



Norfolk County Council

Vehicle Access Crossing: - Guidance

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General information for vehicle access crossings

1. What is a vehicle access crossing?

A vehicle access crossing provides the legal means to allow you to access your property safely and easily when using a car or other domestic vehicle. The kerbs are dropped from their normal height and the pavement or verge is strengthened to take the weight of the vehicle crossing it.

2. Why is it needed?

We do not allow you to drive over a pavement or verge unless a vehicle crossing has been authorised and installed. This is because you may damage the pavement and/or any pipes or cables that are buried underneath it. The crossing allows you to pass safely from the carriageway preventing any obstructions to the highway. The County Council has powers under the Highways Act 1980 to serve a notice on offenders and recover its reasonable costs.

3. Permitted types of vehicle

A domestic vehicle crossing may only be used by a private or light goods (or similar) vehicle. It may not be used by heavy goods vehicles or mechanical equipment. If a delivery, such as a skip, is made to the property and in doing so the delivery damages the crossing, any repairs will be the responsibility of the occupier.

4. Is planning permission needed?

Planning permission is generally needed for either a new access or to amend an existing access if your property is located where the access is: -

- Located on a classified road.
- In a conservation area.
- To an apartment/maisonette
- To a listed building.
- Likely to affect a tree which is protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- Required for business purposes.

In order to determine if your access requires planning permission please refer to the planning department at your local City/District/Borough Council.

NB - Properties subject to planning permission must also meet the vehicle crossover criteria.

5. Planning permission may be required to hard surface your drive

If the surface area to be covered is more than 5m square, planning permission will be needed to lay traditional, impermeable driveways that do not control rainwater running off or onto roads. You will not need planning permission if a new/replacement driveway uses permeable surfacing or if the rainwater is directed to a lawn or border to drain naturally. For further advice and guidance on permeable surfacing visit the planning portal www.planningportal.gov.uk or contact the planning department at your local City/District/Borough Council.

6. How to apply

Norfolk County Council has designated its assessment criteria based on national safety guidelines with measurements so that no hazardous maneuvering on the highway is necessary to obtain access to and from the property.

If after reading the criteria set out below and also the terms and conditions you decide that you would like to proceed, please make a 'Dropped Kerb Application' using the online form at www.norfolk.gov.uk. If you are a tenant or leaseholder, you must provide written consent from the property owner that the works may be undertaken. A copy of their consent can be uploaded into the form.

A non-refundable fee of £161.55 is payable on making your application. This will require you to register for a My Norfolk account via the link provided prior to you making your application.

On receipt of your application, an officer will be instructed to assess your application and if suitable prepare an estimate to construct the access crossing. The County Council will then send you a letter with the estimate together with full terms and conditions. On receipt of your signed confirmation an officer will contact you to discuss possible implementation dates.

If your application is rejected, you will be advised in writing with a full explanation.

7. Contractors

In order to ensure that vehicle crossovers are properly constructed, unless agreed otherwise, all dropped kerbs and vehicle crossovers will be built by Norfolk County Council's own contractor. The County Council will deal with the provision of estimates and must receive payment before any work is carried out.

Permission will not allow you to do the work yourself or for an unapproved contractor to carry out the work

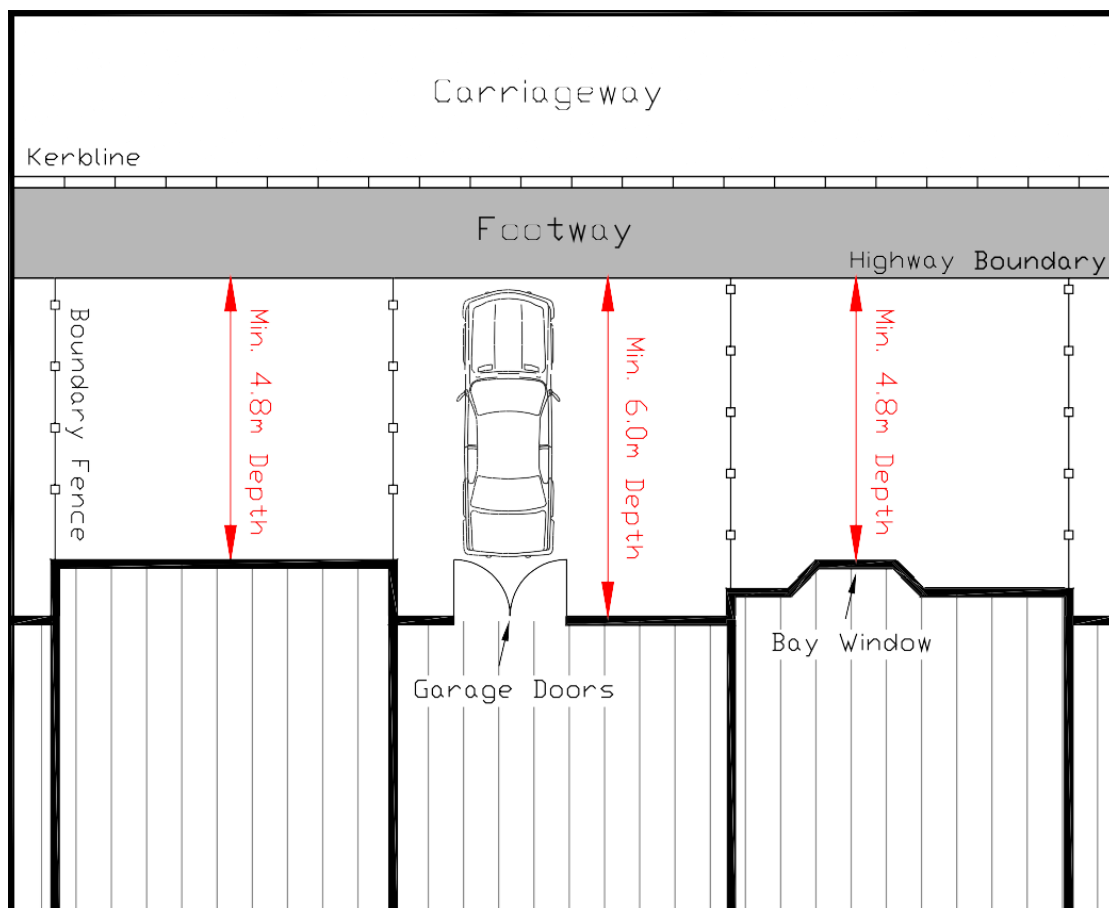
Space and safety criteria

Before submitting your application, you are advised to check your proposal against the below criteria. If you submit an application knowing that certain criteria (i.e., minimum distance between the property boundary and front of house/garage) cannot be met, your application will be refused, and the fee is not refundable.

8. Is there enough space in your garden?

No part of a vehicle parked within your property may project on to or over the highway. The vehicle access crossing may not be used as a parking area and no part of it is exempted for the purpose of footway parking. In order to comply, the parking space must be: -

- At least 4.8m long between the back of the pavement or property boundary (the face of any wall; fence or hedge for example) and the front of your building.
- At least 6m long where the parking area is in front of a garage or door.



Except where there is an overriding safety issue, parking parallel to the highway is not allowed. The parking space must be: -

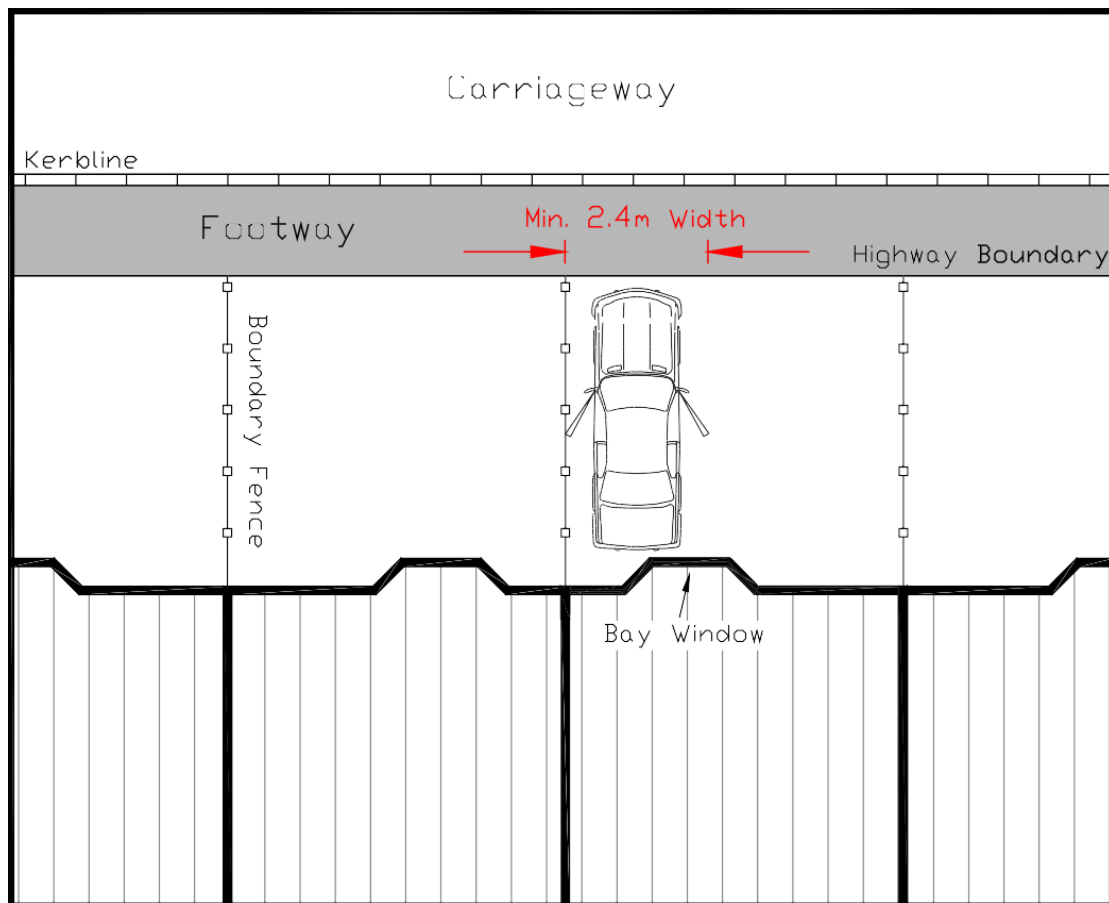
- At a right angle to the highway with the vehicle able to enter and exit the property in one movement.
- There must be no adjusting movements of a vehicle made on the highway when entering or exiting the property.

The policy of the Highway Authority in relation to the minimum depths has changed over time. This may mean that properties in your road have a vehicle access crossing that does not comply with the above criteria and appears in all respects to be very similar to your own proposals. Nevertheless, you will need to comply with the standards set out above and the fact that someone else may have a shorter parking space will not be taken into account when assessing your proposals.

9. Is the access wide enough?

For a single width access serving no more than one dwelling: -

- A minimum width between gate posts of 2.4m is required through the entire parking bay. This dimension is the absolute minimum and cannot be reduced. There must be no obstructions in this area (for example a bay window or tree).



10. Separate entrance and exit

The general rule is that - increasing the number of points on a highway where vehicles turn, increases the potential for traffic conflict. Therefore, applications for two access crossings to a single property, or a second access point where one already exists, will not normally be approved for domestic dwellings unless there is strong evidence that it will add significantly to highway safety.

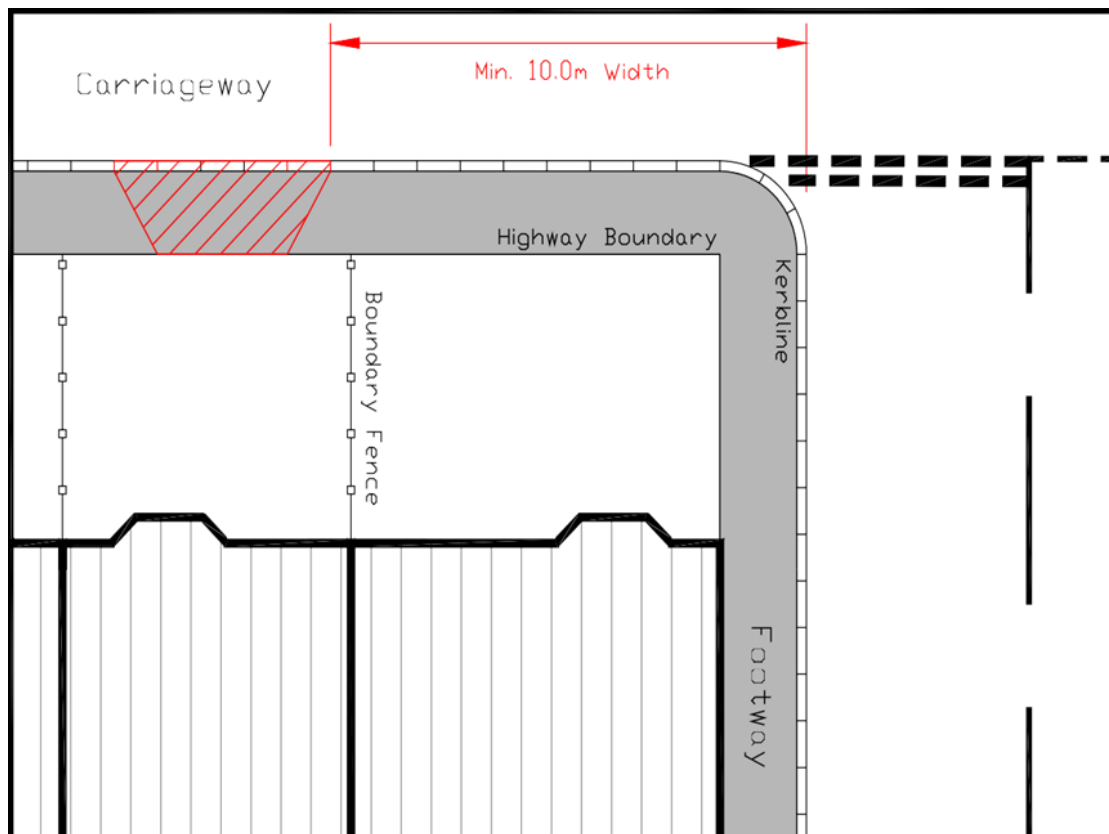
For such applications to be considered, the applicant will need to show: -

- How a second access will add to the safety of the access arrangements.
- Why such added safety cannot be achieved from a single access, or by improving or repositioning an existing access.

11. Distance from road junctions

If the location of the proposed crossing is closer than 10m to a road junction it would create a serious hazard and the application will be refused. This dimension may be increased to 15m on major roads or near to busy junctions. It should be noted that these dimensions are minimum distances but do not take precedent over overriding highway safety considerations.

If the property is situated directly on the junction of two roads, it will generally be safer to situate the access on the minor, side road. Accordingly, you may be asked to amend your proposals to comply with this requirement.



12. Visibility requirements

Will you be able to see pedestrians and vehicles clearly enough to drive out of the driveway without causing danger to yourself or other road users.

Probably the most important contribution to road safety is the provision of adequate visibility. Adequate visibility enables road users to see a potential hazard in time to slow down or stop comfortably before reaching it.

The application will be refused if the crossing does not meet visibility requirements set within published industry standards. Greater visibility may be required on faster, busier roads.

Norfolk County Council considers each request on its own merits. Consideration will be given to the driver's line of vision in both the vertical and horizontal planes.



In order to determine the exact level of visibility required, a site inspection will be needed from an experienced officer.

13. Shared accesses

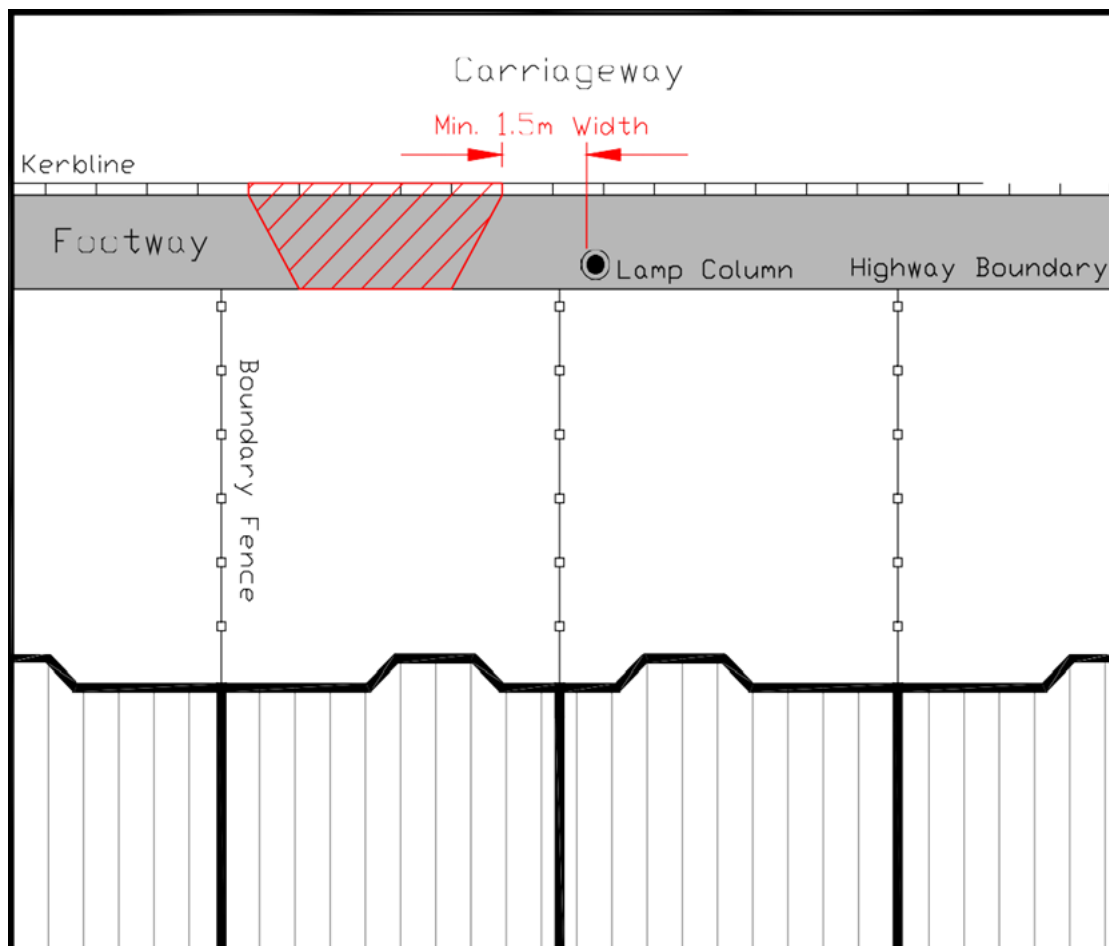
Where the occupiers of two adjacent properties share a driveway and wish to build a double width crossing to serve the two sites, one occupier should act on behalf of both parties.

14. Drainage

The parking area within your property must be built so that water does not drain from it across the highway. Suitable drainage must be provided within the boundaries of your property (see also above under - Planning permission may be required to hard surface your drive).

Where works affect the flow of an ordinary water course, consent to alter the water course is required before work commences on-site under the terms of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010; Land Drainage Act 1991; and Water Resources Act 1991. Consent is obtained from either the Internal Drainage Board (IDB), whose areas of responsibility can be found from the members page at www.ada.org.uk; or for the remainder of the County where there is no IDB from Norfolk County Council's Flood Water Management team at water.management@norfolk.gov.uk or on 0344 800 8020 (during office hours).

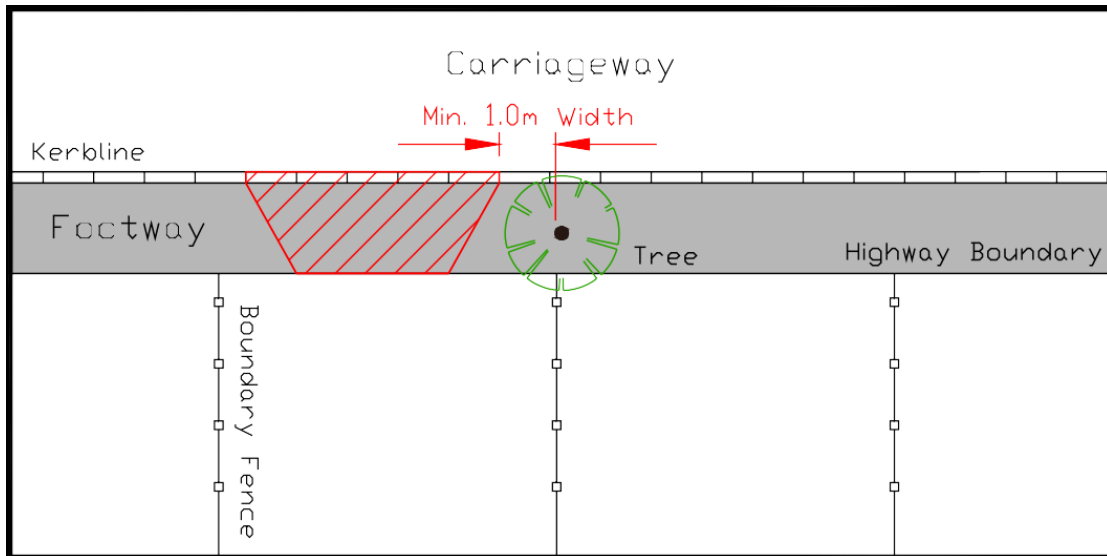
15. Lamp columns and street furniture



All street furniture, lamp columns and utility plant need to be situated at least 1.5m from the location of the top of the ramped kerb of the proposed crossover. Any street furniture, lamp columns and utility plant within 1.5m must be relocated at the expense of the applicant.

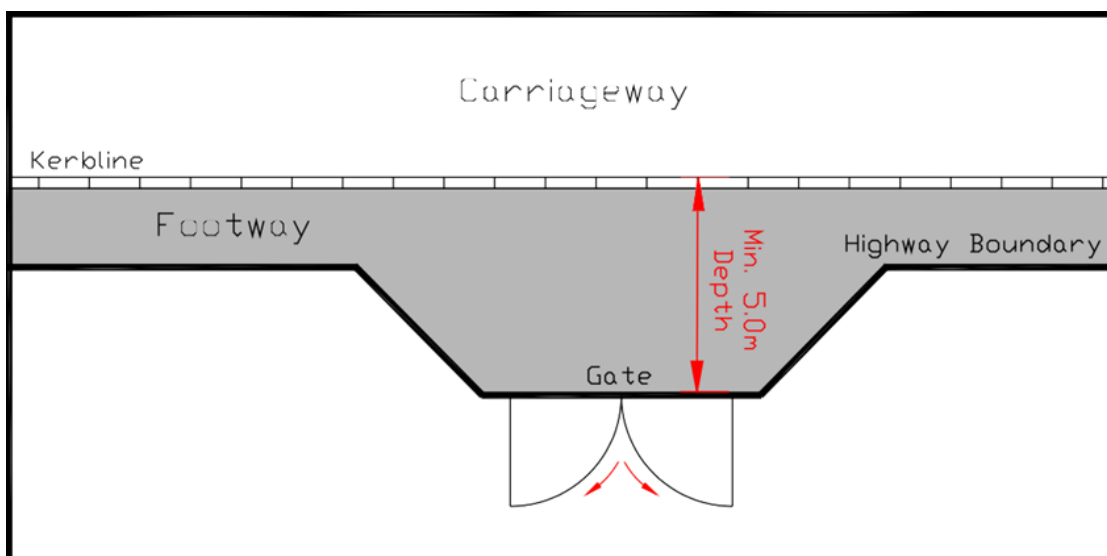
16. Trees

Applications requiring the removal of a highway tree are likely to be refused. There must be a minimum of 1m from the base of the tree to the top of the ramped kerb of the proposed crossover, however, any application in the vicinity of a tree will be subject to assessment by an arboricultural officer whose professional recommendation will be a key factor in the determination of the application.



17. Gates

If gates are to be fitted across the vehicle entrance to your property they must not open outwards across the highway. Additionally, on busy roads they must be set back at least 5m from the edge of the carriageway to allow the driver to park clear of the highway whilst opening the gates. Remember, sufficient space must exist within the site for the gates to close.



18. Consent of owner

If you are not the freehold owner of the property, you will need to obtain the permission of the owner for the construction to be undertaken before Norfolk County Council will consider your application.

19. Refusal

It is unusual for a request to be refused. However, if your proposed crossing puts other road users at risk or seriously interferes with the free flow of traffic on a busy road, then it may be turned down. Notwithstanding the Guidelines above, in certain circumstances it will be necessary for the Council, as Highway Authority, to refuse to allow the construction of a footway crossing to your premises. In these circumstances you will be informed in writing of the reason why permission has been refused.

Reasons for refusal may include: -

- Planning grounds.
- Land ownership objections.
- Local parking implications.
- Safety implications such as poor sight lines at the proposed access point.
- The proposed access is in close proximity to a road hump, road safety feature etc.

The Council's decision as to whether the application will be approved or refused is final. An appeal will not be considered due to parking conditions in your area or where you feel that an access that has already been built in your road or elsewhere does not comply with the current criteria for approval and should not have been approved. The presence of other historic substandard accesses cannot be accepted as mitigation.

20. Costs

The estimated cost will vary depending on individual circumstances since it is based on the cost of the work required to construct the proposed crossing.

21. Applicants' responsibility

The applicant will be solely responsible for all planning permissions that may be required. Consultation with the Local Planning Authority must be made before any works commence.

The applicant will be solely responsible for ensuring that there are no restrictive covenants preventing access over land between the boundary of the property and the carriageway edge.

To apply for a vehicular access please complete the online form at www.norfolk.gov.uk.