

Road Safety Audits – Gateshead Council 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. This procedure supports national guidance set out in GG119 and is required to preserve the safety of all road users using the public highway. Gateshead Council requires the procedures set out in GG119 to be followed.

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.

- Contents
- Objective
- When a Safety Audit required
- Process
- Audit Stages
- Planning Stage
- Highway Agreement Stage
- Post Construction Stage

Objective

The objective of this protocol is to ensure that the road safety implications of all Highway Schemes supporting development, 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 Gateshead for all those who use them.

When a Safety Audit is required

For all 'major*' planning applications that include any of the following:

- Alteration to an existing highway,
- Intensification of use of an existing access. Intensification is generally defined as 50 or more additional vehicle movements per day. However, it is recommended that clarification is sought from the Council 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,
 - onto a;
 - classified road
 - road with local distributor function or greater
 - road with a speed limit of 40mph or higher
- 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.

* ('major' applications are defined as residential development of 10 units or more or 0.5 ha or more when the numbers are unknown and commercial development of 1,000 sq.m. or more or 1 ha or more);

For all other planning applications that include proposals that do not meet recognised standards.

The need for a safety audit will be assessed and determined by Council 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 & Bridges is achieved, however, Gateshead Council Transport 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 GG119

Process

The process as set down in GG119 and reflected in the flow chart below 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 can result in amendments being made to the proposed development and hence the need for it to be undertaken at this stage.

For planning applications other than 'major' applications the Planning Authority will consult the Council's Transport Planning officers who will indicate if a Safety Audit is required. Often the need for a Safety Audit will be identified through pre-application consultation and therefore we strongly encourage prospective applicants to engage with the Council at this stage.

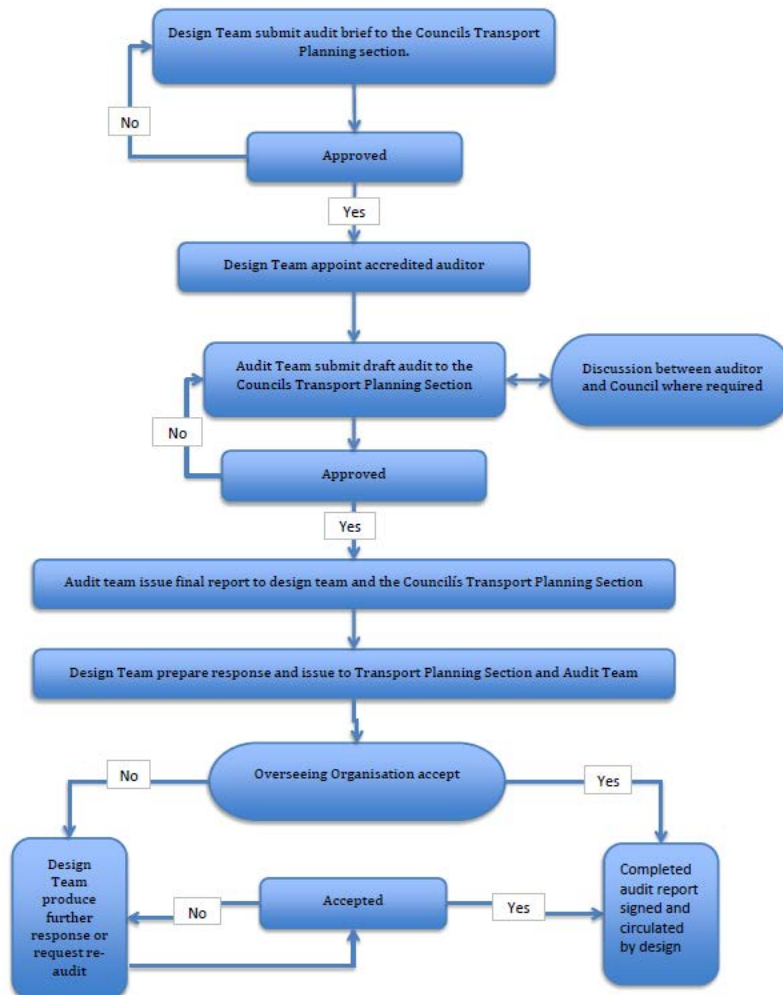
For schemes where a Road Safety Audit is required, transport planning officers will not recommend a positive determination until such a time that a stage 1 audit has been undertaken and any problems identified have been appropriately considered/addressed and agreed with the highway authority as overseeing organization.

It will be 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.

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 the Council's Transport Planning Section detailing how the recommendations of the audit have been addressed. It will be 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 may be requested.
 Where a stage 1 or 2 audit is over 5 years old a repeat 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. 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 just before or just after the issue of the Practical Completion Certificate depending upon what is most appropriate. The timing will be dictated by the earliest opportunity to observe actual road user behaviour.

On occasions it may be necessary to carry out a Stage 3 Audit before a road is (re)opened to traffic, so that any identified issues can be addressed prior to (re)opening. The need for this will be discussed with the developer and should be included in the Section 278 Agreement where possible.

Stage 4

The Developer must commission a Stage 4 Audit 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.

Planning Stage

If Stage 1 Safety Audit issues are not satisfactorily addressed, or if a stage 1 Safety Audit is not submitted in accordance with GG119 Transport Officers will recommend that the planning application be refused.

Highway Agreement Stage

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 certificates will not be issued prior to agreement of the Stage 4 audit and completion of any necessary works associated with it.

