



Enterprise, Transport & Lifelong Learning Department
Transport Division 3

Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

ETLLD Circular No. 1 /2004

To: Chief Executives, Scottish Local Authorities
Chief Officers of Transportation, Scottish Local Authorities
Chief Constables

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Your ref:
Our ref:

26 March 2004

Dear Sir/Madam

20 MPH SPEED LIMITS AROUND SCHOOLS ON ROADS WITH SPEED LIMITS HIGHER THAN 30 MPH

1. This circular provides guidance on the introduction of 20 mph speed limits outside schools on roads with speed limits higher than 30 mph. It supplements the guidance on 20 mph speed limits in SEDD Circular 6/2001 and revises the advice in that Circular on variable (part-time) speed limits.
2. The Executive believes that a 20 mph speed limit should be the norm outside schools. Outside schools on roads subject to a 30 mph speed limit the options described in Circular 6/2001 are available to local authorities.
3. The advice in Circular 6/2001 that variable 20 mph speed limits should not be introduced on roads subject to a speed limit higher than 30 mph no longer applies. In relation to 20 mph speed limits outside schools, roads with existing speed limits higher than 30 mph are generally through routes. The aim is to increase the safety of children walking or cycling to and from school while minimising delays and disruption to through traffic. A permanent 20 mph speed limit is less likely to be appropriate in these circumstances and a mandatory variable 20 mph limit, operating only on school days at times when children are going to or from school, is considered to be the most suitable option.
4. The length of road on which a 20 mph speed limit should apply at individual schools will be determined by a number of factors, including the exact location and access point of the school in relation to adjoining roads; severance from the community; and desire lines taken by pupils. As an example, it may be that the position of existing school warning signs would provide suitable starting/finishing points for the 20 mph limit.
5. As with other speed limit proposals it is important that consultation with the police should take place at an early stage.



SIGNING

6. The Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland has now completed trials of low cost electronic signs with flashing lights indicating a part-time speed limit. The Executive's letter of 28 October 2003 indicated that it is prepared to give blanket authorisation, on request, for the use of the signs, shown in Appendix 1, in a local authority's area. These low cost signs can be used as an alternative to the signs prescribed in Regulation 58 of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 (TSRGD).

7. On roads with existing speed limits higher than 30 mph it will be necessary to warn drivers of the existence of a 20 mph speed limit ahead and to achieve the necessary reduction in speeds. It is considered that, in most cases, a single advance warning sign would be appropriate to indicate the operation of a reduced speed limit ahead, while keeping costs and sign clutter to a minimum. A manually operated sign or permanently visible sign would not be appropriate, the former because of health and safety issues, while the latter would be visible outwith the times of operation of the 20 mph limit. A permanent electronic sign linked to or synchronized with the main sign is, therefore, recommended. Advance signs should include diagram 545 with sub-plate 546 of the TSRGD above a legend reading '20 limit ahead', as shown in Appendix 2. The '20 limit ahead' legend will only be visible when the part-time speed limit is in operation. The sign assemblage should normally include flashing amber lights and can be activated by a timer or a combination of a timer plus vehicle approach speeds. Signs without flashing amber lights may be used on low flow roads or sites where the installation is remote or battery powered, where an authority considers that an intermittent sign will attract sufficient attention without flashing lights. The 85th percentile speed on the approach to the proposed starting point of the 20 mph limit should be used to determine the most appropriate location of the advance sign.

8. The Executive will be prepared to issue blanket authorisation, on request, for the use of the advance warning signs by individual local authorities.

PUBLICITY

9. When implementing 20 mph schemes outside schools, particularly those on roads with speed limits higher than 30 mph, it will be important to raise public awareness of the schemes. The aim would be to achieve an understanding that the schemes are being introduced to make the areas round schools safer for children as well as alerting drivers to the likelihood that they will encounter a 20 mph speed limit outside schools in what could be unexpected circumstances. Local authorities may wish to consider how best to generate awareness of the 20 mph speed limit outside schools initiative in their areas.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10. The Scottish Executive is providing additional resources for local authorities, totalling up to £27 million (£5 million in 2003-04, and £11 million in each of 2004-05 and 2005-06) for the introduction of 20 mph speed limits around schools, including schools on roads with speed limits higher than 30 mph, and related safety projects.

FURTHER INFORMATION

11. For further information about the content of this Circular, or to request additional copies, please contact Ian Robertson, Scottish Executive Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning



Department, Transport Division 3, Area 2-E, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ (telephone 0131 244 0848, e-mail Ian.c.robertson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk).

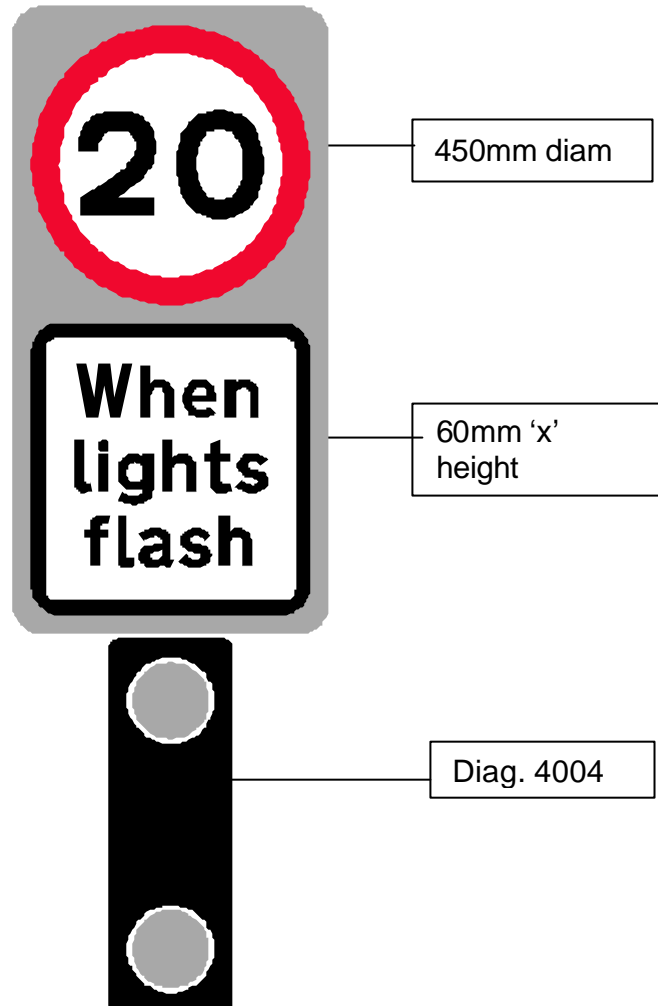
Yours faithfully

ANN WHATCOTT



APPENDIX 1

Sign for use on side-streets within a part-time 20 mph speed limit.



Notes:

Sign only to be used in conjunction with main part-time speed limit signing.

All sign faces to be Class 1 material.

Backing board to be Grey, Black or Yellow.

20mph Roundel – as per TSRGD 2002 - diagram 670, diameter 450mm.

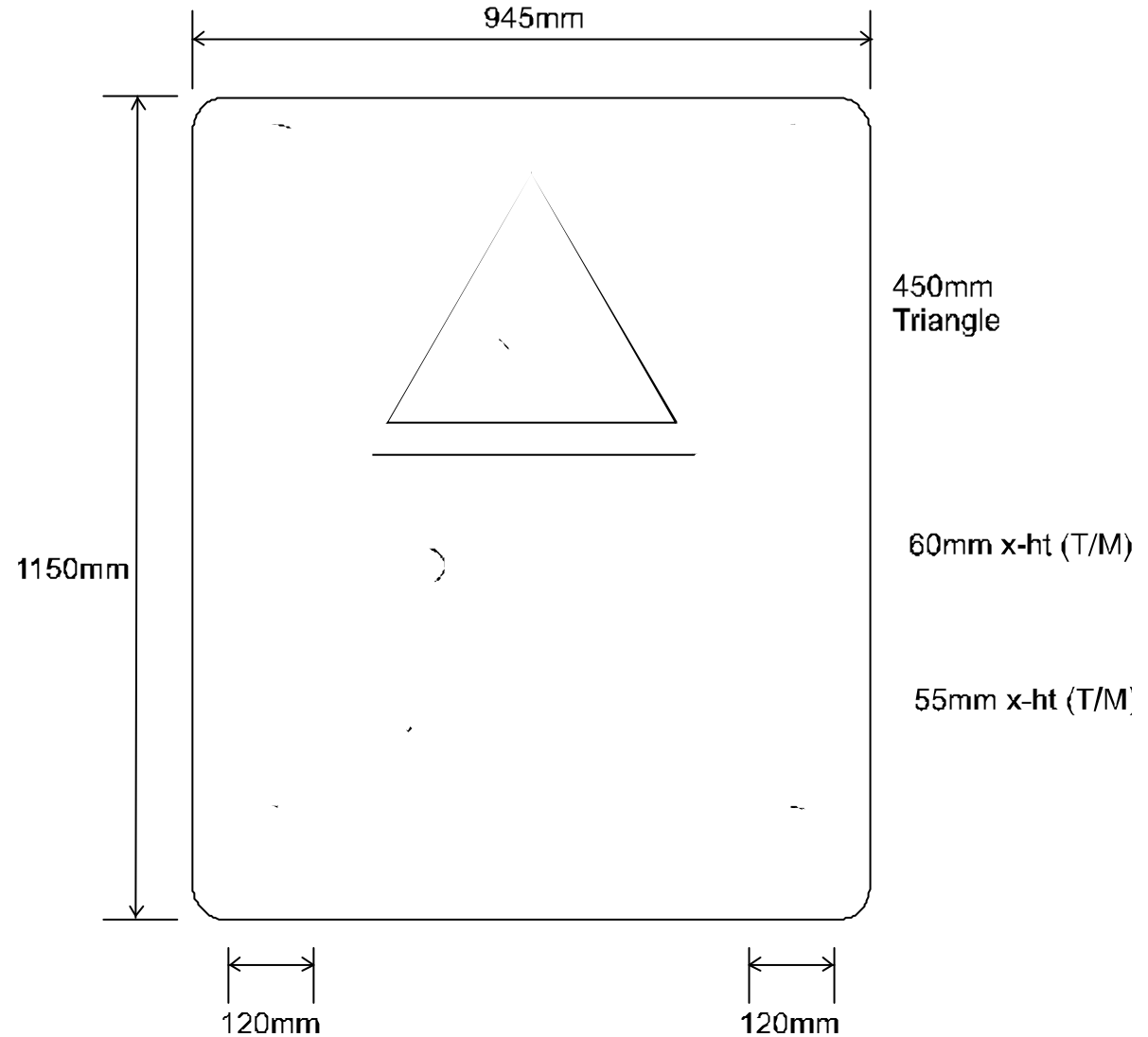
Text – black.

Plate text – 'x' height, 60mm.

Flashing amber light signals – as per TSRGD 2002, diagram 4004.

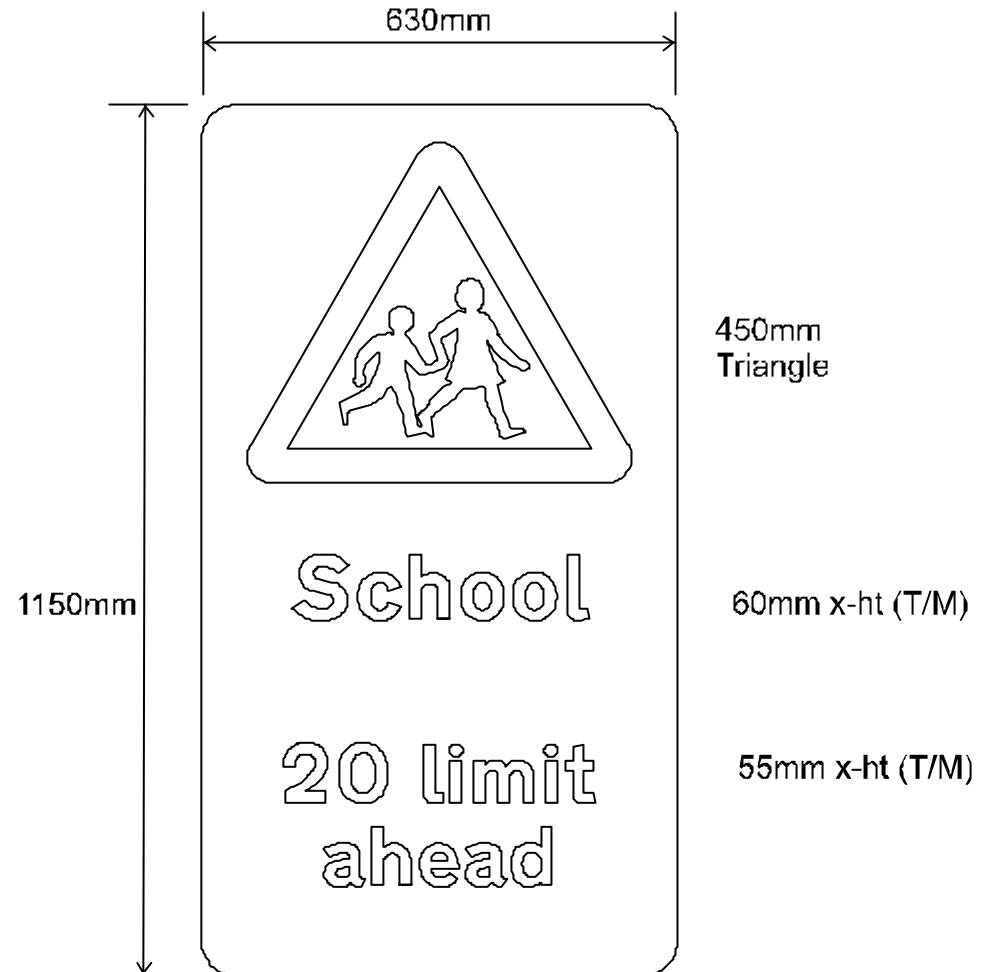
APPENDIX 2

This is an illustration of the proposed advance electronic sign for a part-time 20 mph speed limit. The words "20 limit ahead" would only appear when the speed limit is in operation.

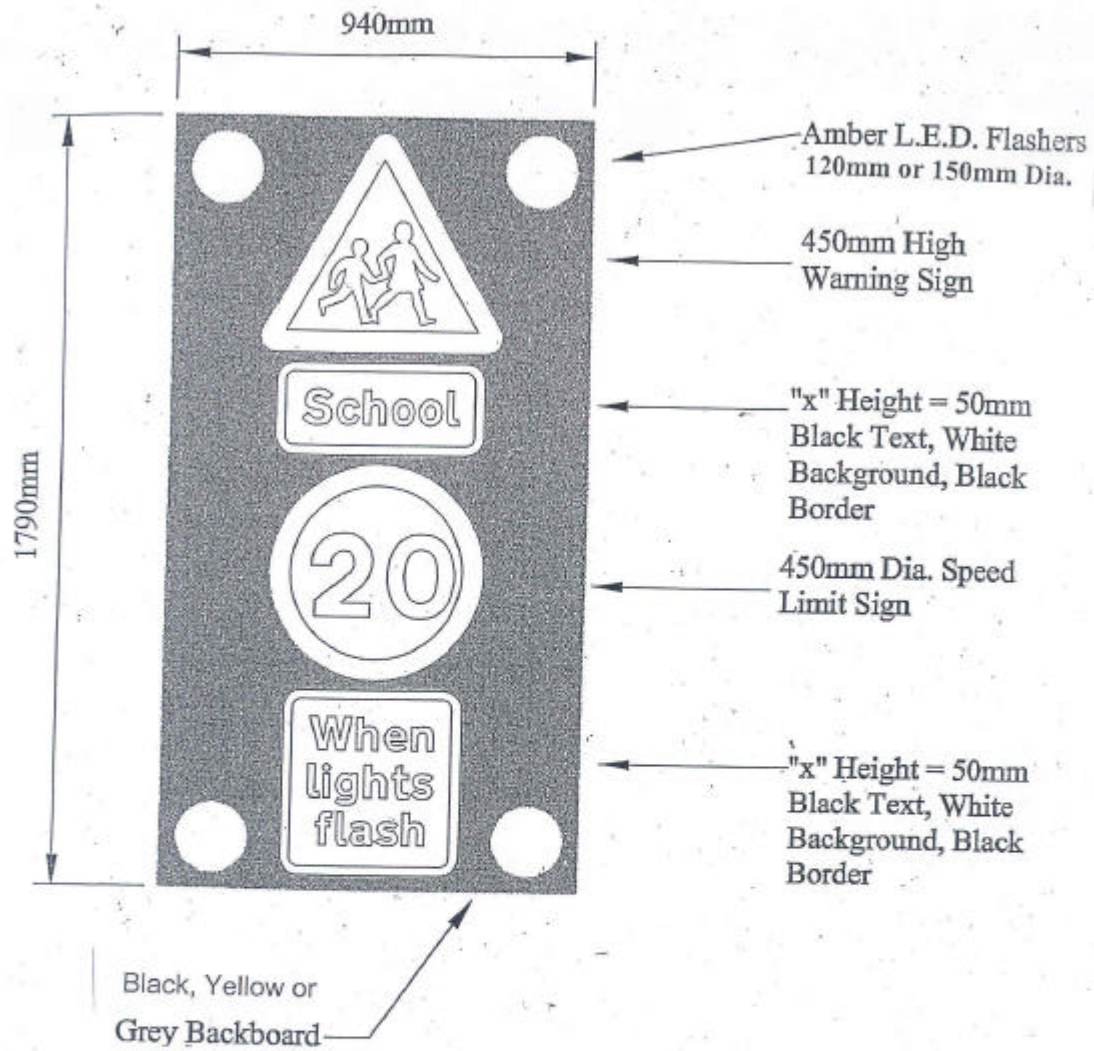


APPENDIX 2

This is an illustration of the proposed advance electronic sign for a part-time 20 mph speed limit. The words "20 limit ahead" would only appear when the speed limit is in operation.

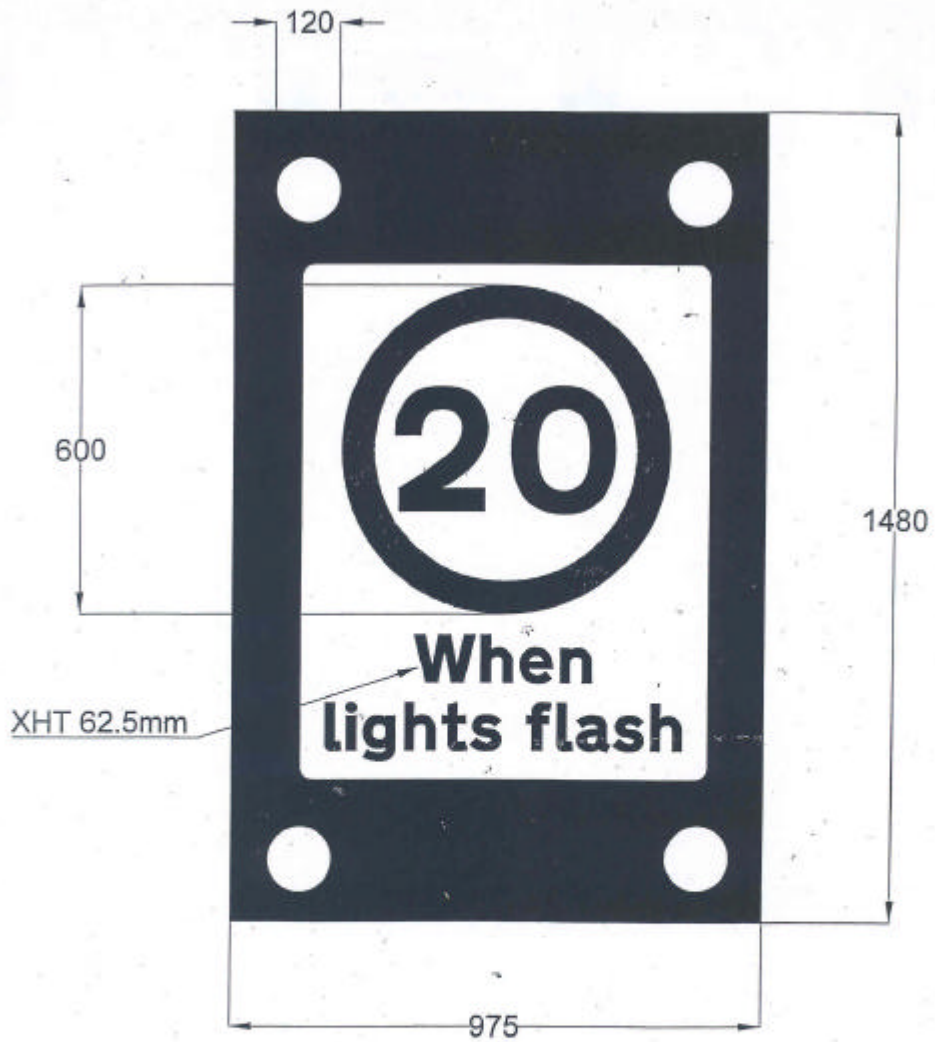


APPENDIX 1



NOTE :

1. All Materials To Be Class 1 Reflective or equivalent



- Legend - Black
- Roundel - Red
- Text - Black
- Background - White
- Backing Board - Black, Yellow or Grey
- Class 1, Reflective