

TTP Consulting - Parking survey for Channing

Some observations by Simon Briscoe, 21 June 2013

Summary

There is parking stress in the Highgate Hill and Cromwell Avenue corner of the Haringey "Highgate CPZ". This note explains why the conclusions of the report commissioned by Channing School – which concludes that there is NO stress – is misleading and should be ignored. Any loss of parking spaces on Highgate Hill and Cholmeley Park as a result of the school's and other works will have knock on effects on those and neighbouring streets and should be kept to an absolute minimum.

Background

Consultants TTP produced a "Parking beat survey note" for Channing School. The document is dated both 24 October and 19 November 2012 and published as part of the Channing School planning application HGY/2013/0943 with a committee list date of 11/6/2013.

Find the document here:

<http://www.planningservices.haringey.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=268073>

under the title "NO1-MT-Parking Note"

The document was produced "to ascertain if there would be an adverse impact if parking availability temporarily decreased as a result of the suspension of parking bays to facilitate construction vehicle access to/from the school." (Para 1)

It concludes that the survey "illustrates that there would not be an adverse impact on parking supply if parking availability temporarily decreased (i.e. less than 121 resident bays) as a result of the suspension of parking bays to facilitate construction vehicle access to/from the school." (Para 7)

This did not "feel right" so we had a closer look.

The Highgate CPZ zone details can be found here:

http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/environment_and_transport/parking/cpz/cpz_highgate.htm

The mad maths of the consultant's report assumes among other things that you can:

- park half a car in half a space
- park a car with less than a foot of spare space between neighbouring cars

Read on

Issues with the report:

The survey mapped an area including the western ends of Cholmeley Park and Cromwell Avenue and those parts of Highgate Hill between those roads, and The Bank. Within that area it counted the lengths of different parking types – CPZ resident/business, double yellows,

disabled etc – coming up with a total length of each type. The consultants estimated the parking capacity by assuming that every five metres could accommodate a car. They counted the vehicles in the area at various times and then estimated spare spaces, ie subtracted actual vehicles from the number of theoretical spaces. It would have been much easier and more accurate to count the number of spare spaces at the various survey times and we have no idea why they didn't do that. (We have done that with results below.)

605m of resident CPZ kerb space was counted leading to an assumption that 121 cars (at 5m each) could be parked. The survey methodology gave rise to a variety of issues:

- The allowance of 5m per vehicle is too small.
 1. It assumes that cars are small. An average car of 4.5m would give less than a foot at the front and back of a 5m parking space – and a family estate will be close to 5m. This is not realistic. (See box on car lengths at the end of the note.)
 2. This assumes that the bays are all in units of 5m – they are not. The 605m of resident bay space is split into over 20 bays and not each one is of a length divisible by 5m. This means that the consultants suppose that 1½ cars will be parked in the bay measuring 7½m just by the school entrance! This is clearly nonsense.
 3. A google search suggests that the industry standard for those areas where parking is set out in parallel bays is that bays will be 6m and sometimes up to 7m long. (See links below.) The Highway Code suggests that you look for a parking space “a few metres longer than your car.” The driving test examiner will expect you to park in a space about twice the length of your car. Allowing less than a foot on either side of an average car is not reasonable.
 4. The consultant's maths assumes that cars park tightly – they do not, indeed cannot, park as tightly as they expect. The capacity ought to be the observed maximum number of cars – ie much lower. They say that 23 cars can be parked on Highgate Hill – the maximum ever recorded by us is 21 with the average at 20.
 5. Motorbikes park in the bays and the impact of each can be to lose one and sometimes two car spaces. There are often skips or other obstructions to contend with. These are real life occurrences and need to be allowed for.
- On The Bank they have allocated the business parking slots to residents – a plain error but one that skews the stress/capacity estimates.

To prove the stress point and to confirm the extent of the impact of the failures in the TTP research, we counted cars at a time of “stress”. The TTP estimates suggest that there are 121 parking spots in the residents' bays. We have counted the number of cars parked at busy times, and the “real” capacity has always been between 98 and 102 cars, with the average (mean and mode) being 99 cars. That amounts to a 22% exaggeration by TTP, effectively an invention of 22 spaces that do not exist on the ground. If the theoretical capacity can never be reached on the ground there will never be stress, there will always, on paper, be places to park! It is this that accounts for their sanguine conclusion which is at odds with the reality experienced by those who have a car to park.

We would summarise the situation as there being parking stress of close to 100% south of Channing on Highgate Hill and into Cromwell Avenue. That stress passes down Cromwell beyond the zone mapped by the consultants. At the most stressed point – the junction of Cromwell Road and Highgate Hill – there is 24/7 stress. Distance eases that to varying degrees at different times of day. By 6pm, our survey shows that there often remains 100% stress on Highgate Hill, The Bank and into the Cromwells. Cholmeley Park is no longer full at that time, a pattern often sustained into the evening. As evening passes into night, Highgate Hill and The Bank ease while the top of Cromwell Avenue stays full.

The TTP survey had to choose an area to study and there is nothing wrong with what they chose, but it is no reassurance for a resident on Cromwell Avenue with children, shopping or an elderly companion to know that spaces exist half way down Cholmeley Park, perhaps 600 metres away. A CPZ with longer hours will never guarantee parking outside the home but will ensure parking closer to home than exists now.

Other aspects of the survey are notable even if they don't affect the capacity issues for the residents' bays:

- Non viable roadside has been counted as parking space – for example the report identifies 10m of single yellow line on The Bank which they say can park two cars. We measure the length of single yellow line to be nearer 8m, and in two parts, with the larger part of it being across the gates giving vehicle access to Channing (with “do not park” signs displayed). To describe that section as offering 0% stress is misleading.
- The survey also gives the impression of there being minimal stress by noting that there's very little parking on double yellow lines! All that shows is that residents in their desperation to park do not park illegally or dangerously!
- The survey write-up mentions one survey time being 1am but the report itself says the survey was conducted at 11pm. Which was it?
- There is no disabled bay on Cholmeley Park as the survey reports.
- Where we do have bays measured out on the ground – the car club bays on Cromwell Avenue – they are 5½m not the 5m noted by TTP. The cars are generally small so sub-6m bays might just work, but frequently the whole of the car is not in the bay. Errors of 10% add up to quite a few cars over the area.

The solution?

As all permit holders on these streets know only too well, there is parking stress. Channing – and the hundreds of its parents, teachers and suppliers who drive to the school - know it too. So we hope that the school will work with the community to get a solution.

There are solutions and they'll cost very little. Two seem obvious, easy and significant:

- 1 - extend the hours of the residents parking to be the full day, six days a week, matching the hours at the bottom of Highgate Hill. As real figures (not the TTP survey) show, during the hours of operation of the CPZ, there is stress but it's manageable. This is not a radical suggestion as most neighbouring CPZ zones – including the immediate neighbour zone in Islington – have longer operation hours. (See detailed information at the end of the note.) Putting the whole of Highgate Hill and neighbouring streets on a common basis would be a sensible start.
- 2 - liaise with Camden to let Haringey residents use the bays on the other side of Highgate Hill. This is done on other roads that run along the border of the two boroughs.

Also consider: the introduction of chevron parking on Highgate Hill (adding parking spaces and slowing traffic); enhanced enforcement (the many visitors to the Ghanaian consulate add to parking stress); separate bays for motorcycles and moving the car club bays to Highgate Hill by the bus stop outside Channing. Residents would also welcome proof from the council that Highgate zone CPZ permits are only in issue to current eligible residents. These measures would ease parking stress but the school should also reconsider what it calls the “workable” Highgate Hill option for access to the work site so that fewer parking spaces are lost.

This note is not trying to make life hard for Channing with regard to its development work. Building work happens and most residents don't seek to stop Channing expanding their numbers and boosting their revenues but the school should disown the TTP research that denies the existence of serious problems and work with residents to get a reasonable solution.

Supplementary information

What length for parallel parking bays?

A Google search showed:

6m (not the 5m used in the report) is length of parallel bays in Westminster

http://www3.westminster.gov.uk/docstores/publications_store/HighwaysPlanningGuide.pdf

Para c17 of this document says that 6m is advised:

http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/j/a/VP_SPD_App_C.pdf

as does page 24 of this:

http://fs-drupal-rochford.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/planning_parking_standards_design_and_good_practice.pdf

..... and in Dorset:

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=154760&filetype=pdf>

this suggests 22/23 ft ie around 7m

<http://www.cyburbia.org/forums/showthread.php?t=35646>

the Highway code says look for a space "a few metres longer" than your car

<http://www.2pass.co.uk/parallel.htm#UbuPEODCGQI>

Car lengths

Not many cars are less than 4m and very few are more than 5m. A Mini is 4.0m and Volvo V70 estate is 4.8m.

Using VW examples:

Golf – 4.2m

<http://www.parkers.co.uk/cars/reviews/facts-and-figures/volkswagen/golf/gti-2009/54010/>

Touran - 4.4m

<http://www.parkers.co.uk/cars/reviews/facts-and-figures/volkswagen/touran/estate-2010/48630/>

Touareg – 4.8m

<http://www.parkers.co.uk/cars/reviews/facts-and-figures/volkswagen/touareg/estate-2010/53009/>

Passat estate – 4.8m

<http://www.parkers.co.uk/cars/reviews/facts-and-figures/volkswagen/passat/estate-2011/49377/>

Beetle – 4.3m

<http://www.parkers.co.uk/cars/reviews/facts-and-figures/volkswagen/beetle/hatchback-2012/53507/>

During much of the day – from school drop off time to the end of the working day drivers can be seen trawling the street looking for a space. The problem is acknowledged and being addressed in Westminster.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2184174/The-app-parking-space-Street-sensors-alert-drivers-bay.html>

Hours of operation of neighbouring CPZ zones

Haringey

http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/environment_and_transport/parking/cpz.htm

There are some all day, six days a week zones around Wood Green, Finsbury Park and Green Lanes. Within the Highgate Station zone, Priory Gardens is also more than the normal Highgate two hours. It is M-Sat 8.00-18.30.

http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/environment_and_transport/parking/cpz/cpz_highgate.htm

Islington – see http://www.islington.gov.uk/services/parking-roads/parking/where_to_park/Pages/cpz_maps.aspx

K – surrounding Highgate Hill, south of Hornsey Lane – 8.30 to 19.00 M-F

P – around Magdala Avenue/Whittington Hospital – 8.30 to 18.30 M-F and 8.30-13.30 Saturday

Z – south of Hornsey Lane from St Aloysius east – 10.00-14.00 M-F

Camden

http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=2262249

Most of the zones are full day M-F. Hampstead is 9.00-20.00 M-Sat with some micro zones with longer hours. CAU, the nearest to Highgate is one of the very few remaining 2 hour zones.

Barnet

The nearest bays to Highgate, in the East Finchley zone, are 10-18.30 M-Sat.

http://www.barnet.gov.uk/downloads/download/1086/controlled_parking_zone_maps

Contact Simon at: channing.parking@gmail.com