

Highway Response

Ref: RECON 25/0281

Date: 09/06/25

PROPOSAL: INCREASE IN THE SIZE OF A HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION FROM A 4 BEDROOM (C4 USE) RESTRICTED BY CONDITION 2 OF PLANNING PERMISSION REFERENCE: 19/0006 TO A 6 BEDROOM HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (C4 USE) INCLUDING MINOR EXTERNAL CHANGES

SITE: 19 Victoria Avenue Newport NP19 8GF

Case Officer: Vicky Quinn

Highway Officer: Kevin Jackson

Highway recommendation:

Not supported due to lack of quality provision for cycles and refuse.

Highway Comments:

Following receipt of additional and amended information, we would update our comments as follows. For ease of reference the Agents comments are reproduced (in blue italics) and addressed below and then the updated survey is considered.

Cycle Storage and Waste Management

We note the comment that no information has been submitted regarding cycle storage or waste management. Plans are being prepared that will illustrate this.

We note that storage for cycles and bins is now indicated within the rear yard. However, it appears that this is not accessible for bins or cycles. The route would necessitate carrying them over the front steps and through the hall, then making a U-turn to go down the stairs the traversing the kitchen /dining areas.

Based on this we do not consider there to be any meaningful storage for cycles and would request a refuse management plan in the absence of responsible person to present/return bins.

Sustainability Assessment and Parking Provision

The Highways response acknowledges the site is not unsustainable but appears to suggest that because the application proposes no net reduction in car parking, it fails to achieve sustainable development. We strongly contest this reasoning. The site is within walking distance of public transport links, local shops, services, and employment opportunities, all of which support low-car or car-free lifestyles.

This seems to be a misunderstanding. We are not debating how sustainable it is just clarifying that policy is to require at least one space per household. In the case of a HMO the requirement is one per bedroom / household and the number is the same regardless of sustainability credentials. The sustainability policy would equally be applied to the existing house but as that would be expected to have 3 spaces based on policy there is scope to reduce the requirement. Applying policy therefore requires additional parking to be provided or capacity demonstrated.

Parking Survey Validity

The survey was carried out by a competent professional, uses a recognised methodology, and provides evidence of local parking conditions.

The survey has been amended and still contains some factual errors and omissions, but as we can now check the key data, we can move forward.

Resident Parking Restrictions

We note the point regarding resident permit eligibility and restricted hours. However, this argument inadvertently reinforces the acceptability of the scheme. If new residents are not entitled to permits, then the development will not place additional pressure on the residents' parking zone. To suggest that the parking is insufficient because new residents can only park between 8pm and 8am assumes an unreasonably car-dependent lifestyle. Many residents in similar developments choose to live without a private vehicle, cycling, and public transport instead.

Experience shows that not having permits is no guarantee of not having a car, so the argument is not accepted. We have not assumed a high dependency on cars and would accept that tenants are likely to have low car ownership. We do not however make any assumptions about employment, and some require a car for access due to shifts, remote locations etc..

That said we would also recognise that demand is lower during the day for residential parking and the competition for spaces is mostly from retail/employment nearby (which of course is why residents' only parking schemes are adopted). However, there is no daytime survey to give comfort.

Threshold of 85% Occupancy

While we acknowledge that 85% is a generally recognised threshold for parking stress, this benchmark is not an absolute cap and must be interpreted in context. A modest uplift in demand of 2 to 3 spaces, which is the worst-case assumption does not fundamentally alter the functioning of the local highway network or parking environment. This is especially the case where permit restrictions are in place, and where there is no entitlement for new residents to apply for permits.

This is broadly accepted, we are primarily looking to confirm if the uplift can be accommodated but would expect some margin to be retained for comfort. With small numbers we would not object to exceeding 85% slightly.

Revised Survey.

We would note that the data is still not entirely agreed, but focusing on the retained, time stamped and clear photos, we can confirm that they demonstrate that 2/3 spaces are available within unrestricted areas and more is available within restricted areas for both survey dates.

Conclusion

There is adequate parking available to meet the policy requirements and therefore no formal objection in this respect, but the high parking stresses remain a concern, with no assurances for the daytime situation.

We do not consider that suitable cycle storage or refuse management has been demonstrated.