

Technical Note: Response to RBC Highways

Site: 60 Beecham Road, Reading
Prepared by: Chris Saunders
Approved by: John Russell
Date: 7th February 2021

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Motion has been instructed by the Chris Keen Partnership, to respond to the comments made by the Highway Officer at Reading Borough Council with regards the proposals for 60 Beecham Road, Reading, Planning Application reference 201607.
- 1.2 This Technical Note covers the proposed parking provision and the sustainability of the site.

2.0 Existing Parking Provision

- 2.1 In the comments from the Highway Officer, which were forwarded on by the Planning Officer, Ethne Humphreys on the 4th January 2021, it is stated that the proposals will result in the loss of two parking spaces, namely a car port and a garage at the rear. However, neither of these are capable of accommodating a motor vehicle and therefore the site currently does not have any parking provision.
- 2.2 Given the comments by Ethne Humphreys, within her response of the 4th January 2021 where she states, "as discussed, it's a little tricky to undertake a site visit in the current covid-19 restrictions", it is also assumed that the Highway Officer has not undertaken a site visit.
- 2.3 The existing car port is only 2.5 metres wide and is therefore below the minimum width of 3 metres for a car port as required within Section 8 of Reading Borough Councils, "Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document" (SPD) and cannot be considered as a car parking space.
- 2.4 It is also noteworthy that if a car were parked in this location, acknowledging the fact that if it were, it is unlikely the driver would be able open the door, the vehicle would obstruct access to the rear garden where the garage is located.
- 2.5 With regards the garage, given the narrow width of the garden, a vehicle cannot egress the garage without undertaking a significant number of manoeuvres within the back garden, as shown on the swept path analysis within **Appendix A**. In addition, the swept path analysis shows that the narrow width of the drop crossing on Beecham Road and the on street parking on both sides of the carriageway, a vehicle is unable to access the drop crossing to access the site without coming in collision with parked vehicles, even if a vehicle reverses into the site.
- 2.6 Therefore, the existing property does not have a parking provision.
- 2.7 This position is confirmed by the neighbour in her representation letter, **Appendix B**, which states:

"No Access to Vehicles

*The application states that this is not provided given the constraints of the site. As I live adjoined to number 60, **this would be a significant disturbance to my life if vehicles were trying to negotiate in an out between the two properties.**" (Motion emphasis)*

3.0 Proposed Parking Provision

- 3.1 The proposed site will be car free in accordance with national and local planning policies, promoting sustainable travel. The site is within a sustainable location.
- 3.2 The Highway Officer states that the site is within Zone 3 of the SPD and requires three parking spaces, two for the existing dwelling and one for the proposed. However as detailed above, the existing site does not have any parking provision and therefore the proposals require, in the Officers view one new space.

3.3 However, the Officer has not taken into consideration the following note on page 15 of the SPD.

"The above standards for C3 are the required standards. Should a developer require fewer spaces than are set out here then there would need to be demonstration, to the Highway Authority's satisfaction, that there would be no detriment to highway safety as a result"

3.4 The site is in a highly sustainable location as detailed within Section 4 of this note and the shortfall of one parking space will not have a severe impact on the existing parking provision along Beecham Road.

3.5 The Highway Officer refers to an appeal at 615 Oxford Road, which was for the provision of three flats at the corner of Oxford Road and Beecham Road, however an examination of the Reading Borough Council Website Planning Portal shows that the appeal decision is not available and therefore the context of the Inspectors comments cannot be judged. From the small extract provided it seems the no parking survey was submitted and it is unclear if the Inspector walked the full length of Beecham Road.

3.6 Therefore, a parking survey was undertaken on Saturday 22nd January 2021 between 4pm and 5pm, during Covid 19 National Stay at Home Restrictions, where only essential and work travel is permitted. Given this and that any residents who would be travelling to work would likely be at home at the weekend, the timing represents a robust analysis of parking conditions along the length of Beecham Road. Table 3.1 provides the results of the survey.

Location	Cars Parked	Number of Spaces	Capacity
Beecham Road, East Side	73	19	79%
Beecham Road, West Side	63	10	86%
Total	136	29	82%

Table 3.1 – Parking Survey, Beecham Road, Saturday 22nd January 2021

3.7 The parking survey shows that there are 29 free spaces along Beecham Road with a parking capacity of 82% and therefore a shortfall of one parking space can be accommodated on street.

3.8 It should also be noted that the Beecham Road and surrounding roads are not within one of Reading's Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ), which are implemented where there is severe parking stress within a residential area. Given that Beecham Road is not within a CPZ, this indicates that spare capacity is available.

4.0 Sustainability of Site

4.1 It is generally accepted that walking and cycling provide important alternatives to the private car and should also be encouraged to form part of longer journeys via public transport. Indeed, it is noteworthy that the Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT) has prepared several guidance documents that provide advice with respect to the provision of sustainable travel in conjunction with new developments. Within these documents it is suggested that:

- ▶ Most people will walk to a destination that is less than one mile (Planning for Walking, 2015);
- ▶ The bicycle is a potential mode of transport for all journeys under five miles (Planning for Cycling, 2015); and,
- ▶ Walking distances to bus stops should not exceed 400 metres, whilst people are prepared to walk twice as far to rail stations (Planning for Walking, 2015).

4.2 Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that the NPPF recognises that the policies and measures required in different communities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from rural to urban locations. Moreover, Manual for Streets (MfS) identifies 'walkable neighbourhoods' as being:

4.3 *"characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes (up to about 800m) walking distance of residential areas which residents may comfortably access on foot".*

4.4 It is also important to recognise that MfS does not consider 800 metres to be a maximum walking distance. Indeed, MfS and the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges contend that walking can be used to access a

variety of destinations within a range of up to two kilometres and two miles respectively. Finally, it is also important to acknowledge that 81% of all trips that cover a maximum distance of one mile are completed on foot (National Travel Survey, 2017).

- 4.5 The site is within 250 metres of bus stops which are served by the following services.
- ▶ Service 15, Reading Town Centre to Tilehurst and Purley, every 30 minutes.
 - ▶ Service 16, Reading Town Centre to Tilehurst and Calcot, every 30 minutes.
 - ▶ Service 17, Early, Reading Town Centre, Tilehurst, every 8-9 minutes.
- 4.6 In addition, the district shopping centre of Oxford Road, Tesco superstore, Prospect Park, Govelands Surgery and Pharmacy and the Battle Primary School are all within a one mile walking distance of the site.
- 4.7 All these services are within the thresholds detailed with the above mentioned documents and therefore given the sustainable location of the site this supports a car free development in accordance with the SPD.

5.0 Summary

- 5.1 The existing property is not provided with any useable parking spaces and any parking associated with it will occur on street.
- 5.2 There is parking capacity available on Beecham Road to accommodate a shortfall of one parking space from the proposed development, however the sustainable location of the site supports a car free development in accordance with local and national policies.

Appendix A

Swept Path Analysis

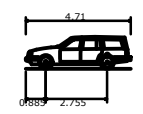
In forwards, out forwards



Reverse in, out forwards



Rev:	Description:	Date:	Rev By:	Chk'd:
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Estate Car (2006)	4.710m
Overall Length	1.804m
Overall Width	1.442m
Overall Body Height	0.207m
Min Body Ground Clearance	1.756m
Max Track Width	4.00s
Lock to lock time	5.950m
Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius	



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Project:	60 Beecham Road, Reading		
Title:	Swept Path Analysis Estate Car		
Client:	The Keen Partnership		
Drawing Status:	For Information		
Scale:	1:250 (@ A3)	Date:	03/02/2021
Drawn:	CM	Checked:	CS
Approved:	CS		
Drawing:	2101023-TK01		
Revision:	-		

Appendix B

Neighbours Comments

From: Comments, Planning
Sent: 14 December 2020 13:42
To: Jones, Grahame
Subject: FW: Planning Application No: 201607 - Mr Rajan Galot - My ref: PP-09238973
Attachments: Jan 2017.jpg; Apr 2018.jpg; Nov2020.jpg

Importance: High

Dear Reading Borough Council Planning Team,

I have the following concerns regarding the planning application (No: 201607) and I want to ensure that these are recorded.

Based on the current use of the garage by R&R properties for commercial storage and the "garden" for commercial tipping (pictures attached), I have little confidence that the planning permission for this extension will be adhered to. I have no major objections to the planning application itself, however I am concerned that once the building is converted & erected the points below will not be complied with:

1. No access to Vehicles

The application states that this is not provided given the constraints of the site.

As I live adjoined to number 60 Beecham Road this would be a significant disturbance to my life if vehicles were trying to negotiate in and out of the entrance between the two properties.

2. Adherence to 1 x Bedroom Use

I expect the property to adhere to 1 bedroom use (as stated) and that the study is not later used as an additional bedroom.

Does this property have an occupancy limit?

3. The "garden" is currently used for commercial tipping - I would like assurance that this will not be the case moving forward.

The property has been used as a commercial tip for many years, this has been an eyesore and I would expect this to be completely cleared on completion of this work. (See attached pictures from 2018 - 2020)

Please confirm assurance to my concerns and confirm the garden tip will be removed.

Kind Regards

Madeleine Simpson