Vehicle Crossover Guidance for Householders

Approval Process

Please read this document carefully before you submit your application

A vehicle crossover, often referred to as a dropped kerb, provides the legal means to allow you to access your property safely and easily 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.

Each site will be assessed individually and against the current standards. Similar installations within a localised area will not automatically result in approval of a given application. Older, historic, crossovers in the same vicinity do not necessarily mean a new crossover will be approved.
Legal Considerations

Under The Highways Act 1980 it is not allowed to drive over a footway or verge unless a vehicle crossing has been authorised and installed. Doing so may damage the pavement and/or any pipes or cables that are buried underneath it.

Planning permission is not usually required to construct a crossover, but will be if

- The property’s vehicle access would lead directly onto a classified road (A,B or C road)
- The property involved is a listed building
- The property involved is other than a house for a family, e.g. Flat, Maisonette, Commercial or Industrial Premises.

Planning permission will also be required if it is intended to construct the proposed off-highway parking area using non porous material such as concrete, asphalt concrete, block paving or similar.

Applicants should contact their local Borough Council to confirm planning requirements. In cases where planning permission is required, a copy of every page of the planning consent must be supplied with the application.

Other Considerations

1. If you are a tenant of a council, housing association or leasehold property you will require the written permission of the relevant landlord. Please submit a copy of the written permission with the application form.

2. You must check your deeds to confirm there is no restriction on parking a vehicle within the boundaries of the property. (Often applies to New Build properties).

3. It is likely that the presence of an on-street parking place in the vicinity of the proposed VCO, whether in a Controlled Parking Zone or not, will mean that the request is refused. If such a bay exists, please contact the Highways Office via our contact centre on 0300 200 100 3 for further advice.

4. A 3 x drop, 2 x raker (sloping kerb) installation represents the standard vehicle crossover configuration. This equates to a measurement along the kerb line of approximately 4.6 metres. Unless specific reasons exist, this standard will be applied. An appropriate width dimension of 3.5m / 3.6m, at the rear edge of the crossover, would be expected.

5. Should it be the intention to provide a loose gravel driveway or hardstand on your property, a mechanism must be put in place to ensure the gravel is retained and is not able to spread across the highway.
6. Due to the possibility of restricting the amount of on street parking for the wider community, two crossings serving a single property will not be permitted, unless direct safety benefits can be proven or that there are no adverse on-street parking implications.

7. It is highly likely that a Vehicle Crossover will be refused if is accessed through a lay-by.

8. A new vehicle crossover, or the widening of an existing crossover, would be refused if it were excessively wide, to the detriment of other highway users.

9. An existing access to a property that becomes redundant due to the installation of a new access will require to be raised back to the original pavement level as part of the installation works of the new crossover.

10. Highway trees are a valuable environmental asset and every effort is made to avoid damage to them. A crossover may be refused if excavation will unduly disturb the root protection area of any trees located on the highway, this area essentially being that covered by the tree canopy and is calculated by measuring the circumference of the tree at chest height and multiplying by a factor of four.

    Should the proposed Vehicle Crossover fall into this area it may be necessary for a trial excavation to be carried out to establish the feasibility of installing the Crossover without undue root disturbance. The cost of this will be borne by the applicant.

    No crossover will be permitted within a distance of one metre from the trunk of a tree.

    **Highway trees will not be removed to allow a vehicle crossover.**

11. Standard crossings will be constructed with the rear edge level with that of the existing rear edge of the footway. This minimises the potential for highway water entering private property. **Homeowners may have to adjust ground levels within the property boundary to ensure there is sufficient ramp (breakback) angle to prevent vehicles grounding the underside when using the crossover to enter and exit the property.**

12. A high degree of road camber or a considerably inclined vehicle crossover can also create grounding issues for either or both the front and rear overhang of a vehicle. Local ground levels and gradients may put limitations on the type of vehicle that can use a given crossover installation.

    **It should be noted that a crossover installation would not necessarily accommodate all vehicle types.**

13. Under the Highways Act 1980, it is illegal for water to flow from a private property across a footway onto the highway. If the proposed hard standing area is to be constructed from a non-porous surfacing material such as concrete, asphalt concrete or some block paving types, surface water from the area will need to be directed to a drainage system within your own property. If the proposed area is non-porous and over five square metres, planning permission will be required.
14. The reduction of natural drainage areas by paving over, or similar, may result in local flooding due to overload of the drainage network. Other adverse environmental issues could be local temperature rises, increased noise, raised dust levels and an unsympathetic looking street scene.

Useful guidance can be obtained by searching for ‘Paving front gardens’ on the websites for: the Royal Horticultural Society, (www.rhs.org.uk), or the Communities and Local Government, www.communities.gov.uk.

15. Vehicle crossovers will normally not be constructed with a down slope towards the property. Should this be necessary due to local ground levels, it may be required to include a system of drainage into the design to prevent highway water entering the private property.

16. If there are streetlights owned by the County Council that would require to be relocated, and relocation is possible, we notify the company responsible for all street lighting in Surrey (Skanska) who confirms the suitability of the proposed move, and contact you directly. The moving of other types of street furniture such as gullies, road signs etc, can be carried out by the Contractor selected to undertake the crossover works. (At cost to the applicant).

17. A vehicle crossover is installed to allow access from the highway to private property. **It is not permitted to park on the vehicle crossover.** Doing so may be considered an obstruction under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980.

18. **Site Suitability Survey** - If a resident is unsure as to whether their property meets the above criteria, Surrey County Council offers a service whereby a Highway Officer will assess the site for its suitability. The non-refundable fee for this service is £75, which will not be deducted from a subsequent VCO application.

The above survey is for **UNCLASSIFIED** (D class) roads **ONLY**. Please contact Surrey Highways to establish classification of the road. If it is a classified road, you will need to contact Traffic & Development Planning at Surrey County Hall for approval.

**Developers seeking to construct a vehicle crossover should contact their local Highways Office to ascertain the correct method of applying for the crossover.**
Safety Criteria
Vehicle crossings will not be approved where they significantly encroach into, or affect junctions and create conflicts between highway users. A dimension of 10 metres from a junction is the usual minimum distance that is considered.

No crossover will be permitted if it is adjacent to and conflicts with a designated pedestrian crossing point.

A crossover will not be permitted to be closer than 600mm to any item of street furniture such as a lamp column or road sign.

A crossover application will be refused if the resulting gradient across the footpath will be dangerous for pedestrians. (Steeper than 1:12)

The access must be provided with suitable visibility to ensure safe entry and exit and to enable 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 the visibility requirements. The minimum requirements are set out as follows: -

When standing at Point ‘A’ there must be clear vision along the dashed lines shown to both left and right for distance ‘Y’ from the table below.

Distance ‘X’ is 2.0 metres for urban (built up) areas and 2.4 metres for all other locations. Distance ‘Y’ is dependant on the road speed limit as tabled below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speed (mph)</th>
<th>Distance ‘Y’ (m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When looking left or right from Point ‘A’, a clear visibility zone must exist between a dimension of 0.6 metres above the ground level for a further vertical dimension of 2 metres below the footway / verge.

Updated on 12 April 2016
**Space Criteria**

You must have sufficient room on your property for a vehicle to be parked without it overhanging the public highway.

**Where the space available does not meet the requirements the VCO will not be permitted.**

The minimum requirement for a car to be parked on the owner's property at right angles to the road is **4.8 metres deep by 3.2 metres wide.** A minimum width of 2.4 metres may be considered in some cases. The width may need to be increased at the highway officer's discretion to ensure safe entry and exit.

Where a car is to be parked end on in front of a garage the 4.8 metre depth dimension is increased to **6 metres** to enable enough room to be left to open the garage door. A reduced dimension may be considered in very minor quiet locations.

If a car is to be parked parallel to the road the available space should allow an average car to be parked without excessive manoeuvring. Each site will be assessed individually. However for guidance, in an area with no on street parking and no footway, an off road parking space off not less than **6 metres wide by 2.4 metres** deep may be considered. The addition of a footway and/or a verge and/or on street parking will necessitate these figures being increased.

If you intend to have gates, the gates must open inwards onto your property.

Crossings are approved on the basis that vehicles will drive out forward onto the highway.
Procedure

Once a Crossover Pack has been issued, you will have **six months** in which to appoint a contractor. If we have not received both commencement and completion notices by an approved contractor within this period, the licence will lapse, and a fresh application, with fee, will have to be made.

It is **essential** that you pass the results of the Utility searches, the Licence and the Crossover Checklist to the contractor you select from the list.

If there is any Utility equipment that needs to be adjusted, protected or diverted, Surrey County Council will provide you with a contact for the relevant Utility Company for you to arrange the works **with them directly**. The applicant shall meet the cost of any Utility works necessary.

Once your appointed contractor has constructed the vehicle crossover, they will notify the County Council that the work is complete. Surrey County Council will then carry out a visual inspection of the works. If the work is satisfactory, we will issue a letter of certification to the householder and the householder can now make payment to the Contractor.

To ensure the quality of work of the approved contractors, we carry out core sampling on approximately 10% of their works. A core is a 100mm diameter cylinder shaped extraction that is removed from the crossover and checked for compliance to specification in our materials lab. At the same time as the core is taken the core hole will be filled with approved material. The coring leaves the crossover fit for purpose.

**No payment is made to the Contractor until Surrey County Council have inspected the completed installation and issued approval.**

Frequently asked questions

**How much does it cost to apply?**

The total cost for the application is £208.00 and this covers:

- Administration costs
- Initial Site Assessment by an engineer
- Contacting the Utility companies
- Post construction inspection

**This fee is Non Refundable**
How long does the process take?

- Application received by Surrey County Highways, acknowledgement letter & receipt issued to client and assigning request to a Highways Officer for a mark-up of the proposed dropped kerb – between 10 and 14 days.

- Highways Officer to carry out an on-site assessment and mark up proposed location for the dropped kerb - between 21 and 30 days

- Upon receiving notification of acceptance of markings from the client and issuing information pack consisting of stats from utility companies, list of approved contractors and licence to carry out the proposed works - between 5 and 7 days.

- Client negotiates price and commencement date directly with approved contractor(s). Surrey County Highways does not in any way get involved with contractors re initial negotiations on quotations, commencement and completion dates.

- Once a contractor has been selected, said contractor will notify Surrey County
  - Highways of a commencement date, as well as a completion date

- Assigning a request to the Highways Officer to carry out a final inspection –
  - between 7 and 10 days

- If inspection is successful, 'Letter of Certification' is issued

- If unsuccessful, reasons for failure passed to the contractor to carry out remedial works

Can anyone construct a vehicle crossover?

Those seeking a vehicle crossover must obtain prior agreement from the County Council and use one of our approved contractors. The County Council takes seriously its duty to maintain its highway and protect it from damage, if necessary by legal action.

It is an offence to do any works on any part of the highway including footway, carriageway and / or verge, without the express permission of the County Council.

What will be the cost of my crossover?

The cost depends on the amount of work that needs to be done and the contractor you use. We would expect the cost for a standard vehicle crossover to be upwards of £1000-00.

However, there are several external factors that can increase this figure: -

- Utility protection or diversion

- Street furniture adjustment such as relocation of a street lamp
• The size of the proposed crossover
• The proposed site of the crossover
• The type of road and road usage levels, the necessity for traffic management, limited available working hours i.e. off peak, near school, etc.

Am I responsible for the pipes and cables buried underground?

Yes. As part of our initial checks, we will contact all of the Utility companies to see what equipment is located underground. This information will be passed to you in your Crossover Pack. If there is equipment that requires protection or diversion you will be responsible for the arrangement and cost.

How will I know if the work is satisfactory?

Once the work is completed and we have been advised as such by the contractor, we will visually inspect it to make sure the work has been carried out satisfactorily and to specification. The contractor will be liable for the work for a period of two years after the construction. Surrey County Council will then take on responsibility for any maintenance issues.

What if my application is refused?

The main reasons for refusal are provided in ‘The Guidance Note for Householders’. Applications are assessed against the criteria outlined in the guidance. If your application has been refused, you can ask for the decision to be reviewed. However, you must demonstrate where the council has failed to comply with its published guidance.

What do I do now?

An application form can be downloaded from the Surrey County Council web site. (www.surreycc.gov.uk) This should be completed and sent with the application fee to our Business Support Office – as below.

Business Process
Surrey County Council Highways
Rowan House
Merrow Lane
Guildford
Surrey
GU4 7BQ

Updated on 12 April 2016