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2015/3684/P	K Lipman	50 Maresfield Gardens	31/07/2015 17:50:52	OBJ	Objection to 2015/3684/P

I write in objection to 2015/3684/P. As the Council has noted, the new position of the northernmost parking space is incompatible with regulations for the pavement and kerb, and due to the adjacent brick wall poses a risk to the pedestrian traffic, which all local residents but the applicant acknowledge is a busy area with many children during the school term.
Furthermore the request to curtail his neighbours parking space outside their houses is out of order and should be refused. He argues this by stating that a reduction in the parking bay of 3m is 'no loss or Resident Parking bay', which is disingenuous at best, and frankly downright wrong.
The applicant justifies his wishes with reference to a Technical Note from Paul Mew Associates. I object to this document in many places, which I explain at length below. In brief summary, it is fundamentally flawed, and misleading. The company has researched school traffic during a time when most schools were on holiday, which is a phenomally basic error of judgement. Furthermore they make a bold claim that removing 3m of a parking bay will not result in a loss of parking which to be frank defies the law of logic. Utter nonsense.

Again this request is retrospective. The applicant could have discussed this possibility with you prior to works, as do the vast majority of residents. The Council should ensure that retrospective applications do not become easily accepted, otherwise in future residents will become incentivised to follow suit, which will become detrimental to all.
Measurement of School Traffic when the Schools are Closed.

The aim was " to capture the peak pedestrian movements along the street resulting from the nearby school". He did the survey on afternoon of 8 July 2015 and the morning of Friday 10 July.

As backdrop, the local residents and council have been talking for many years about the huge amount of traffic – both pedestrian and vehicular – in the school run in Maresfield Gardens and Nutley Terrace. Paul Mew Associates produces a report which claims otherwise, and the reason behind it is staggeringly simple. They did the analysis during the summer school holidays!

These days were completely unrepresentative days to check pedestrian traffic resulting from schools. The nearby schools are Northbridge House School (2 venues) , Southbank, and South Hampstead school (2 venues). During term time, there are also students walking from Finchley Road up to Devonshire House and other Hampstead schools as it is the most direct route other than along the busy Finchley Road.
Northbridge school term ended at noon on 9 July. [up to age 7]
Southbank school term ended on 24 June. [up to age 11?]
South Hampstead term ended at noon on 10 July. [age 12 – 18]
Other Hampstead schools (Devonshire, etc) finish 8 July at noon.

Note however that it is exams season, so all GCSE / A level / AS students will be off school during July (and probably June too). That is a large fraction of the South Hampstead pupils.

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It is also true that a significant fraction of kids will miss the last day or two of school in order to go on holiday.

So the number of schoolchildren on this morning was probably less than 25% of that normally seen on a school weekday. But the pedestrian count is a non-linear function on numbers of schools. Because there was only one school open, parking nearer the school (Nutley Terrace or lower half of Maresfield) was easier and therefore fewer pedestrians walked on our part of Maresfield.

The afternoon count is also flawed. It was only done until 4pm, which is too early – the schools only finish around then, and many parents and kids spend a few minutes in the playground before heading home. Furthermore after school clubs extend the school day beyond 4pm, so the spread of traffic in the afternoon is further extended. Taking into account these factors, together with the number of children away due to summer vacations or exams, invalidates their conclusions.

If one of my employee researchers had produced such a shoddy piece of work I would be reviewing their employment. There is a huge number of pedestrians in the normal school run. Parents, kids (often on scooters, not looking for cars coming from hidden parking spaces), animals, prams. Also commuters. And it is during these times that the gates are likely be in use.

Paul Mew also considers that 'children accompanied by adults' do not constitute any more risk in front of a crossover than an adult on their own. Quote a bold assumption I would say, particularly during the school run if they had bothered to look at the right times of year. The school run traffic is often one parent with several kids, many of whom run and skip, or scoot, oblivious to cars, along the pavements. Just come to see on the first few days of term in September at 8.30 to 9.00am.

Parking reduction

It is absolutely laughable to suggest that reducing the parking bay by 3m "will not result in a loss of parking opportunities on Maresfield Gardens".

Let's look at why not.

1) Direct evidence

This bay in question is one of the most heavily used at the top half of Maresfield, because the residents of the many flats of 45 Maresfield Gardens use it preferentially on account of (1) proximity and (2) it is free from tree overhang, with the resulting mess from sap and birds. It is frequently filled with 4 cars. Below are some example photographs of the bay being full with a mixture of size of cars.

[To be sent separately]

2) Measurements

a. The current bay is 18m in length. 4.5m is used as a minimum size for a parking space, and 18/4.5 is 4.

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b. Note of course that the parking requirement is that the wheels of the car are inside the bay, not the whole car. So there is plenty more room for the cars to fit in.
c. Mathematically: 4 average size cars, such as a VW Golf, can fit into 18m without needing any overhang: 4 x 4.2m plus 3 gaps of 40cm each, which is practical given the outer two cars can drive straight in (no need to parallel park etc).
d. Mathematically, 4 larger than average cars, such as a BMW 3 series, can fit in with the overhang: 4 x 4.526 –overhang of 1.26 plus 3 gaps of 40cm gives 18m
Remember, the applicant claims that reducing the bay size will "not results in a loss of parking". The onus is therefore on him to prove that there is no circumstance in which parking is not lost. This is clearly a fallacy.
3) Irrelevance of a theoretical framework which lacks any evidence of application in the real world. The Lambeth methodology uses a rounded number of 5m for ease of calculation. It is not a number to be used for a specific circumstance where one resident wishes to curtail the parking rights of many of his neighbours just so that he can move his parking space a couple of metres to the side.

4) The real world conundrum. People park in a space that is available, and not always perfectly with consideration for other future parkers. Therefore, the space available in a bay is non-uniform distribution of space. Consider someone parks in the 15m bay with only 2m space behind them. That is not sufficient for another car. But, if the bay was still 18m, there would be 5m, which is easily enough for a car. This is proof in itself that 3m is a significant space for the bay, and should not be dismissed as the applicant suggests.

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2015/3684/P	stuart simmons	Flat A April House 45 Maresfield Gardens London NW3 5TE	31/07/2015 10:37:12	OBJ	This application should be refused on the following grounds: 1. There is a HIGH frequency of pedestrian movement during the majority of the year, particularly term time given the large number of schools in the immediate vicinity of the subject property. 2. Children are frequently running or scooting south passed the subject property. There is very limited vehicle to pedestrian sightline, as admitted in the submission by Doyle in their letter dated 17th July. 3 The driver of a vehicle exiting the northern parking space is almost non-existent and it is regrettably only a matter of time before a pedestrian is injured. 4.The voluntary reconfiguration of the previously open forecourt outside Flats 1 & 2 has resulted in the user of the northern parking space only being able to exit their space by driving over an upright curb. This is illegal. 5. The driver also has to exit, using a car that weighs over two ton, over a public manhole cover. This will ultimately crack under the weight particularly during cold weather when the manhole cover becomes brittle. 6. There was no "demonstrable harm" caused by the former open forecourt. on the contrary, it enabled two cars to exit the forecourt without driving over the upright kerb nor the manhole cover. Because the exiting vehicle was not exiting from behind a high wall pedestrians could see it coming and the driver had a reasonable view of any pedestrians/children moving south down Maresfield Gardens, sometime running or on scooters 7. The covering proposal suggests that "there will be no loss of Resident Parking opportunities". Why then are they proposing the Resident Parking bay directly outside Flats A-F April House is reduced from a four car bay to a three car bay? 8. The frequency of movement into & out of the northern bay is not limited. It is used by the vehicle owner for all the usual domestic journeys i.e.; School runs for a number of small children, frequent shopping & business and social journeys. 9. The brick pillars, built without planning permission and the accompanying iron gates are inconsistent. The southern bay has no gate at all and the access to Flat 2 is now severely restricted.