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Reading  
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25 October 2016

Mr C Brooks  
Head of Legal & Democratic Services  
Reading Borough Council  
Civic Offices  
Reading RG1 2LU

ref: NM/PC/EP-Collier

Dear Mr Brooks

I write in response to the above referenced consultation on parking and traffic restrictions around E P Collier School.

**Schedule 4**

By making the North side of Ross Road No Waiting at Any Time the council intends to remove parking available to residents and the users of the New Hope community centre, and this I object to. The New Hope centre has already been penalised by the expansion as they have lost the use of approximately 30 evening parking spaces that were available in the old school car park. This loss of amenity was not considered at all at the planning stage despite objection and in direct contravention to planning policy CS32: Loss of Amenity. The situation is now that the evening parking is now a severe problem for both residents and users of the New Hope centre alike with both groups competing for parking bays when there are now no longer nearly enough. This is a situation compounded by the issue of resident parking permits to teaching staff. Schedule 4 intends to make even less parking available seemingly for the sole purpose so that the new teacher car park entrance be kept clear. What is actually required is a Keep Clear marking and designation at the car park entrance only and other restrictions remain the same.

While discussing Keep Clear markings the consultation, schedules, and plans make no reference to a required Keep Clear marking at the entrance to the New Hope centre residents' car park on the North side of York Road. This is currently a double yellow restriction but during term time school drop off and collection this entrance is blocked constantly by parents and taxis parking. If the council can propose changes entirely for the benefit of the school then they can begin to do so for the residents too. It goes without saying that access for emergency vehicles, just as is required for the school car park, is impossible at this location during school drop off and collection because of parking in the gateway.

**Schedule 22**

The plans are not clear as to exactly how large the section of 'School Keep Clear' markings are to be reduced by, but by measuring out it appears to be planned to remove the Keep Clear at the North of York Road right up to the railings next to the new nursery pedestrian entrance. What the plan fails to show is that there are 2 new pedestrian entrances on York Road and now the council seriously intends to drastically reduce the 'School Keep Clear' length despite new entrances and more than doubling the number of pedestrians using them? Already the greater proportion of the Safe Routes to School protective barriers have been removed from York Road creating an unofficial drop zone.

The proposed changes further encourage driving and actually make an official drop zone as all the parents have been made aware that they can park for 5 minutes on the double yellow lines.

Kiaran Roughan, head planning manager, was on site the other week to further discuss other matters surrounding the school expansion and when I complained that resident cars were regularly being hit by poor parent parking manoeuvres he said "Surely that is bad parking?" Yes it is but the proportion of parents parking badly has remained the same but it is simply the number of parking manoeuvres that has increased increasing the risk and actuality of incident.

I mention this because this will be exactly the same with the accident rate. Whilst it may seem logical in some respects to facilitate the increase in traffic by reducing restrictions, it will increase the risk of a serious accident massively. The situation is already a case of when not if. The proposed changes would allow an area of double parking very close to a school pedestrian entrance that is sited next to a blind bend. The whole purpose of the 'School Keep Clear' markings is to separate pedestrian movements from vehicle movements and creating a safety zone. Instead of proposing further restrictions to increase separation and safety it defies all logic to remove that safety zone at a time when the pedestrian movements at the gates are doubling. The constant parking and pulling away of vehicles on both sides of the road right next to the new dropped kerb road crossing will create particularly poor sight lines, and there will be, by necessity and design, many pedestrians having to walk between double parked vehicles.

These proposed changes are positively dangerous yet when that accident comes I am sure that I will hear Reading Borough Council absolve responsibility with "Surely that is bad driving?" The answer to that is no. Actually it is very poor planning and risk assessment, and done deliberately with eyes fully open.

I will remind the council that this is an Air Quality Management Area and traffic measures and planning should be aiming to mitigate the effects of traffic and reduce the levels. These proposed changes do exactly the opposite encouraging and facilitating travel by car, and at a sensitive use site, a primary school. I fully expect salt to be rubbed into residents' wounds by learning that these changes that are going to make things worse are to be paid for from S106 funds that are perversely supposed to mitigate the ill effects of development.

Yours sincerely

