Department for Transport

Traffic Advisory Leaflet 12/93
November 1993

Overrun Areas

Introduction

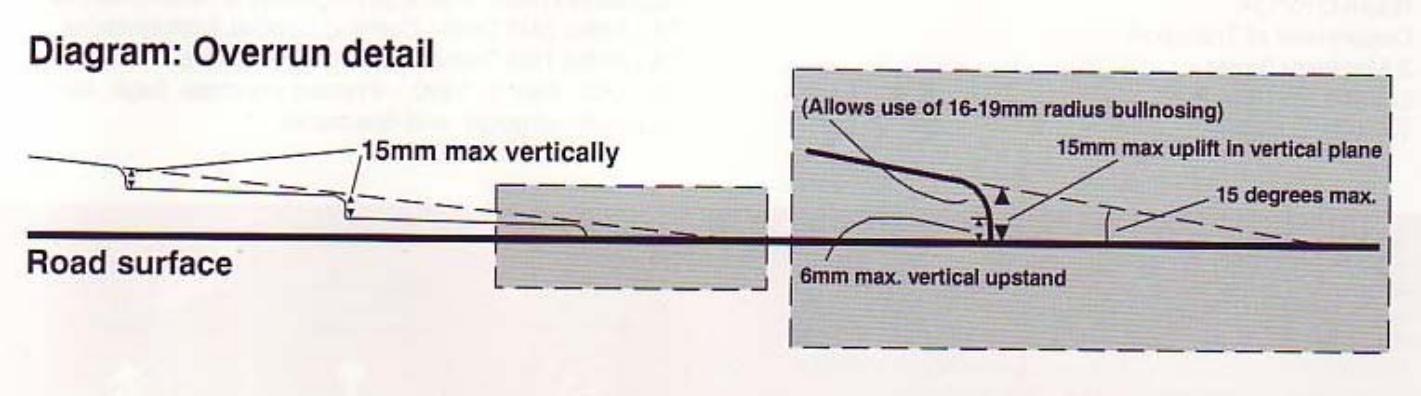
The Traffic Calming Regulations cover the use of overrun areas constructed within specified parameters. If local authorities wish to use a design which goes outside these dimensions, they can apply for special authorisation. Traffic Advisory Leaflet 3/93 gives advice on seeking special authorisation, and explains that some justification would need to be given why a feature could not conform.

Purpose

Overrun areas are used to create the optical illusion that the useable carriageway is narrower than it actually is. These areas may be employed on bends to encourage car drivers to keep to a low speed but still allow sufficient room for larger vehicles to negotiate them. Similarly they can be used at junctions, particularly roundabouts, to deflect traffic away from a straight ahead and faster path, where the overrunning area allows larger vehicles to negotiate the junction without problems.

Maximum Dimensions

These are prescribed in Regulation 5 of the Traffic Calming Regulations and are shown in the Diagram below. This Diagram is not intended to dictate the actual cross sectional shape of an overrun area, but only to illustrate the dimensions that must not be exceeded. The overrun area may have a smooth or an irregular surface across its width, it could have a horizontal surface, and it does not need to incorporate any step like projections.



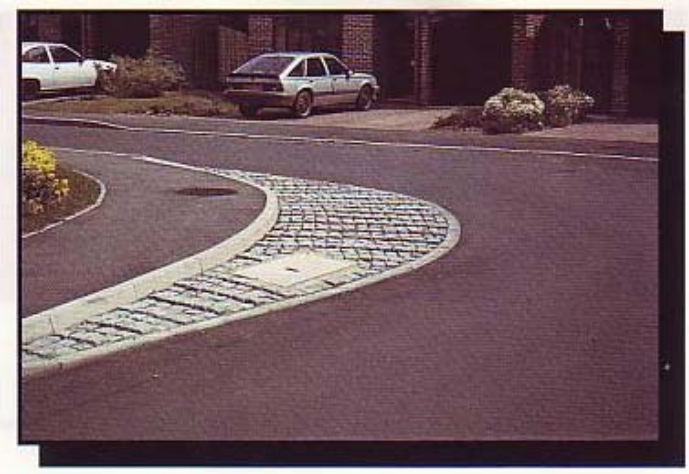
Pedestrians

If not located appropriately, overrun areas can cause difficulties and possible danger for pedestrians. Therefore it is important to avoid positioning these areas in places where pedestrians often cross the road. In some cases pedestrians may need to be directed to safer crossing places. Most pedestrian deterrent paving surfaces could not be used to form overrun areas, since the Traffic Calming Regulations do not permit a very rugged surface to be used.

Cyclists

Because of the locations where overrun areas are likely to be used, cyclists might find they are forced onto the features by passing vehicles. The design of the overrun area should not prevent cyclists crossing it safely. For example, a bullnose kerb having a 16mm - 19mm nose radius, provided that only this nosing is exposed above the carriageway, will conform with the requirements of the regulations. Cyclists should be able to negotiate such a feature safely, even on an angled approach. However, if any vertical face is present, the feature will be more difficult and possibly dangerous to negotiate.

In some circumstances half battered kerbs might meet the dimensions given in the regulations, but if these are used only the nose radius should generally be exposed. The use of 45 degree splayed kerbs is also possible under the regulations, though the angle is probably rather steep for cyclists to negotiate safely, particularly in wet weather, and is therefore better avoided. A kerb or edge block with an angle face of 30 degrees, provided it did not extend over a width greater than 75mm, could be acceptable.



Materials

The regulations do not dictate the use of any particular materials, only that they should conform to the maximum dimensions given. Overrun areas can therefore be constructed from a variety of materials. The main concern is that the design should not result in damage or risk to any road user

inadvertently walking, riding or driving across the area. It should be generally maintenance free, and designed so that rain water runoff will not create problems of ponding, particularly at the point where it joins the main running surface of the carriageway.

Signing

Specific signing of overrun areas should not be necessary if the area is properly designed. The features should however be of a contrasting colour, such that when viewed at night under the street lighting used, they are distinguishable from the general running surface of the carriageway. Whilst this is a matter for local highway authorities to determine, it is advised that overrun areas should not be used in unlit streets unless special lighting sufficient to illuminate the overrun areas is provided.

References

- Traffic Calming Act 1992
- Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations 1993 SI No. 1849
- TA Leaflet 3/93 - Traffic Calming Special Authorisations
- TA Leaflet 7/93 -Traffic Calming Regulations
- BS 7263: Part 1: 1990 - Precast concrete flags, kerbs, channels, edgings, and quadrants

Enquiries

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