Vehicle Crossover Applications
Householder guidance
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Please read this document carefully before you submit your application

A vehicle crossover (VCO), 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.

Householders do not automatically have the right to have a crossover. 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.

Although the location of a vehicle crossover may seem safe other factors will be taken into account when the decision is made. These factors could include the road aesthetics, local amenities, parking and the intended purpose of the requested location. This decision can only be made by the Highway Authority and will have been made after considering all options.

Crossovers not requiring Planning Permission

If a proposed crossover does not require Planning Permission, the householder should apply for a suitability survey to be carried out. This is the first stage of the full process whereby a Highway Officer will assess the site for its suitability. The non-refundable fee for this service is £75, which will be deducted from any subsequent VCO application.

If you would like to refurbish an existing crossover, the same application and payment is required.

Crossovers requiring Planning Permission

If a proposed crossover requires Planning Permission, the applicant will need to contact their local planning authority to obtain the permission before making an application through Surrey County Council.

Developers seeking to construct a vehicle crossover should contact Highways to ascertain the correct method of applying for the crossover.
Legal Considerations

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

It is essential that applicants contact their local District or Borough Council to confirm whether planning permission is required. In the majority of cases, planning permission is not required but written evidence of this is still required.

In cases where planning permission is required, this must be obtained before an application for a crossover is made. A copy of every page of the planning consent including any relevant approved drawing must be supplied with the application.

Planning permission is not usually required to construct a crossover, but is likely to 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 access serves more than one dwelling, or serves commercial or industrial premise
- The property has had its permitted development rights removed.

Planning permission is also likely to 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.

Other Considerations

The property

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.

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).

Location

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 requested, this standard will be applied. An appropriate width dimension of 3.5m / 3.6m, at the rear edge of the crossover, would be expected.

Should it be the intention to provide a loose gravel driveway 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.
An existing access to a property that becomes redundant will require the original pavement level and kerbing to be reinstated as part of the installation works of any new crossover.

We will not excessively widen an existing crossover and would only implement a widening of one further dropped kerb. If the result of this does not allow for a standard kerb to be placed between the new raker kerb and an adjacent crossing raker kerb, we would propose to join the two crossings.

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 angle to prevent vehicles grounding the underside when using the crossover to enter and exit the property.**

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.**

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.

**Parking**

A new, second or widened vehicle crossover may be refused if there is a very high demand for on-street parking and the impact of a second or widened crossover would be severe, unless direct safety benefits can be proven.

The presence of a formally designated on-street parking space 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.

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.

**Utility apparatus**

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 adjustment or diversion you will be responsible for the arrangement and cost.
Street lighting

If the crossover requires a streetlight to be relocated, Surrey County Council’s contractor (Skanska) will confirm the suitability relocation, and contact you directly. The relocation 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).

Drainage

Under the Highways Act 1980, it is illegal for water to flow from a private property onto the highway. If the proposed hard standing area is to be constructed from a non-porous surfacing material surface water from the area will need to be directed to a drain within your own property. If the proposed area is non-porous and over five square metres, planning permission will be required.

The reduction of natural drainage areas by paving over, or similar, may result in local flooding due to overload of the drainage network or other adverse environmental issues.

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.

Watercourse consent

If the road has a ditch or stream running alongside it the VCO construction must ensure that water can flow unrestricted in this watercourse, as this may increase local flood risk. This means a bridge or pipe (culvert) may need to be installed as part of the works. Depending upon how the crossing is built, an additional consent may be required from Surrey County Council under the Land Drainage Act 1991. If an additional consent is required it will be identified in the suitability assessment. The cost (£50 per consent) and administration of this will be included within the VCO process and any associated costs of the works included in the quote provided.

Following the works the maintenance responsibility of the watercourse remains with the owner of the land, who under Common Law is referred to as the riparian owner. Therefore, the landowner must ensure that the culvert and associated ditch remains in good condition and free from obstructions.

If the works are undertaken outside of the simple VCO process a separate consent may be required and you should contact SuDS@SurreyCC.gov.uk before works are carried out.

Trees in the area

A new, second or widened vehicle crossover may be refused if the crossover results in the removal of or damage to a highway tree.

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 access.
Safety Criteria

Vehicle crossings may not be permitted:

i. At busy junctions where they create conflicts between highway users. Where the crossover is adjacent to and conflicts with a designated pedestrian crossing point.

ii. if it is closer than 1m to any item of street furniture such as a lamp column or road sign and such street furniture that cannot be relocated.

iii. if the resulting gradient across the footpath will be dangerous for pedestrians. (Steeper than 1:12)

iv. On particularly busy roads, cars cannot turn within the driveway.

v. If the crossing does not meet the following visibility requirements:

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

### PLAN VIEW

- Distance ‘X’ is 2.4 metres or 2.0m for single dwellings where 2.4m is unachievable.
- Distance ‘Y’ is dependent on the road speed limit as tabled below.

### SIDE VIEW

When looking left or right from Point ‘A’, a clear visibility zone must exist between a height of 0.6 metres and 2.0 metres above ground.
Space Criteria

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

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 2.4 metres wide.

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.

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

Where the space available does not meet the requirements the VCO is unlikely to be permitted.

If you intend to have gates, the gates must open inwards onto your property. On A, B and C class roads it is advisable where space permits, for the gates to be back at least 6 metres from the edge of the road.

The council will decide the final size and position of the crossing. If you do not agree with the highways authority’s decision, you may appeal the decision by asking for your application to be reviewed. However, you must demonstrate where the council has failed to comply with this guidance or be able to identify any exceptional circumstances. Your letter should be addressed to the address set out in this guidance.

The appeal decision is final.
Refurbishment of existing crossovers

If you would like to refurbish an existing crossover the full application process will need to be applied. This is to ensure that the refurbishment is undertaken to the specification applied by the Local Highway Officer and works are completed to a quality standard.

The Application Process

Before you apply for a VCO

As the Highways Authority, Surrey County Council provides the householder an application process to customers who wish to request simple vehicle crossover works.

SCC also considers more complex changes or works on the public highway, normally as a result of new development, but because these requests are likely to have a bigger impact on the highways network, they require a deeper level of consideration.

Our Transport Development Planning department considers VCO or access applications which may require planning permission and secures these through a legal agreement to make changes, for example, if the crossover has a direct effect upon the location of a bus stop, yellow lines or a parking bay.

If you are unsure if your application would be considered as a VCO application or not you can contact Transport Development Planning for further advice - tdp@surreycc.gov.uk

For development related highway works other than simple vehicle crossovers, please visit the Transport Development Planning web pages. Here you will find guidance and information on how Surrey County Council considers planning related highway and transport matters (www.surreycc.gov.uk/tdp).

Homeowners may wish apply for a crossing that accesses two properties. These applications can only be made for adjoining properties and written consent must be supplied by the primary applicant showing agreement by both homeowners. This will be treated as a single application. This process cannot be completed retrospectively. Existing, single applications that wish to change to a joint application will be subject to a new Site Survey and attached cost.

Step 1 – Site suitability Survey

A site suitability survey will be carried out for all applications, regardless of road classification, by the Local Highway Officer at a cost of £75. The survey will decide if you are eligible for works to take place.

Before applying, please establish the classification of your road. This can be done via the interactive map on the Surrey County Council website.

If it is a classified road (A, B or C), you will need to contact Transport Development Planning for pre planning application advice if you have not already been granted planning permission.

If you are on an A, B or C road and have planning permission, or an unclassified D road, please proceed with the application.
The Local Highways Officer will then come to the proposed location, carry out the site suitability survey and mark out the location of the proposed VCO. These will be agreed with you before progressing.

If approved, and you would like to progress the application further you will move to Step 2.

Due to possible changes in the proposed location and surrounding properties, the approval of this survey will only be valid for six months.

We will do this within 20 working days of receiving your application. In busier times, this may take longer. If this is the case, we will contact you to let you know.

**Step 2 – Full application (if applicable)**

The full application will be completed at a cost of £145.

You will be provided with a VCO Licence pack and a list of approved contractors who Surrey County Council has given authority to carry out these works on the Highway. You can contact as many of these contractors as you wish to obtain quotes for the works.

The Vehicle Crossover Licence pack will contain:
- Licence for the work – (Valid for 6 months)
- Traffic Managements requirements
- Watercourse requirements
- Contractor feedback from
- Utility Stat drawings

This pack should be provided to any contractors to allow them to provide an accurate quote.

It is essential that you pass the results of the Utility map searches, requirements for any further traffic management or watercourse consents and the Licence onto 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.

We will provide you with the Licence pack within 20 working days of receiving your £145 fee. This is because we have to contact the utility companies to find out about any of their cables buried underground and these can sometimes take a few weeks to be received.

When you have requested your quote and have chosen your preferred contractor, you will need to complete the online ‘Vehicle Crossover – Works From’. This will require:

1. Your chosen contractor and details of the agreed quote.
2. Payment for the full cost of the works

**Step 3 – Initiation of the works**
Surrey CC will raise the necessary works order with the agreed contractor and coordinate the works.

We will raise the works order with the contractor within 10 working days of receiving your agreed quote and full payment for the works.

Your chosen contractor is required to liaise with our Streetworks team regarding works start dates. This is to ensure that works taking place on the highway are done so with the proper permits and do not clash with other works taking place.

You will be kept up to date with all aspects of this planning and can contact us anytime using the reference number supplied on the application.

**Step 4 – Post construction**

Following the construction the crossover the local highway officer will come back out and make a visual inspection of the completed works. The outcome of this inspection will determine if any remedial works will be required. If any remedial works are required the coordination of this will be carried out by Surrey CC at no extra cost to the customer.

Where a visual inspection approves the works you will be informed through a Completion Certificate and Surrey County Council will release payment to the contractor.

We will provide you with the Completion Certificate within 5 working days of the successful inspection.

We would ask that you complete either the supplied feedback card or online feedback form, supplied in your application pack. This will allow us to monitor and react to any feedback you feel we show know about regarding the works or the way the contractor carried out the works.

Following the works the maintenance responsibility of any culvert or bridge installed remains with the owner of the land and you should keep any ditches or watercourses clear from blockages and regularly remove any silt which builds up.
Quality of Work

Visual Inspection

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.

Core testing of vehicle crossovers

Approved contractors will have to adhere to a set construction criteria to ensure the safety and longevity of the works. After two years, Surrey County Council will be responsible and liable for any failings in the construction of the works.

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.

Illegal Footway Crossings

Where a driver habitually attempts to gain access to either a residential or commercial property by crossing the footway/grass verge where there is no constructed crossover, the Council has powers under section 184 (11) of the Highways Act (1980) to insist on the construction of a properly surfaced vehicle crossing, subject to meeting all relevant planning, highway safety and amenity criteria.

The approach will be to notify the occupier in the first instance to make them aware of the legal implications and to advise them both to stop crossing the highway and to apply for a crossover in accordance with the stated procedures. The Council can then charge the occupier with the costs of installation.

Please note consent for watercourse works CANNOT be given retrospectively and we may ask you to remove any works carried out without consent. You may also be liable for any flooding damage caused by unconsented works on a watercourse.