

Environmental Information Regulations – Response - 27747

Visibility standards applied to the access at Land East of The Garden Cottage, Hadleigh Road, Polstead — planning application DC/25/01689 (your references SCC/CON/1954/25, SCC/CON/2987/25 and SCC/CON/3259/25)

Background

Planning permission DC/25/01689 was granted on 4 November 2025 for the change of use of agricultural land to equestrian use, with a stable block and a barn. Condition 6 requires visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 160 metres to the north east and 159 metres to the west.

Your consultation response of 4 June 2025 stated that for a road with a nominal speed limit of 60mph a Y value of 160 metres is expected, measured to the nearside edge of the carriageway in both directions without encroaching third-party land. Your response of 23 July 2025 recorded that the proposed development would require frequent day to day movements as identified within the submitted planning statement.

The information requested

(1) Please identify the published standard or guidance from which the X dimension of 2.4 metres and the Y dimensions of 160 metres and 159 metres were derived for this access, giving the document title, version and the relevant page or table.

Stopping sight distances and recommended visibility for various 85th percentile speeds are set out in Table 1, Appendix F of the Suffolk Design: Streets Guide (2022) which is available for download via:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/planning-and-development-advice/suffolk-design-guide-for-residential-areas>

For a private access onto a road with a nominal speed limit of 60mph, Table 1 sets out an expected X distance of 2.4 metres and a Y distance of 160 metres.

(2) Your published dropped kerb criteria contain a table of vehicle visibility requirements which is stated to apply to private accesses serving up to two properties. Please confirm whether that table was the source of the dimensions applied to this access and, if so, on what basis it was considered applicable to a development of this description.

Suffolk County Council's published dropped kerb criteria applies for permission to construct, extend or alter a domestic dropped kerb for one or two dwellings. As set out in response to information request (1), the source of the visibility dimensions applied in the assessment of planning application DC/25/01689 were derived from the Suffolk Design: Streets Guide, Table 1 Appendix F.

(3) Please identify the standard that applies to a vehicular access serving agricultural or equestrian premises on a classified single carriageway road with a 60mph speed limit and state the X and Y dimensions it requires.

Suffolk County Council does not apply a separate visibility standard specifically for

agricultural or equestrian accesses in this context. The applicable standard is set out in the responses to information requests (1) and (2).

(4) Interim Advice Note SCC01/2024 states that where the design speed is 40mph and above, junction and forward visibility are to be to the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. Please explain the relationship between that provision and the dimensions applied to this access, and state whether DMRB was considered in this case.

The relationship between the quoted provision and the dimensions applied in this case is reflected in Table 1, Appendix F of the Suffolk Design: Streets Guide. The accompanying note to Table 1 states that, where the primary function of a highway is deemed to be movement, the design principles contained within DMRB, or appropriate local design standards, should apply. For a private access onto a road with a nominal speed limit of 60mph, Table 1 sets out an expected Y distance of 160 metres. The visibility requirements applied in this case were derived from the Suffolk Design: Streets Guide as the applicable local design standard, which highlights circumstances where movement function dominates. No separate assessment against DMRB was undertaken.

(5) Please provide any speed survey, traffic count, personal injury collision data or other assessment relating to this section of the A1071 that was obtained, considered or relied upon in connection with this application, together with the date of any such data.

Suffolk County Council, as Local Highway Authority, assessed the planning application based on the information submitted as part of the application and using the relevant standards, guidance and policies in place at the time.

No records are held which identify any speed survey, traffic count or personal injury collision data relating to this section of the A1071 as having been obtained, considered or relied upon by the Local Highway Authority in connection with the planning application. The Local Highway Authority's assessment relating to this section of the A1071 is reflected in its consultation responses dated 4 June 2025 and 23 July 2025, which refer to matters including the road classification, speed limit and the perceived high-speed nature of the road.

(6) Please provide all internal correspondence, notes, file records and calculations recording how the dimensions in condition 6 were arrived at.

A review has not identified any internal correspondence, notes, file records or calculations which specifically record how the dimensions specified in Condition 6 were arrived at. The exception is the Local Highway Authority consultation response dated 4 June 2025, which set out the expected visibility distances for a private access onto a road with a nominal speed limit of 60mph.

(7) Your published guidance provides that an applicant must ensure that all land required to provide the necessary visibility is within their control or within the existing public highway. Please state what assessment was made in this case of whether the land required to achieve and retain the condition 6 splays is within the applicant's control or within the public highway.

As part of the assessment of the planning application, the Local Highway Authority considered whether the visibility splays shown on Drawing No. 2415 - 04 Rev. P4 could be achieved and retained. On that basis, the visibility splays were considered acceptable and capable of being secured through condition. In reaching that conclusion, regard was

made to the Highway Authority's position that visibility splays should be provided within land controlled by the applicant or within highway maintainable at public expense.

(8) Please state whether any works licence or permission under the Highways Act 1980 has been sought or granted in connection with the access at this site.

A review of the records held by the Local Highway Authority has not identified any application for, or grant of, a works licence or permission under the Highways Act 1980 in connection with the access at this site.