

Planning application 5/2016/3107: Demolition of nine garages and construction of two semi-detached houses, College Place.

We write in support of objections and concerns of members in College Place, as well as objections made by other residents neighbouring this site. Many of these concerns are the same as for the previous application (5/2016/1439).

1. Loss of parking space for at least 12 vehicles has a very serious impact on the already overcrowded Parking Zone B, but especially on College Place itself. Residents near the site would potentially have to walk at least half a kilometre to the new parking bays in Verulam Road. As pointed out in objections to 5/2016/2941, the existing garages were regularly used until their recent exclusion by the owner (they have been roped off for the past months), who has also failed to maintain them or the site.
2. The parking problem for residents is aggravated by the fact that the new houses will have two bays on the roadway for visitors, which are presumably not shared with the rest of College Place. Such privately restricted sites, whether gated or not, are socially divisive.
3. The turning space for cars should be at the north end of the site, not at the south. Manoeuvring into the furthest bays will be complicated.
4. College Place is a long, narrow Victorian cul-de-sac, at right angles to Verulam Road with its larger houses. The new houses and roadway would extend the length even further. The extended roadway would be unsuitable for heavy service and emergency vehicles (D&A p. 3). Squeezing houses into areas that were never intended for them constitutes overdevelopment.
5. With specific regard to the plans, the application admits (D&A p. 4/5) that the amenity space, i.e., garden, for each planned property is less than the local standard (in one case little more than half) and excuses this by reference to local Victorian houses. Surely new buildings should follow today's standards rather than those of Victorian workers' cottages.
6. The plot size is only about one-third larger than that at the end of the Temperance Street cul-de-sac, on which single 3-bedroom house with an adequate garden was recently built.
7. The addition of two more houses will overload the struggling infrastructure of this cul-de-sac, as noted by other objectors. The Victorian sewerage system starting in Verulam Road and running the length of College Place has regularly blocked, with extremely unpleasant and unhealthy consequences. The carriageway is severely deformed as a result of traffic far heavier than it was built for. Two houses in the street have recently had to be underpinned due to subsidence possibly related to broken drainage.
8. The long narrow residential street is not a suitable access route for modern construction traffic. Narrow pavements against the house fronts are regularly breached by large lorries, with obvious danger and inconvenience to residents, especially those with small children. Residents have suffered intolerable and often inconsiderate disturbance almost continuously for several years due to the underpinning works and renovation or extension of houses already owned by the applicant. Any approval should have the strictest possible conditions including a ban on heavy traffic.

We ask that this application be subject to the closest scrutiny with regard to these points.

Robert Pankhurst
Secretary, for APRA, 13 College Street AL3 4PW

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See accompanying photographs PTO



College Place cul-de-sac



Deformed carriageway



No room for heavy construction traffic

APRA 11/2016