

NOTICE OF REVIEW 09/00963/OUT

Transportation Comments in Response to the grounds submitted by the Applicant

1. Site Planning History - Transportation

06/00426/OUT – recommended refusal

08/00388/OUT – recommended refusal

Copies of the Transportation responses for the above applications are attached in Annex 1. It should be noted that both of the above planning applications were withdrawn by the applicant.

2. Junctions of Walkers Crescent with Public Roads

In the case of a wholly new development there is a requirement, for the two junctions, for a visibility splay of 4.5 x 70 metres to enable vehicles exiting Walkers Crescent to see, and be seen by, other road users. For further information on visibility splays see Annex 2.

The existing junction of Walkers Crescent with Garmouth Road does not meet this standard. The visibility splay for the junction of Walkers Crescent with St Andrews Road is currently available; however, the full visibility splay envelope is not within the direct control of the Applicant or the Road Authority. It involves third party land (private) and therefore cannot be guaranteed. In the consideration of a planning application, Transportation seek demonstration that applicants can provide and have control over the visibility splay for the access(es) onto the public road such that it can be maintained for the lifetime of the development. For these reasons the junctions are not considered to provide a 'safe and suitable' access' in terms of road safety and in particular Policy T2.

3. Walkers Crescent – Existing Conditions

There are no footways. It should be noted that the survey undertaken by the Applicant was during December, when dark mornings and inclement weather deters pedestrians and in particular journeys to school by foot. Traffic and pedestrian surveys are for this reason undertaken during 'neutral' months of the year where the results are unlikely to be suppressed. No conclusions regarding the pedestrian activity in and around Walker's Crescent should be drawn from this 'snapshot' survey.

Overspill parking from existing properties observed, see attached photographs in Annex 3 which were taken on a weekday between 10.00 and 11.00, when most occupants of the surrounding houses would be at work. Annex 4 contains an extract from the current road design guidance used by Transportation on the provision of turning areas at the end of cul-de-sacs.

Narrow road – informal passing places

4. Walkers Crescent – Home Zone/Shared Surface

The process of accepting and approving Home Zones and Shared Surfaces involves many considerations including aspects such as consultation with residents, road signs, traffic calming, and a separate statutory procedure [Section 74 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 provides the legal framework for Home Zones in Scotland].

The Applicant has contended that Walkers Crescent has the characteristics of a Home Zone/Shared Surface area but has not proposed any measures to formally or to practically address this aspect.

An extract from the current road design guidance used by Transportation on the provision of Home Zones is included in Annex 5.

5. Private Access – Connecting with Walkers Crescent

There is a requirement for the access track, serving several properties, to meet appropriate standards in the interests of road safety for all users of the track.

The Access track is a designated Core Path route.

The Applicant accepts that the visibility at the access track is 'restrictive', see photographs in Annex 6. It is our understanding that the restrictions to the visibility are on third party land over which the Applicant has not control. Annex 7 contains an extract from the current road design guidance used by Transportation on the provision of forward visibility.

The visibility requirement is appropriate no matter the long-term status of the road (access track). Transportation does not accept that the powers of the Council (as Road Authority) should be used as the primary way of enabling the visibility requirement for this new development.

Conclusion

Transportation recommends refusal of this Appeal.

Policy T2 - Provision of Road Access

The Council will require that a suitable and safe road access from the public highway is provided to serve new development and where appropriate any necessary modifications to the existing road network to mitigate the impact of development traffic, and the provision of appropriate facilities for public transport, cycling, and pedestrians. Access proposals that have a significant adverse impact on the surrounding landscape and environment that cannot be mitigated will be refused.

SPP17 details that there is a presumption against new accesses onto a trunk road and that the Scottish Executive will consider the case for such justifications, where nationally significant growth or regeneration benefits can be demonstrated.

JUSTIFICATION:

It is important to ensure that new development is served by appropriate infrastructure. The road access arrangements should be suitable to the proposed development and ensure that there are adequate safety provisions and provision for public transport, cycling and pedestrians. Road access design should be carefully designed to fit in with the surrounding landscape and environment. Where the access to a site is unmade or a private track it may require to be surfaced to a suitable standard and require the provision of passing places or be widened accordingly.

ANNEX 1 - Copies of the Transportation responses for the previous planning applications 06/00426/OUT and 08/00388/OUT (both withdrawn).

ANNEX 2 – Further information on the determination of Visibility Splays

ANNEX 3 – Photographs of parked vehicles in vicinity of development site.

ANNEX 4 – Extract from Aberdeenshire Council Standards for Road Construction Consent and Adoption, Chapter 19 Turning Areas.

ANNEX 5 – Extract from Aberdeenshire Council Standards for Road Construction Consent and Adoption, Chapter 14 Home Zones

ANNEX 6 – Photographs of private driveway access to development site

ANNEX 7 - Extract from Aberdeenshire Council Standards for Road Construction Consent and Adoption, Chapter 16 Forward Visibility