

NEW OFF STREET PARKING AREA

5 ST JOHN'S CLOSE, MARLBOROUGH, SN8 1JX

Introduction

This statement supports an application for the formation of a new vehicular access and off-street parking area, including provision for electric vehicle (EV) charging. Whilst the postal address is 5 St John's Close, the actual location of the front entrance is on Hyde Lane.

The key consideration relates to the ability to achieve the required visibility splay of 2.4m x 43m, which is constrained by existing mature boundary vegetation to neighbouring properties.



Visibility and Highway Safety

It is acknowledged that the full visibility splay of 43 metres cannot be achieved due to established hedging, vegetation, and site features to adjoining properties which are outside the applicant's control and contribute positively to the character of the area.

In addition, the site is constrained by existing shared access steps on the southern side which must be retained. These steps fall within the visibility splay and prevent full compliance with the requirement to maintain boundary treatments at or below 600mm in height within 2.4m of the carriageway edge.

With regard to access geometry, guidance within Manual for Streets 2 advises:

"A minimum X distance of 2.0m may be considered in some slow speed situations when flows on the minor arm are low... This applies to rural lanes."

In this case, Hyde lane is a lightly trafficked residential lane where vehicle speeds and flows are expected to be low. Accordingly, a reduced X distance of 2.0m is considered appropriate and consistent with national guidance.

In response to the site constraints the proposal has been designed to provide a reduced boundary height of 1.0m at a distance of 2.0m from the road edge. This represents a balanced and pragmatic solution which maximises visibility as far as reasonably practicable while respecting the physical constraints of the site.

Notably, a comparable neighbouring property in an equivalent position has implemented a similar arrangement, which was accepted as part of a previous planning approval.

Furthermore, it is demonstrated that the proposed access can achieve practical visibility splays of approximately 2.0m x 20m in both directions, when measured to a point 1.0m into the carriageway with only minor trimming of existing boundary hedges and shrubs required. This level of visibility is considered to provide a realistic and safe level of intervisibility between vehicles and the highway in the context of the local road environment.

A comparable nearby application, supported by a detailed highways technical assessment, also demonstrated that:

- Actual vehicle speeds were significantly lower than standard assumptions
- Traffic volumes were low
- Reduced visibility splays were appropriate and safe in practice

This approach reflects a site-specific and proportionate application of guidance.

Material Considerations

As mentioned above, a directly comparable neighbouring property in a similar position has been granted planning permission for a vehicular access despite substandard visibility splays.

That application was supported by a traffic speed survey and technical note, which concluded that the reduced visibility did not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

This represents a material consideration and demonstrates that a consistent approach should be applied in this case.

Sustainability Benefits

The proposal will enable off-street parking with provision for electric vehicle charging, supporting the transition to low-emission transport.

In addition, the removal of on-street parking associated with the property will reduce pressure on Hyde Lane. This carriageway is narrow and currently the only option for residents along this stretch of road and so the development would improve the overall functioning and safety of the road.

Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be refused on highways grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

In this instance:

- The road is residential in character
- Vehicle speeds are likely to be low
- Drivers are aware of existing accesses and on-street parking
- There is no evidence of existing safety issues

Accordingly, the proposal would not result in a severe or unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Conclusion

While the full visibility splays cannot be achieved, this is a common constraint in established residential environments.

Taking into account:

- The site-specific highway conditions
- The comparable nearby approval
- The sustainability benefits of EV charging
- National policy guidance

It is considered that the proposal is acceptable and would not give rise to any unacceptable highway safety impacts.

Planning permission is therefore respectfully sought.