

Road Safety Audits – Oxfordshire County Council (Transport Development Management) protocol for developer led schemes

This section sets out the Council's protocol for the consideration of developer proposals requiring the support of a Road Safety Audit (RSA). This procedure supports national guidance set out in GG 119 and is required to preserve the safety of all road users using the public highway. Oxfordshire County Council requires the procedures set out in GG 119 to be adhered to.

This protocol highlights the importance of the safety audit process in support of a planning application and identifies when an audit is required, and the process involved. This procedure will not relate to works being proposed on Trunk Roads or those falling under the responsibility of Highways England.

Safety Audit Process

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The aim of this approach is to ensure that the road safety implications of all Highway Schemes supporting development proposals, including those subject to future adoption by the Council, are fully considered for all users of the highway, as well as those working on the highway, and to ensure that proposals are compliant with current statutory regulations.

This will help to reduce safety risks on the highways of Oxfordshire for all those who use them and ensure the objectives and aims of the Council's Local Transport Connectivity (LTCP) and Vision Zero objectives are achieved.

When is a Safety Audit required?

For all planning applications that include any of the following:

Alteration to an existing highway, including:

- *Formation of a new access onto an existing road.*
- *Amendments to an existing access onto the public highway.*
- *All new residential estate roads / streets serving more than 5 dwellings.*
- *Most major planning applications that will be subject to this RSA approach will be for residential development of 10 units or more or 0.5 ha or more when the numbers are unknown and commercial development of 1,000 sqm or more or 1 ha or more).*
- *For all other planning applications that include proposals that do not meet recognised standards.*

The requirements for a safety audit will be assessed and determined by Council officers and will include design issues such as visibility, geometry and junction location(s) design. Safety Audits may not be required, for minor applications, if guidance set out in Manual for Streets or Design Manual for Roads & Bridges is achieved, however, Oxfordshire County Council Officers reserve the right to request a safety audit on any sized proposal where it considers there to be potential safety issues that need to be assessed.

Safety Audits must be undertaken in compliance with GG 119 (Appendix B) and be provided to council officers in a word and pdf format.

RSA Process

The process as set down in GG 119 will be followed for all Safety Audits. Ideally, in order to ensure that the safety audit process does not delay the overall planning process, developers will be required, when submitting a 'major' planning application to the Planning Authority, to support the planning application with a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (taking the above requirements in to consideration). This audit may result in amendments being made to the proposed development (and potential re-consultation by the Local Planning Authority) and hence the need for it to be undertaken at this stage.

For planning applications, other than 'major' applications the Local Planning Authority will consult the Council's Transport Development Management officers who will confirm if an RSA is required. It is likely a RSA will be required for any proposals that alter the existing highway or where new residential roads / streets are formed.

The requirement for a RSA will be identified through pre-application consultation and therefore we strongly encourage prospective applicants to engage with the Council at this stage.

For schemes where a Road Safety Audit is required, Transport Development Management officers will not provide any positive recommendation until such a time that a stage 1 audit has been undertaken and any problems identified have been appropriately considered/addressed and agreed with the Highway Authority as the overseeing organisation.

It is the responsibility of the developer to commission an independent audit team with appropriate industry recognised accreditation and qualifications to consider the safety implications affecting their scheme design. It is anticipated that in the majority of cases developer schemes will be required to incorporate amendments within their designs to accommodate the recommendations a safety audit. Prior to commissioning any independent audit team, the applicant will be required to agree the brief and scheme drawings with OCC.

A signed 'Road Safety Audit Response Report' will be required to be produced by the design team and submitted to the Council's Transport Development Management Officer detailing how the recommendations of the safety audit have been addressed.

It is the responsibility of the design team to provide an electronic copy of the response report to the RSA team for information.

If the Safety Audit raises problems that are not to be addressed through amendments to the scheme, to the satisfaction of the overseeing organisation, a repeat RSA covering the outstanding issues is likely to be requested. Where a stage 1 or 2 audit is over 5 years old a repeat / updated RSA will be required.

Process Map Audit Stages Scheme audits are undertaken at the following stages:

Stage 1. A Stage 1 Audit must be commissioned by the Developer as soon as possible after completion of the preliminary design. The design should be sufficiently progressed so that all significant features are clearly shown. The RSA brief is to include plans that clearly show visibility, geometry, excessive gradients (if applicable) and refuse vehicle tracking. This is likely to have been undertaken prior to defining the scope of the S278 works. The Developer will provide the Stage 1 Audit report prior to the start of detailed design.

Stage 2. The Developer must commission a Stage 2 Audit upon substantial completion of the detailed design and before the preparation of works orders or tender documents. The design should be sufficiently progressed so that it could be constructed with the information produced to that point. Once the Developer has provided the Stage 2 report, the detailed design can be completed in line with recommendations.

Stage 3. A Stage 3 Audit must be commissioned by the Developer in advance or as soon as the works are usable by the public, irrespective of whether the works are considered formally complete. The timing will be dictated by the earliest opportunity to observe actual road user behaviour. Should the Stage 3 be carried out before the works are formally complete, the RSA may be considered an interim and a further Stage 3 may be required once works have completed.

Stage 4. The Developer is to commission a Stage 4 Audit, if requested by the Council within the time parameters set out in GG 119 and before the issue of the Final Completion Certificate. The Stage 4 Audit should take account of actual road user behaviour including collection and analysis of appropriate data to inform assessment of the scheme's performance.

The Council as The Overseeing Organisation reserve the right to request a RSA is repeated at any stage should the audit provided be deemed insufficient.

The Council will not register applications for highway agreements where a stage 2 safety audit, is required, but has not been submitted in accordance with GG 119. Post Construction Stage Where changes do need to be made to schemes any additional costs will be the responsibility of the developer. Final Completion or Adoption Certificates will not be issued prior to agreement of the Stage 4 audit (if required) and completion of any necessary works associated with it.