

Safety Audit Adopted Policy: Guidance Notes for Scheme Promoters

Revision: September 2015.

Introduction

This Policy:

- sets out West Sussex County Council's (WSCC) procedure for the consideration of developer proposals requiring the support of a Road Safety Audit;
- supports national guidance set out in HD 19/15 and is required to preserve the safety of all road users using the public highway;
- requires the procedures set out in HD 19/15 to be followed subject to the departures set out in this policy;
- 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;
- will not relate to works being proposed on Trunk Roads or those falling under the responsibility of Highways England.

Objective

The objective of this Policy is to ensure that the road safety implications of all Highway Schemes required to support development, including those subject to future adoption by WSCC, are fully considered for all road 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 West Sussex for all those who use them.

When a Safety Audit is required

A Safety Audit is required for all major¹ planning applications that include any of the following:

- alteration to an existing highway;
- intensification² of use of an existing access;

¹ Major applications are defined as residential development of 10 units or more or 0.5ha or more when the numbers are unknown and commercial development of 1,000sqm or more or 1ha or more.

² Intensification is generally defined as 50 or more vehicle movements per day. However it is recommended that clarification is sought from WSCC where a proposal involves the intensification of an existing access as other issues, such as collision data, visibility, and geometry, would need to be considered.

- formation of a new access;
- off-site highway improvements;
- new residential estate roads where a through route is created, where a bus route is created, or where the road serves access to a school or other major community or retail facility.

For all other planning applications that include proposals that do not meet recognised standards, the need for a safety audit will be assessed by WSCC officers. Of particular interest will be visibility, geometry, and junction location. Safety Audits will not normally be required for minor applications if guidance set out in Manual for Streets or Design Manual for Roads and Bridges is achieved.

Safety Audits must be undertaken in compliance with HD 19/15, Road Safety Audit subject to the departures set out in this policy.

Process

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 district and borough councils, to support the planning application with a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.

For planning applications other than major applications the planning authority will consult WSCC who will indicate if a Safety Audit is required.

It will be the responsibility of the developer to commission an independent audit team to consider the safety implications affecting their scheme. As of 1 March 2015, WSCC will require all Road Safety Audit teams to include at least one team member who has one or more of the following industry recognised accreditation or qualification:

- be an IHE Registered Road Safety Auditor, entitled to use the designatory letters RegRSA(IHE) **or**
- be a Fellow or Member of the IHT Society of Road Safety Auditors, entitled to use the letters MSoRSA or FSoRSA **or**
- be a holder of a Highways Agency Approved Certificate of Competency for Road Safety Audit, and otherwise comply with the requirements of IAN 152/11.

It is expected that in the majority of cases schemes will be amended to accommodate the recommendations of the Safety Audit. A signed Road Safety Audit Response Report should be produced by the Design Team and submitted to WSCC detailing how the recommendations of the audit have been addressed.

If the Safety Audit raises problems that are not to be addressed through amendments to the scheme, an Exception Report will be produced by the Design Team and submitted to WSCC with the final Safety Audit. The Exception Report will identify why the recommendations of the Safety Audit have not been accepted and the scheme amended accordingly. The Exception Report will be considered and if acceptable will be approved and signed by WSCC. Where WSCC is not prepared to sign off an Exception Report, the design will need to be amended to remove the identified safety problem.

All schemes requiring a Safety Audit will require a Road Safety Audit Stage 1 (completion of preliminary design), Stage 2 (completion of detailed design), and Stage 3 (completion of construction).

A Stage 4 Safety Audit will be a requirement of the highway agreement where the following criteria are met:

- a new junction is being created onto the Strategic Road Network;
- a new link road is constructed which will form part of the Strategic Road Network;
- where a departure or departures from standard are agreed through the design process and there is a need to monitor a schemes operation.

Planning Stage

District and borough planning authorities may decide not to register a major planning application if a safety audit is required, in accordance with the policy, but is not provided.

If Stage 1 Safety Audit issues are not satisfactorily addressed, or if a Stage 1 Safety Audit is not submitted in accordance with HD 19/15 and the departures identified in this policy, when required, WSCC will recommend that the planning application be refused.

Highway Agreement Stage

WSCC will not register applications for highway agreements where a Stage 2 Safety Audit is required but has not been submitted in accordance with HD 19/15 and the departures identified in this policy.

Departures from HD 19/15

Stage 4 Safety Audits

- The developer will arrange for evidence-led collision monitoring where a Stage 4 Safety Audit is required in the highway agreement.
- Road safety audit collision reports shall be prepared using 12 months of personal injury collision data from the time the Highway Improvement scheme became operational.

Road Safety Audit Brief

- The format of the illustrative road safety audit brief at Annex E of HD 19/15 shall be used when commissioning safety audits. This avoids the need for briefs to be submitted to WSCC for approval.

Road Safety Audit Reports

- WSCC require the final Road Safety Audit Report to be submitted. The Road Safety Audit Team is to submit draft Road Safety Audit Report to the Design Team.

Road Safety Audit Response Report

- WSCC require the final Road Safety Audit Response Report to be submitted. The Design Team do not need to send a draft Road Safety Audit Response Report.

Documentation

- The finalised Road Safety Audit Report, Audit Response Report, and Exception Report do not need to be sent to Highways England.