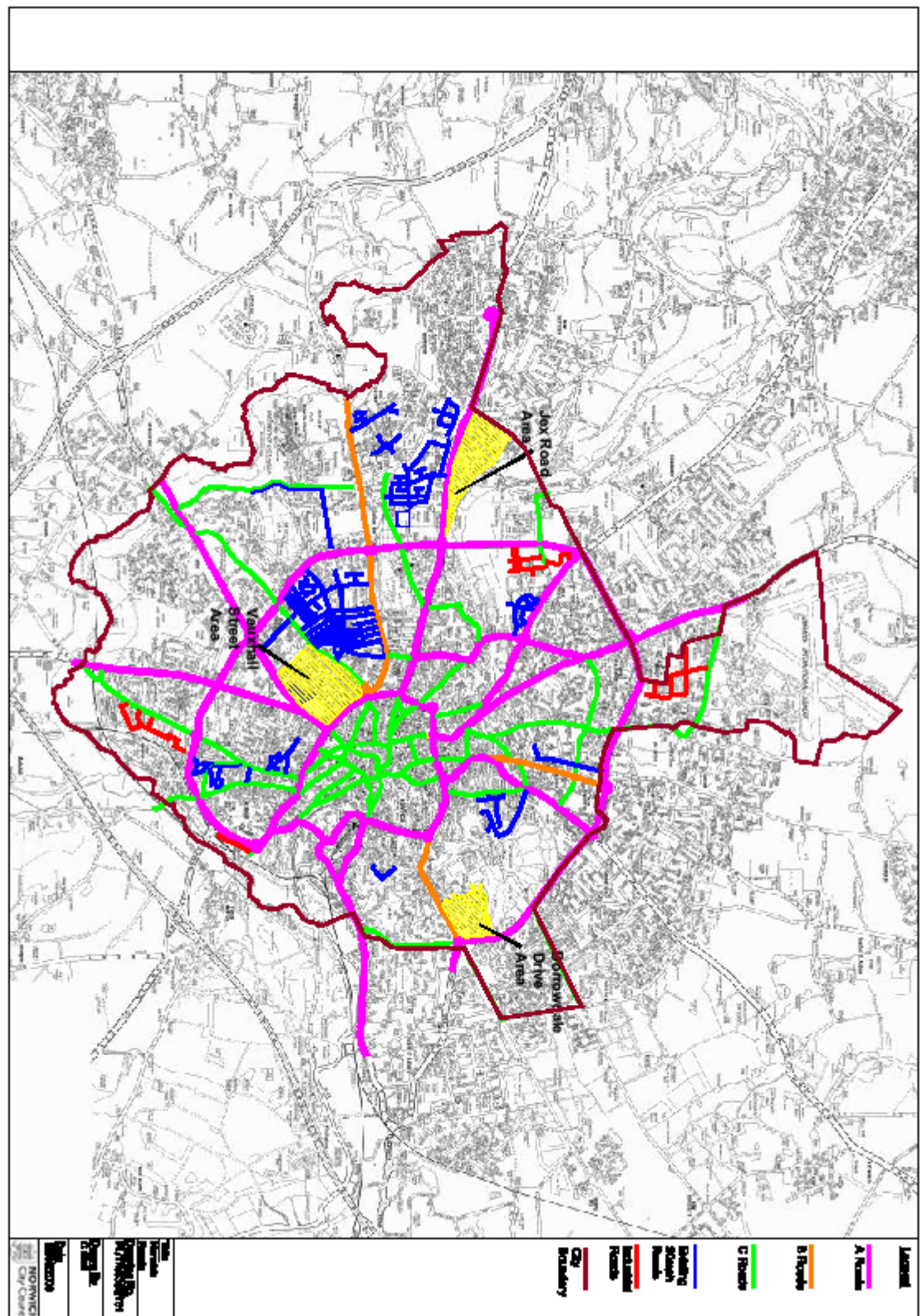
Alternative Approach

20. It is clearly an aspiration of some members that the 20mph speed limit should be implemented across the City in a single phase. Provisional estimates indicate the cost of that would be in excess of £350k, including all fees and

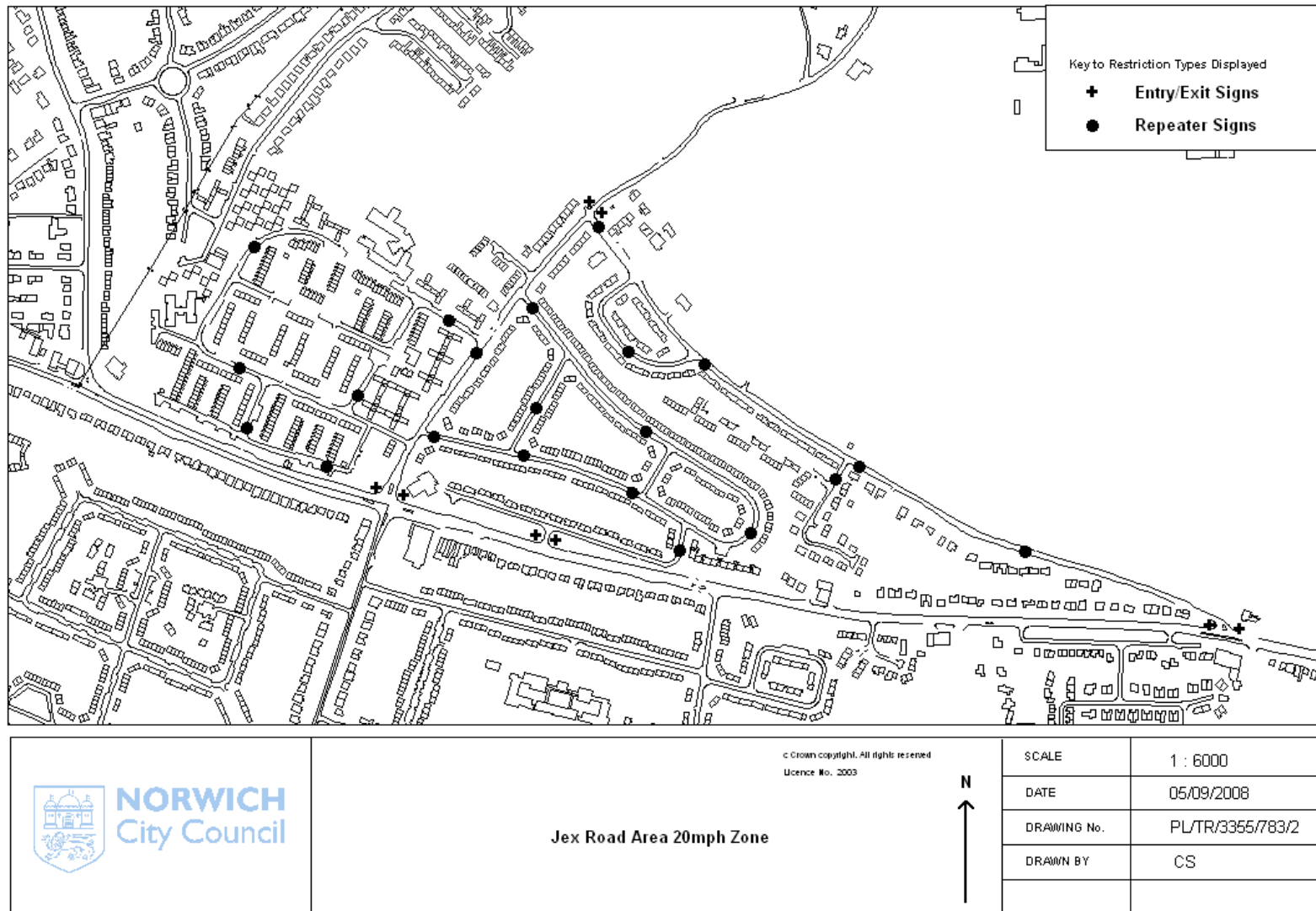
publicity. Each year approx £250k is allocated to speed management schemes in the LTP, and while additional funds could be requested for speed management, this would have to be at the expense of another budget, e.g. cycling or pedestrian crossings. It is more likely that the funding would have to be split over 2 years. To achieve a single phase implementation the signs would start to be erected in early 2010 and the programme would run through to spring 2010.

21. It would mean that no speed management works took place on the classified road network, during the period the scheme was being implemented, and it is on the classified road network that the majority of accidents take place. It would also delay implementation of any 20mph limits for at least a year.
22. Such an approach also raises the question of what to do about the current schemes where design fees are available; Jex Road and Vauxhall Street areas. If the fees for these were used to start the City wide consultation on the proposal that is required by statute these areas would see no direct benefit for at least 18 months. If instead members are minded to continue with the designs for these areas there is then the problem of funding the measures identified as the entire budget in 2009/10 will be used to implement the 20mph limit.
23. Opting for a single phase approach also means that if the scheme proves to be ineffective at noticeably reducing speeds there is likely to be frustration from local residents and an increased demand for physical measures to back the 20mph speed limit.
24. For these reasons officers recommend the pilot area approach.

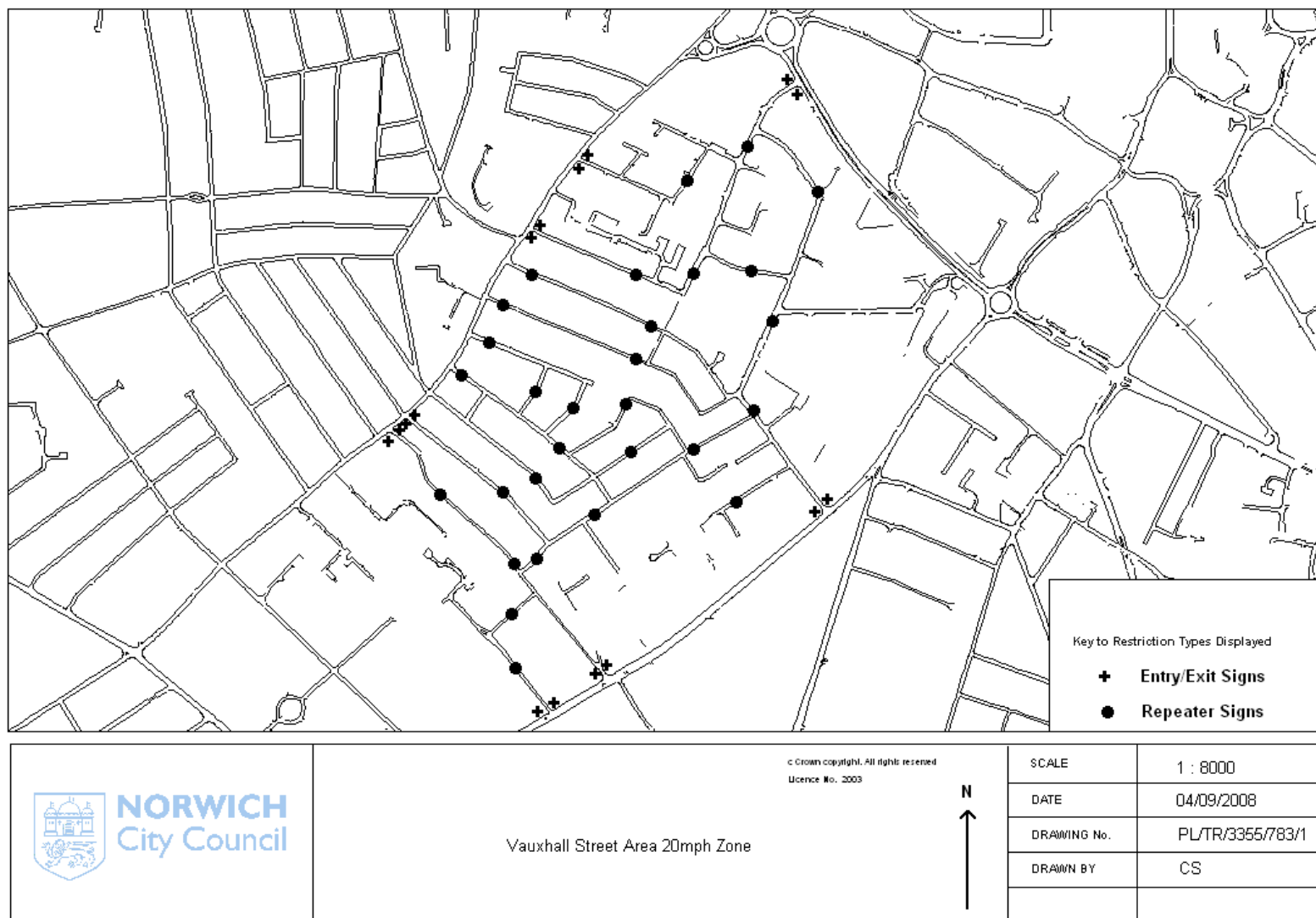
Appendix 1



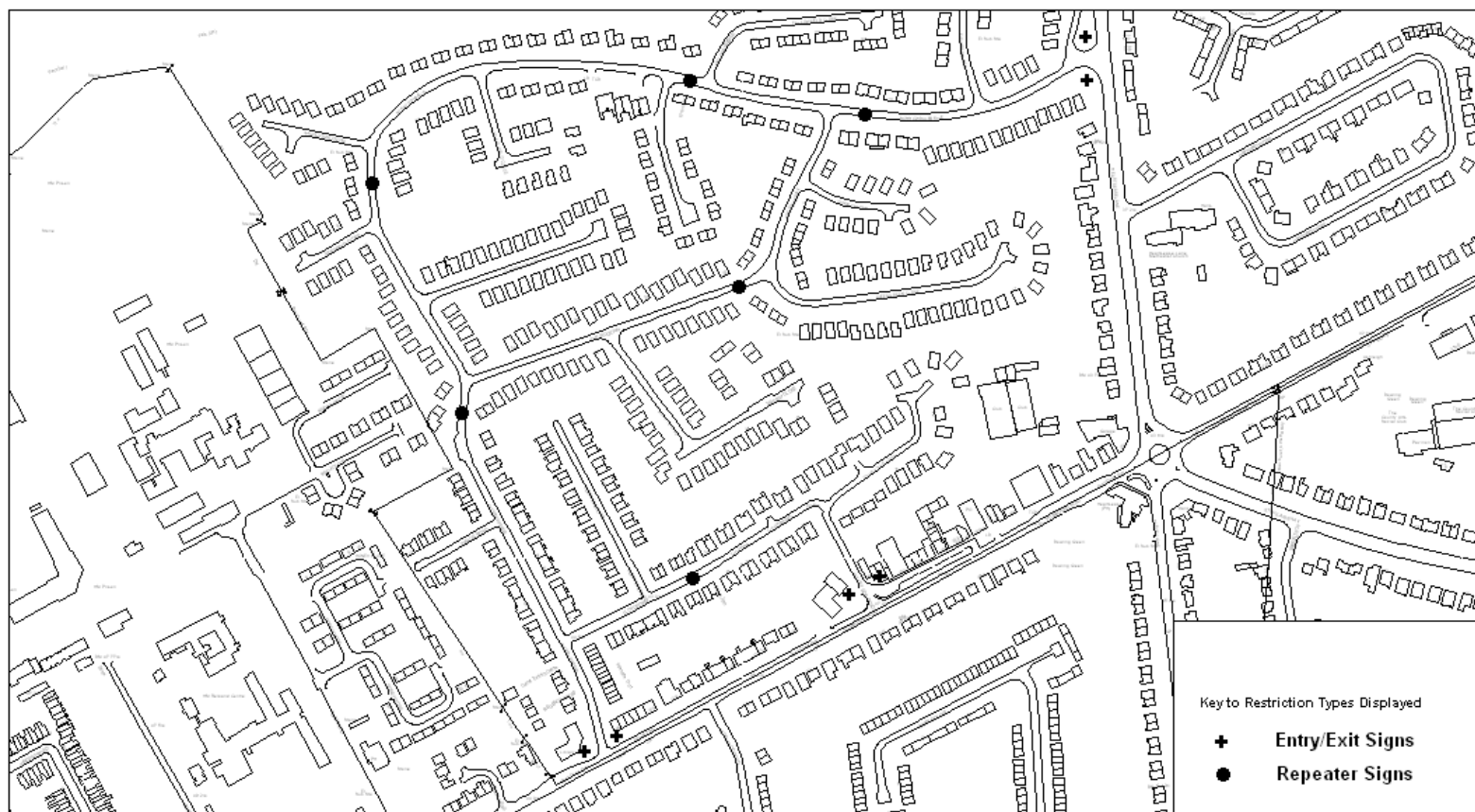
Appendix 2



Appendix 3



Appendix 4



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City Council

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Borrowdale Drive Area 20mph Zone

SCALE	1 : 4000
DATE	04/09/2008
DRAWING No.	PL/TR/3355/783/3
DRAWN BY	CS