

MEMORANDUM

From:	JP		
Service	WBC Highways	App No:	251470
Address:	1 Halstead Close, Woodley, Wokingham, RG5 4LD.		
Proposal:	Full application for the proposed erection of first floor side extension following subdivision of existing dwelling, associated parking and amenity land.		
Type of Development:	Minor Dwellings (1-9)		
Site Visit Made:	Yes/No		

Comments On Proposal

Reason for refusal

This statement supports refusal reason no. 1 of planning application 251470, which stated the following:

- By reason of the unacceptable position of the proposed dropped crossing, the proposal would fail to meet satisfactory visibility splays and would not provide a safe or suitable vehicular access for the proposed dwelling. This would create unacceptable impact on highway safety for future occupiers and other users of the highway and footway contrary to policies CP6 of the Core Strategy (2010) and CC07 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014) and paragraphs 115 & 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).*

Background

The location is 1 Halstead Close, Woodley, Wokingham. The appellant proposes to subdivide the existing dwelling with 11 no. habitable rooms into two dwellings with 6 and 7 no. habitable rooms. A new dropped crossing is proposed onto Halstead Close proximal to the bend. A total of four driveway parking spaces is proposed within the red line. The footway along the site frontage provides direct access to Woodford Park.

The Highways have requested the appellant to demonstrate sufficient visibility at the new access or to consider alternative access position, but this remained unresolved during the application stage.

The appellant has included an additional Transport Written Representations (TWR) (dated 1 October) in support of this appeal.

Access

Stopping Sight Distance

The visibility splay to the east of the existing access is circa 2.4m x 15.4m. The new parking spaces will be accessed via a 3.6m wide new dropped crossing onto Halstead Close. As the new dropped crossing is proximal to the bend (circa 4.7m from the bend), the Highways have concern regarding the location of the proposed dropped crossing.

Halstead Close is subject to 30mph speed limit, which requires visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m, or demonstration of sufficient visibility splays subject to the 85th percentile speeds, to be achieved to the nearside edge of the carriageway in both directions. 2m x 2m pedestrian visibility at individual driveway is also required. The sightlines shall be across land within the appellant's control or highway land and shall be clear of obstructions to visibility exceeding 0.6m in height.

Given the visibility splay to the east of the existing dropped crossing is shorter than 2.4m x 43m, the Highways have considered retainment of existing sightline (2.4m x 15.4m) to be acceptable.

While this has not been justified during the planning application stage, the appellant has assessed on the visibility splays based on the actual speed survey results in the TWR indicate the following:

		Mean speed	85th percentile speed
Speed	Northbound	12.2mph	15.9mph
	Southbound	12.0mph	15.3mph
SSD	Northbound	11.53m	16.4m
	Southbound	11.30m	15.54m
SSD adjusted	Northbound	13.93m	18.80m
	Southbound	13.70m	17.94m

While SSD is generally assessed on its 85th percentile speed, the MfS2 suggests that a minimum X distance of 2m and a reduction in Y distance below recommended levels (85th percentile speed) can be acceptable unless there is local evidence to the contrary. The appellant suggested that the site is situated at a lightly-trafficked street with two-way traffic between 106 and 142, daily.

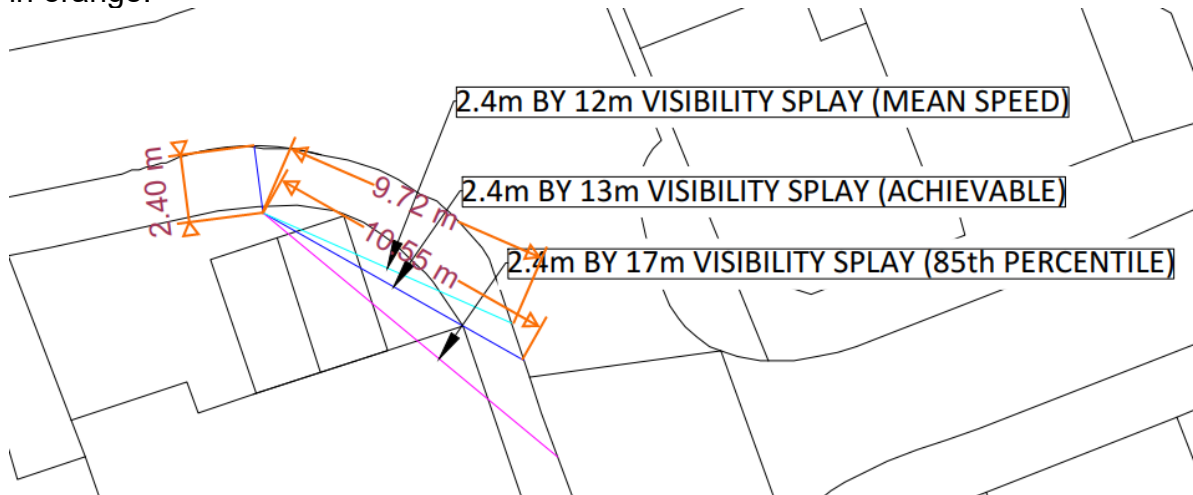
Despite it is reasonable to consider this as a slow-speed situation and accept reduction in X distance, the acceptance of SSD based on its mean speed is unreasonable for this site.

The footway along the southern/western side of Halstead Close connects to the site access of Woodford Park, where vulnerable pedestrians (e.g. children) are anticipated. The Highways therefore expect visibility splays no worse than the existing to be achieved to the nearside edge of the carriageway in both directions.

Meanwhile, no sufficient justification has been provided that the adjustment for bonnet length is not required. In particular for short SSD, the distance between the driver and the front of the vehicle account for a significant portion. Therefore, the SSD adjusted for bonnet length has to be applied.

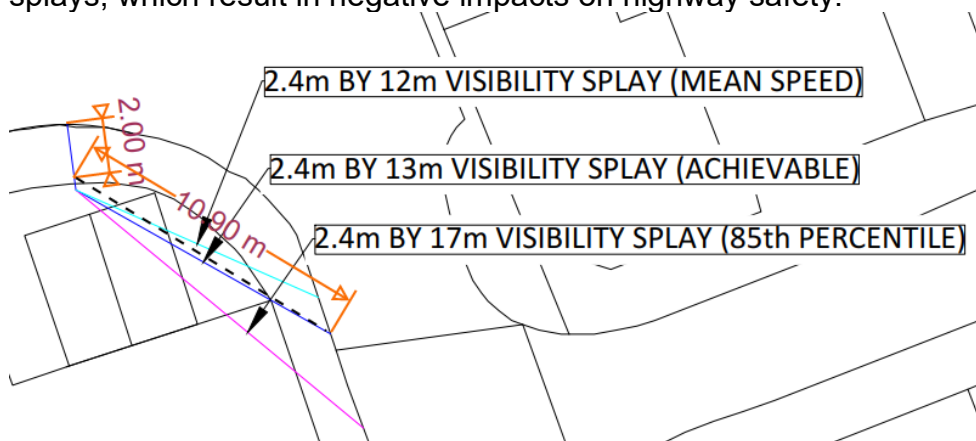
Regardless of the visibility splays to assess on the SSD for mean speed, the proposed measurement for a maximum 2.4m x 13m visibility splay to the east is inaccurate and unachievable.

The Highways remeasure the submitted drawing (Ref: R-25-0169/HY02) as marked in orange.



It is noted that the maximum achievable visibility splay to the east is circa 2.4m x 10.6m, which is aligned with LHA estimated visibility splay (2.4m x 10.3m) during the planning application stage.

The Highways have also assessed the visibility based on reduced X distance (in black dotted line), which a maximum of 2m x 10.9m visibility splay can be achieved. This does not meet the required visibility splays nor retaining the existing visibility splays, which result in negative impacts on highway safety.



Pedestrian Visibility

While 2m x 2m pedestrian visibility is indicated on Drawing No. R-25-0169/HY01, it has been assessed at where driveway meet the edge of the carriageway, which is not assessed correctly.

Pedestrian visibility is required to be assessed for frontage accesses where driveways meet the rear of footways to provide inter-visibility between drivers and pedestrians. This is particularly relevant when the existing footway connects to the

access of the park, where active movements from vulnerable pedestrians can be expected.

Other material considerations

It is relevant to note that independent access and parking are required for all independent residential properties, and the proposed parking for the new dwelling will not be able to utilise the existing dropped crossing, vice versa. Therefore, both the existing and additional dropped crossings will be required.

While the appellant may have already been utilising the position of the proposed dropped crossing for vehicle access, it is currently considered as encroachment of public footway. The proposed creation of new access will intensify the uses of substandard access, which is unacceptable.

Cycle Provisions

According to the WBC Parking Standards, three cycle parking allocations are required per dwelling with 6+ habitable rooms.

The appellant has been required to clarify if there will be boundary treatment separating the two plots. If so, while the appellant has indicated an acceptable direct access to the rear garden for cycle storage for the new dwelling, the direct access to the rear garden for the existing dwelling will be removed.

This shall have been covered by planning application, but it was not. Alternative cycle storage for the existing dwelling, however, can be identified when discharging the conditions.

Conclusion

The major highway concern falls on the impacts on access arrangement, which the proposed dropped crossing is at an unacceptable position. The appellant has submitted further supporting information in the appeal, but fail to demonstrate that sufficient visibility can be provided, leading to unsafe and unsuitable vehicular access for the proposed dwelling. The visibility splays at the proposed access are significantly worse than that of the existing access.

The local Highway Authority considers that the proposed development will result in substandard access to the detriment of highway safety, which is contrary to Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy, Policy CC07 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, and Paragraphs 115 and 116 of the NPPF.

I respectfully request that the appeal to be dismissed.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

If this appeal is allowed:

1. CF3 - PARKING (TO BE APPROVED)
2. CF9 - CYCLE PARKING (TO BE APPROVED)
3. CG2 - VISIBILITY SPLAYS (TO BE APPROVED)
4. CH1 - ACCESS BEFORE OCCUPATION/TO BE AGREED
5. I22 - ACCESS CONSTRUCTION

Date:	14/11/2025	Signed:	JP
--------------	------------	----------------	----