

Mr J Lawler
Regeneration and Planning
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

0161 234 6509

jt@sktransport.co.uk
sktransport.co.uk

25th November 2020

Dear Josh,

2020/3067/P & 2020/3397/L Erection of Single Storey Garage, 45 Highgate West Hill, Camden

With reference to the above planning applications, I have been asked by the applicant to consider the highway implications of the proposal to erect a garage on the site. Specifically, I have been asked to consider whether such provision would be expected to give rise to any material change in the traffic generation characteristics of the property.

The proposal relates to an existing property at which parking is already available. In this context the relevant question is whether the provision of additional parking would be expected to result in increased car use.

The area on which it is proposed to locate the garage could already be used for parking. In this scenario the question becomes irrelevant as the garage has no effect on the availability of parking at the property. I have therefore considered the proposal on the basis that the garage would represent parking provision over and above that currently available elsewhere for the property.

The property currently shares a substantial shared parking area with the adjoining properties at Nos. 46 and 46A Highgate West Hill. The shared parking area is private and is accessed via lengths of driveway connecting to Highgate West Hill at two existing vehicle crossover access points. The driveway arrangement is shared with a further property, providing access to its separate private parking area.

The shared parking area is not formally laid out but it comfortably provides space for eight or more cars to park, as can be seen in the photograph below.



Photograph 1: Courtyard Parking Area

TfL has undertaken research¹ into the relationship between parking provision and car ownership and use. This research is referenced in the evidence base for the London Plan².

The TfL research found that there is a relationship between parking provision and car ownership and use. Further, it found that people who own cars are more likely to use them. These findings underpin parking policy for new developments across London. However, the site in question is not a new development and already benefits from a generous level of parking availability. This necessitates further interrogation of the TfL research and other relevant sources.

The research found that the level of parking available is a significant factor in relation to car ownership only where the average level of parking available is less than one space per unit, with a substantial difference recorded in levels of car ownership in developments having less than 0.5 spaces per unit parking provision and those with between 0.5-1 spaces per unit.

Parking provision in excess of 1 space per unit was recorded by TfL to make only a very minor further difference in the resulting level of car ownership. TfL concludes that this relationship is not statistically significant. TfL reports that this relationship held true for all areas of London, as is illustrated in the extract below.

¹ TfL (2012), Residential Parking Provision in New Developments

² TfL (2017), Residential Car Parking

Figure 3.6 Car ownership by parking provision

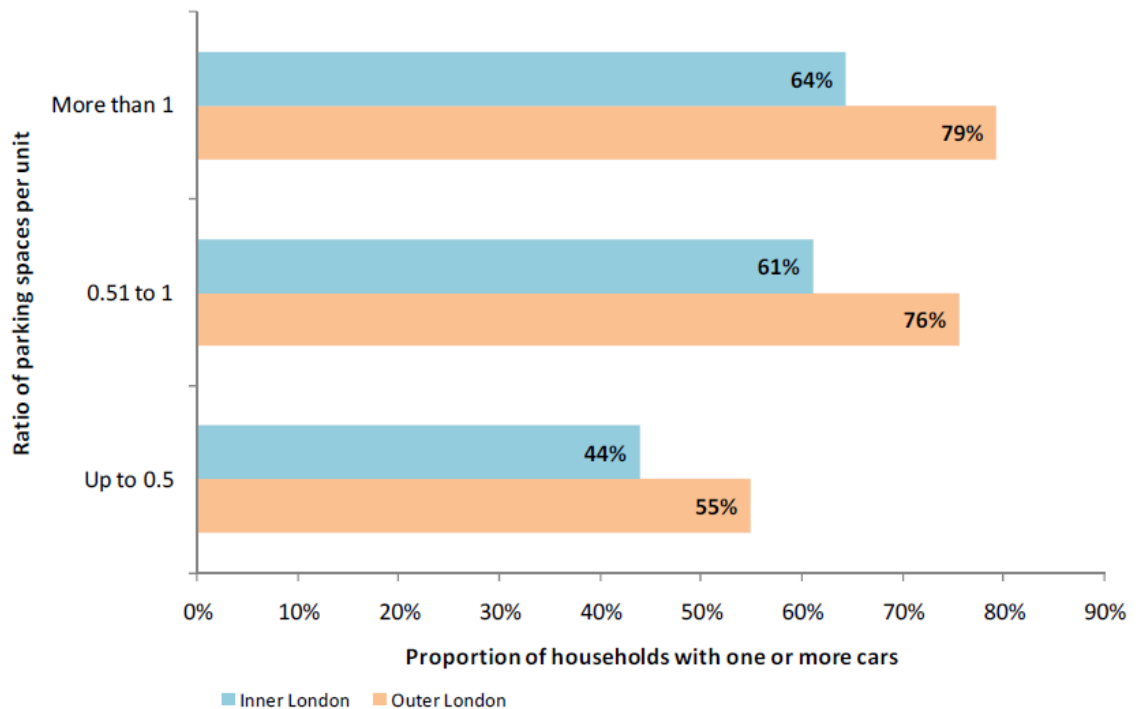


Figure 1: Car ownership by parking provision
 [source: 'Residential Parking Provision in New Developments' TfL, 2012]

On the basis of this finding alone the proposal would not be expected to give rise to any practical difference in car ownership and by extension, car use, due the existing level of parking already available at the property.

Parking provision of below 1 space per unit was found to be the dominant factor in the resulting levels of car ownership on new developments but other factors were also considered as part of the research and I have therefore also considered whether there are any other significant factors that would be relevant to the proposal. The other factors noted in the research relate to PTAL levels (representing the relative level of accessibility by public transport) and income levels.

The TfL research found that car ownership levels were lower in areas with higher PTAL but that the effect of parking provision is still dominant. The 2017 TfL report forming part of the London Plan evidence base states:

'In developments with provision up to 1 space per unit, car ownership varies with the level of public transport connectivity (PTAL) – as people's alternatives get better, fewer choose to own a car. However, at developments with more than 1 parking space per unit, access to public transport makes relatively little difference to how many households choose to own at least one car.'

Again, this supports the view that provision of additional parking in the situation in which there are at least four spaces already available for a property would not be expected to be a factor in the resulting car ownership level.

In relation to the effect of household income, the TfL research finds:

'Income is a key indicator of car ownership, but the effect of parking is in some ways more pronounced: in developments with 0.5 spaces per unit or less, only 56 per cent of people with a high income own a car, while in developments with more parking available, 83 per cent of people with high income own a car.'

However, it is also found that there is a threshold to the influence of income on car ownership, with a

general trend of increasing household car access as household income rises up to the household income level of £75,000 per year, beyond which point car ownership does not rise further with increases in income³.

All factors considered relevant to the level of car ownership and use are found to be subject to limiting thresholds. In the case of this proposal, the existing level of parking available is not fully utilised and can effectively be considered to be unrestrained. The number of cars associated with the property and the degree to which these are used are therefore determined by factors unrelated to the availability of parking space and cannot be expected to be affected in any practical way by the provision of a garage providing up to two spaces.

I conclude that the proposal cannot be expected to result in additional car use that could be considered to give rise to a negative impact from a highway perspective. I would be grateful if you could take this into account when considering the proposal.

Yours sincerely,

John Thompson

³ London Mayor (2015), Health Impact of Cars in London