

# Vehicle Crossover Applications

Householder guidance



**SURREY**

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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 be made after considering all options.

## 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 authorised and installed. Doing so may damage the pavement and/or any pipes or cables that are buried underneath it.

It is essential that **all** 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.

Planning permission is not usually required to construct a crossover, but may, 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 premises
- The property has had its permitted development rights removed.
- It is intended to construct the proposed off-highway parking area using non porous material such as concrete, asphalt concrete, block paving or similar.

### Crossovers requiring Planning Permission

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.

Applications for planning permission must be made to your local District or Borough Council Planning Team. Please note it takes approximately 8 weeks for a planning application to be considered.

If the property is on a classified road (A, B or C) and you have not already applied for planning permission, you may wish to contact [Transport Development Planning](#) for pre planning application advice.

Developers seeking to construct a vehicle crossover should contact us ([highways.licensing@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:highways.licensing@surreycc.gov.uk)) to find out the correct method of applying for the crossover.

### 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 application process. More information about the application process can be found on Page 11 of this document.

Written evidence that no planning permission is needed will be required to support your application.

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

## 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 and size

The standard vehicle crossover configuration consists of 2 sloping kerbs (“raker”) either side of 3 dropped kerbs in the middle. 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. Please see the ‘Space Criteria’ section for more information on this.

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.

Please note that 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.

If you intend 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.

### Pavement levels

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. Please read the 'Space Criteria' section further on.

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 1003 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 and other street furniture**

If a streetlight needs to be relocated to accommodate the new crossover, we will let you know and give you further details on how to arrange for this be done with Surrey County Council's contractor (Skanska).

The relocation of other types of street furniture may be carried out, however it may not be possible to do so in every case. This include gullies, road signs, benches, telegraph poles, utility cabinets and manhole covers.

The applicant must pay for the relocation of any street lights or street furniture.

Please see the 'Safety Criteria' section for more information about streetlights and other street furniture in the vicinity of the crossover, and how this may affect your application.

### **Trees in the area**

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.

If the proposed Vehicle Crossover falls 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**

### **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](http://www.rhs.org.uk)), or the Communities and Local Government ([www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)).

### **Ditches / Watercourses 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](mailto:SuDS@SurreyCC.gov.uk) before works are carried out.

More information on watercourse consents is available at: [www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/flooding-advice/more-about-flooding/ordinary-watercourse-consents](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/flooding-advice/more-about-flooding/ordinary-watercourse-consents)

### **Driveway on your property**

While you are not required to construct a driveway on your property before a vehicle crossover is put in, we recommend that you arrange for this work to be done first where possible.

This is to prevent damage to the newly constructed vehicle crossover.

## 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 of minimum 6 metres wide by 2.4 metres deep may be considered. The presence of a wide footway or verge and on-street parking may increase these figures.

When assessing an application, we do not take into account the size of the applicant's current car(s).

**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.

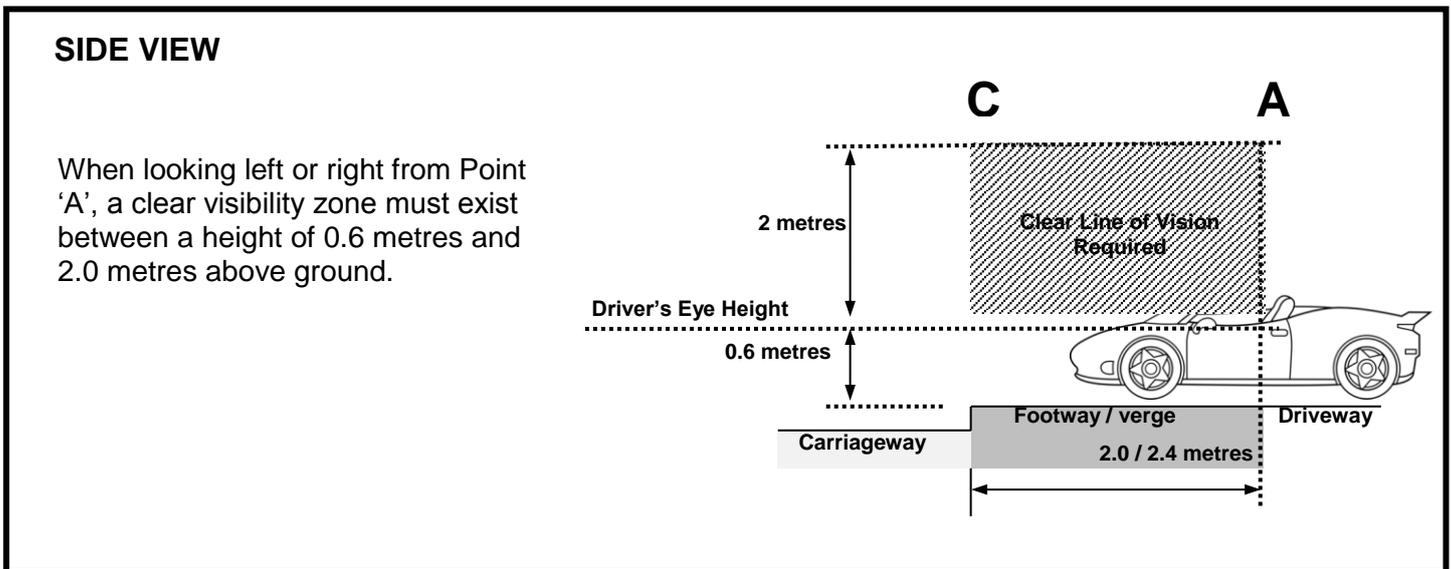
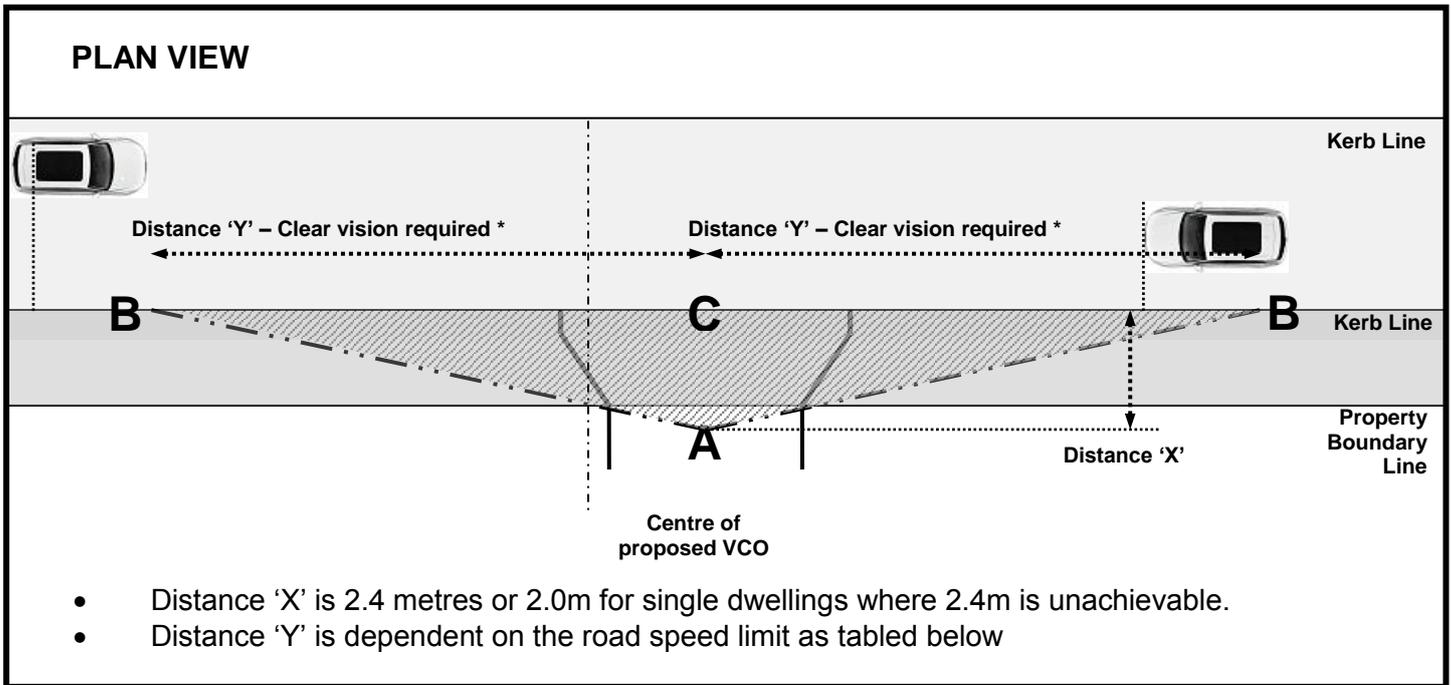
The council will decide the final size and position of the crossing. If you do not agree with the highways authority's decision, you may appeal the decision by asking for your application to be reviewed. However, you must demonstrate where the council has failed to comply with this guidance or be able to identify any exceptional circumstances. Please make your appealing in writing. **The appeal decision is final.**

## 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, if 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.



Speed Limit	Y' Distance
20mph	25 metres desirable/ 22 metres minimum
30mph	45 metres desirable / 40 metres minimum
40mph	120 metres in rural areas /free flowing trafficked areas
	70 metres desirable / 63 metres minimum in urban areas
50mph	160 metres (relaxation only permissible following site specific assessment)
60mph	215 metres (relaxation only permissible following site specific assessment)

Notes: Desirable figures apply to roads carrying buses/HGV's  
 Minimum figures apply to roads with no buses and low numbers of HGV's  
 Localised adjustments may be required on roads with an incline of greater than 10%

## **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 Highway Authority, Surrey County Council (SCC) provides an application process to customers who wish to request **simple** vehicle crossover works.

Homeowners may submit a joint application, if the proposed crossing accesses two neighboring properties. Written consent must be supplied by the primary applicant showing agreement by both homeowners. This will be treated as a single application.

Existing, single applications that wish to change to a joint application will be subject to a new Site Suitability Survey and attached cost.

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 (see [www.surreycc.gov.uk/tdp](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/tdp) for email addresses and other contact details)

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 SCC considers planning related highway and transport matters ([www.surreycc.gov.uk/tdp](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/tdp)).

## Step 1 – Site suitability Survey

An on-site assessment will be carried out for **all** applications, by the Local Highway Officer at a cost of £77.

For applications that do not require planning permission, an on-site assessment will be carried out by a Local Highways Officer (LHO) to decide if the location meets the criteria and if works can take place.

For applications where planning permission is required and has been granted, a site visit will be carried out by an LHO, who will mark up the proposed vehicle crossover.

The £77 fee covers:

- The initial assessment / site visit
- Marking out the proposed crossover (if applicable)
- Preparation of some of the required documentation
- Administration costs

**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 may wish 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 and have confirmation from your local District or Borough Council that planning permission is not required, please proceed with the application.

**After applying**, a Local Highways Officer will come to the proposed location and carry out the site suitability survey. If the proposed crossover meets the criteria in this guidance document, the LHO will use white spray paint to mark out the location of the proposed VCO. You can contact us if you do not agree with the markings.

Due to possible changes in the vicinity proposed location and surrounding properties, the approval in principle 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)

Once you have gone through Stage 1 and your application has been approved in principle, we will ask you to complete a further form to proceed with the full application. The remaining fee of £148 will be due (£225 in total).

By completing the full application and paying the £148, you will also be agreeing to the markings for your proposed vehicle crossover.

After this point, if you wish to have the markings changed, we will charge a £77 administration fee to cover this. All requests will still be assessed against the approval criteria.

We will then provide you with a Licence pack which includes a list of approved contractors who can carry out these works. You can contact as many of these contractors as you wish to obtain quotes for the works, and we recommend you obtain several quotes.

The Vehicle Crossover Licence pack will contain:

- Licence for the work – (Valid for 6 months)
- Full construction specifications
- Suggested Traffic Managements requirements
- Watercourse requirements (where applicable)
- Utility Stat drawings
- List of approved contractors

This pack should be provided to any contractors to allow them to provide an accurate quote. When selecting a quote, please consider the availability of the contractor to start the works. Surrey County Council has no control over other work commitments which contractors may already have.

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 £148 fee. We have to contact the utility companies to find out about any of their cables buried underground and this can sometimes take a few weeks to be received.

### Step 3 – Final payment and initiation of the works

When you have chosen your preferred contractor, you will need to complete one final online form. This will confirm your chosen contractor and details of the agreed quote.

You will also need to pay the full cost of the works. The payment will be held by Surrey County Council until the works have been completed.

Please do **not** include VAT (value added tax) in the payment. If in doubt, please double check with your contractor that they have quoted a **net** amount.

We will then raise a works order with your chosen 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.

### Step 4 – Post construction

Following the construction of the crossover, the LHO will make a visual inspection of the completed works within 28 days. The outcome of this inspection will determine if any remedial works are required. If any remedial works are required the coordination of this will be carried out by Surrey County Council at no extra cost to the customer.

Surrey County Council will arrange for payment to be made to the Contractor following the completion of works.

When the inspection has passed, you will be informed and sent confirmation via email.

We will do this within **5 working days** of the successful inspection. This certifies that a lawful crossover has been built.

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

## Quality of Work

### Visual Inspection

After the work has been completed, we will carry out a visual inspection to make sure it 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.

Following the two year guarantee period, Surrey County Council will then take on responsibility for any maintenance issues, in accordance with our policy for maintaining all pavements across Surrey.

\*Sometimes, home owners may arrange to carry out extra home improvement works such as walls, hedges or driveway adjustments. If any damage is caused to the vehicle crossover as a result of these works, neither Surrey County Council nor the contractors will be required to carry out repairs.

### 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 testing on selected works. If you are unhappy with the quality of works on your crossover, you may request that we carry out a core test.

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

It is an offence to carry out any works on the footway without our express permission. Unauthorised vehicle crossovers will cause the footway to deteriorate and put those using the footway at risk. We take seriously our duty to maintain our highways and protect it from damage, if necessary by legal action.

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.

## **Checklist for applicants**

- Have you checked the 'Safety criteria' and 'Space criteria' in this document against the amount of space at your property?
- Are you the freeholder, leaseholder or tenant? If you are the leaseholder or a tenant, you must get permission from the freeholder before you apply.
- A, B or C road? You will require planning permission. You may wish to contact Transport Development Planning for pre planning application advice if you have not already been granted planning permission.
- D road? You *may* require planning permission. Written proof from your District or Borough Council will be needed to show if planning permission is or isn't required.
- Is there a tree trunk within one metre of the proposed crossover? An application may not be approved if so. Please read the section on 'Trees in the area'.
- Is the proposed crossover closer than 1 metre to any item of street furniture such as a lamp column or road sign? An application may not be approved if so. Please read the section on 'Space Criteria'.