



CDM Advice

If you are an architect, quantity surveyor or construction manager involved in a project that includes an automated gate, you have a legal, moral and financial responsibility – or 'duty of care' to ensure that the gate specified represents a safe and compliant installation. In the Karolina Golabek case, the HSE clearly points to the responsibility of the architect or developer to consider safety during the design of any powered gate installation and to specify the relevant safety to ensure the gate conforms with the recognised standards.

CDM Regulations 2015

The CDM – Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 recognises the role of the 'Principal Designer' as having accountability for co-ordinating the health and safety aspects during the pre-construction phase of a project. For an automated gate installation this could be the primary design consultancy, architect, consulting engineer, surveyor, specifier, principal or specialist contractor. The Principal Designer takes into account any significant risks arising from the automated gate design that could adversely affect the project. In addition the designer must understand and mitigate against any significant risks that construction workers may be exposed to and ensure that the client is aware of their own responsibilities in relation to the automated gate installation. If the designer is aware of gaps in their technical knowledge or experience, they should seek out other professionals to help them. This means that if an automated gate 'machine' is being included in the build, a suitably trained i.e. Gate Safe Aware trained installer should be involved / consulted who has direct knowledge of the safety risks associated with this type of installation. A suitably trained installer will also be able to provide guidance as to how the equipment can be interfaced into the overall design taking into consideration other design factors (eg aesthetics, costs, planning criteria) and safety devices e.g. a fire alarm.

The designer of an automated gate installation is charged with the responsibility of eliminating / avoiding or reducing / minimizing health and safety risks (so far as reasonably practical) through adopting the correct design, in terms of the actual operation of the gate and its ongoing maintenance..

In addition the Principal Designer has a duty to liaise with other contractors who might be directly associated with the gate to ensure that their input into the site does not impact on the safety of the gate installation. An illustration of where this would apply could be the creation of a structure adjacent to the gate, which may create additional pinch points.

The Principal Designer should also make the gate supplier aware of any current or future services that might interfere with the gate or its foundations. This includes details of the intended wind loading for the gate, the anticipated number of operations per day / peak number of operations per hour that the gate is expected to perform.

Making Gates Safe

The preference would be for the designer to visit the site at the earliest possible stage to understand the realities of the site specifics. For automated gates, this means being clear from the outset in terms of the recommended levels required to enable the gate to be installed in such a manner that eliminates reducing gaps, whilst still maintaining the desired security. BIM modeling can also be used to understand the project in its entirety.

Gate Safe has developed guidance to help specify a safe gate, click here to download how to specify a safe gate.

Gate Safe operates a unique service inviting trade professionals to have any specification document pertaining to automated gates checked to ensure that it is compliant with current guidelines. To take advantage of this service email info@gate-safe.org.

Architects / quantity surveyors and specifiers and construction managers are encouraged to join the Gate Safe Aware training course, click here for more details.

"I am delighted to continue to offer my support to Gate Safe. It is imperative that architects are aware of the need to follow the appropriate safety protocol when specifying this type of installation. Education is absolutely vital – no one will knowingly install an unsafe gate – and the Gate Safe Aware training course and online guidance is designed to help architects not repeat the disastrous mistakes that have been made in the past. The recent feedback from the HSE in relation to the Karolina Golabek case made it abundantly clear that architects have a clear responsibility to ensure the relevant risk assessments are made prior to installation, and that the appropriate safety features are fitted to deliver a safe and legally compliant automatic gate operation. Gate Safe's online architect service and Gate Safe visualiser are really useful tools, which will enable architects to develop the desired safe gate specification."
—Paul Bussey (RIBA, RMaPs, FIFireE) Technical Associate
Scott Brownrigg