

Triangle Residents' Group.



Parking Report - Salisbury House, 20 Queens Road, Weybridge, KT13 9XE (Reference 2017/1176)

Summary

The available evidence from observation, interviews and, most recently, counts carried out by the Triangle Residents' Group (TRG) confirm that parking within a 170m radius of the York Road-Queens Road junction in the Queens Road village centre has reached saturation levels. Legitimate on-street vacancies along Princes Road, York Road and New Road are virtually impossible to find. Long-stay vacancies along Queens Road are confined to a short stretch from Clive House to the Manby Lodge boundary; shops and businesses along the frontage of the shops are essential for business and customer purposes and ineligible for stays beyond two hours. As a result, even small increases to the demand for parking space due to development or the loss of spaces in private or public car parks can only add to the increasingly intolerable pressures across the area.

Introduction

1. This report by the Triangle Residents' Group (TRG) has been compiled to assist the consideration of the application to extend Salisbury House by summarising the available evidence on the parking position in the surrounding area. It does not claim to be from an independent source. However, it does seek to present the available evidence from a number of sources as well as the findings of the fuller local parking survey by TRG.

Context

2. The current road network has five key characteristics:

- *Significant traffic volumes* along the A317 (Queens Road) that effectively divides the area into two segments. It is a major artery linking London, Walton on Thames and Hersham through Weybridge town centre to the M25. As such, there are significant parking restrictions in place.
- *Access problems* for customers, staff and clients of shops and businesses based at the Queens Road local or village centre on the north side of the Scope for short term parking in the course of the day is critical.
- *Rat running* through narrow residential roads is common. The A317 leads in less than half a mile to the Monument Hill roundabouts which not only lead to the town centre but also provide access to the A3050 (Oatlands Drive) towards Walton and to the bridge over the Thames and to Hanger Hill (B373) towards the station. The junction is a choke point clearly visible to drivers on the approach roads, encouraging many to find alternative routes. The only such cross routes between Queens Road and Hanger Hill cut across the Triangle via York Road/Princes Road and Princes Road/Pine Grove.

- *Limited scope for on-street parking* across the wider area. The areas north and south of the Queens Road centres are almost exclusively residential in nature. They are characterised by narrow roads unsuitable for anything other than parking on one side of the road (most of York Road (north), South Road, Princes Road from the Jolly Farmer public house to Hanger Hill) or private roads (Oakfield Glade). The only areas where parking on both sides of the road is currently possible are Princes Road from the Jolly Farmer corner to the junction with Pine Grove and York Road (south) effectively reducing the actual carriageway to a single lane along these stretches of road. There is limited scope for parking on both sides of the road near the York Road-Queens Road junction.
- *Legal restrictions* further reduce the scope for legitimate parking within the 170m circle. Double yellow lines are in place on all corners, on the south side of Queens Road between Princes Road and York Road; at the narrow entrance to South Road, along the single carriageway Grove Place adjacent to the Jolly Farmer; and west of the latter past Manby Lodge School and New Road; further restrictions are in place along York Road North and the north side of Queens Road (eg loading bay, disabled and restricted parking - two hours with no return within two hours - at the Queens Road shops); and most houses with driveways have protective (if respected) white T markings. In short, any further parking pressures will focus on areas already under severe pressure on York Road South, Princes Road (east) and from the Queens Road-York Road junction to the north entrance of Manby Lodge School.

3. Applicants wishing to extend Salisbury House (2017/1176) claim that the consequent loss of car park spaces and any increased traffic reflecting the expansion can be absorbed. Their evidence is presented in a map and a series of 8 photographs, without explanatory notes. It has a number of deficiencies.

- There is no explanation of the methodology and no attempt to communicate the findings in an intelligible format to the local community. Exchanges between officials and the developer may have set out more detail but, if so, this has not been made available for public scrutiny.
- Detailed statistics are lacking along with any evidence of monitoring parking over time on a consistent basis.
- The wider actual situation on the ground is ignored. For example, the close proximity of Manby Lodge School with entrances on both Princes Road and Queens Road; the use of York Road and Princes Road as well-recognized rat runs and the extent of parking restrictions.
- The photographs only show that at odd times of day for an unspecified duration a vacant space might be found. They are not supported by any longitudinal study or evidence that they are anything but occasional/temporary or that spaces are regularly available. In at least two instances, parked vehicles are overlapping drives.
- It is asserted that the expansion itself will not be significant in terms of traffic generation. This is based on TRICs data based on averages at undisclosed but allegedly 'similar' locations without any visible comparison to the specific circumstances of this area. No figures of traffic anticipated from additional staff or more customer visits are presented.

4. No independent assessment has been submitted by Surrey County Council officials. In May, they supported rejection of the application on traffic and parking grounds. This was apparently based on finding on one visit of 10 vehicles parked in the 6 (actually 7) space Salisbury House car park. Their volte face in September shows no evidence of detailed scrutiny the applicant's 'evidence'. It is based

on a single 25 minute lunchtime visit when it is hardly surprising that one or two vacant spaces might be found over such a wide area. No corroborative evidence based on different times or days appears to have been collected.

Evidence of Parking Issues

5. In the absence of official studies, residents have sought over the last 18 months to gather relevant evidence. These initiatives include:

- *Triangle Residents Group Survey:* The TRG undertook a survey in April 2016 of local perspectives on the traffic and parking problems the area of the Triangle, encompassing Princes Road, Pine Grove and York Road. This formed the kernel of the arguments presented to the Surrey County Council Local Committee earlier this year in support of a 20mph zone. Residents in Princes Road and York Road, for example, complained of difficulties in accessing or exiting drives into the traffic flow while trying to see round parked vehicles. All day parking on both sides of Princes Road between Pine Grove and York Road by employees and customers of local businesses reduced the carriageway to a single lane with vehicles having to use the gaps at driveways to pass each other. The competition for parking spaces often resulted in the overlapping of driveways and parking on white or yellow lines in place. Parking on the double yellow lines on the junction of York Road and Princes Road, the Keep Clear markings adjacent to the Jolly Farmer pub and outside the Princes Road entrance to Manby Lodge School were seen as a continuing problem.
- *Weybridge Society Survey:* A survey undertaken by the Weybridge Society earlier in 2017 involved discussions with 84 local businesses. Their findings confirmed that parking spaces in Queens Road, York Road and Princes Road were under particular pressure. Many staff working at the Queens Road Centre reported that they needed to walk some 10-15 minutes from where they were able to park their car to their place of work. Some two thirds of the 383 drivers identified had no parking space at work. Of these 252 drivers, 31 parked in the local York Road car and the remaining 221 parked in nearby residential roads. Businesses also commented on the lack of parking space available for customers, clients and visitors.

Triangle Residents' Group Parking Survey October 2017

6. In the light of the extent of redevelopment planned and proposed in the Queens Road village, of which Salisbury House extension forms a part, TRG decided to undertake an objective count of parking volumes in the area in the week commencing Monday 16 October.

7. *Methodology:* The TRG survey was based on a physical count of vehicles parked within the 170m radius of Salisbury House defined by the applicant. The approach was piloted initially in York Road (south) at different times of day over several days in order to iron out any potential difficulties. The results are set out in Appendix 1. The full count was scheduled to take place over a full week and around the same times each day. The times chosen were 8.30 am to avoid distortions caused by temporary schools traffic dropping off at Manby Lodge and because most employees working in local businesses are likely to have arrived: 10.30am when local traffic has calmed to a degree but

before lunchtime pub and restaurant traffic; and 3.00pm post the lunch period at businesses and again avoiding Manby Lodge traffic. The count was also undertaken the week before the half-term holidays although the Friday count may have been affected. Some local roadworks were under way in Princes Road (west) but these did not reduce legitimate parking spaces within the circle.

7. *Key Assumptions:* The following assumptions were made:

- Only vehicles parked within the 170m radius would be counted so that the results could if necessary be compared with any figures that the applicant or officials might provide. In reality there is very little parking available in areas outside this radius because of parking restrictions in place, for example, on Queens Road (west of Manby Lodge and east of Princes Rd), York Rd north beyond the car park and Pine Grove. Observation and the TRG's 2016 survey suggest that any spaces are fully occupied and that illegal parking often occurs.
- Four roads within the circle were excluded from the count: Grove Place, a single carriageway with access protected by double yellow lines; Barrington Lodge, a short stretch providing access to the school in an area heavily protected by double yellow lines; Oakfield Glade, a private road; and South Road, single carriageway for much of its length with parking restrictions in place and largely invisible to those who do not know the area.
- All parked vehicles were counted irrespective of whether or not they were parked illegitimately on restricted lines, overlapping driveways etc.
- A vacant slot was identified as a space in which a small/medium sized car could fit without breaking the law or overlapping a dropped kerb in active use. In practice, many slots in this area of Weybridge tend to be filled by large vehicles and vans.

8. *Findings:* Details of the pilot York Road count are set out in Appendix 1 and the results from the full count are presented in Appendix 2.

9. The key relevant findings were:

- At current levels, on-street parking across the area is at saturation levels. Over 2,400 parked vehicles were counted over the designated period (with a further 660+ in the Salisbury House and York Road car parks). This translates into an average number of vehicles parked on the street at each count of 162. The equivalent number of vacancies was 10. If short term parking on Queens Road is left out of the calculation, the figures for potential vacancies more than halve, with 123 parked vehicles on average and 4.6 vacancies.
- Most of any scope for short term 'churn' was along Queens Road where parking restrictions are in operation designed to meet the needs of local businesses. As the Weybridge Society survey demonstrated, those businesses are the most vocal in Weybridge about the customer and staff parking difficulties they face.
- Parking availability along both stretches of York Road, Princes Road and New Road are virtually non-existent. At the time of the two counts in mid-morning and mid-afternoon, the average number of vacant spots found was 4.5, somewhat distorted by Friday afternoon readings when a larger number of vacancies tend to appear. The earlier TRG survey found that households along New Road (where few dwellings have off-street parking) felt themselves to be under particular pressure not only throughout the day but particularly

from parking up by parents dropping children off or picking them up from Manby Lodge School.

- Defining a vacancy can be problematic due to the degree of parking across drives or overlapping drives and parking in prohibited areas (eg, double yellows). It is likely that even the few vacancies currently available would rapidly disappear if some drivers parked correctly.
- The average occupancy of the Salisbury House car park was 5.6, leaving one of the 7 potential parking places available. The range was from two to eight parked vehicles (both on one occasion). It was noticeable that higher occupancy tended to occur when on-street parking was at its peak. The possibility that some staff already chose to park on-street when vacancies were available was not explored.
- The York Road fee-paying car park was usually full during the working day, although as in the case of Queens Road more vacancies were available towards the end of the week – particularly Friday. The average occupancy figure was 40, leaving an average of 3 vacant slots, one of which was invariably for the disabled. By 10.30 in the morning on all days the car park was full.

10. Overall, the figures tend to confirm that parking is currently at such levels that even small numbers added by the closure of car parking spaces would have a disproportionate and detrimental impact on businesses and residents. At a conservative estimate, if a 40% increase in the scale of the building translates into a similar increase in the parking requirement for staff, this would raise the average requirement from the current 6 (rounded from 5.6) to at least 8. They would be competing effectively for three parking spaces. More customers/business users would add further problems and, as the survey of business users shows, the motor vehicle and not public transport (inadequate as it is for business purposes) would be the favoured mode of transport. The stress will be further exacerbated by nearby large scale developments on Queens Road under construction or at the planning stage (the Trident Honda site, Clive House, St Georges House), the collective impact of which does not feature in considerations by officials.

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Appendix 1: TRG Pilot Count – York Road (South) only

	Time of count	Vehicles parked on the road	Vacant slots	Salisbury House car park
26 September	08.30	24	0	4
	10.30	26	0	6
	15.00	25	0	8
27 September	08.30	26	0	3
	10.30	27	0	5
	12.20	27	0	3
28 September	14.50	25	1	6
4 October	09.40	25	0	3
5 October	09.50	27	0	5
	10.50	25	0	6
10 October	12.20	25	0	6
13 October	09.40	25	0	5
	10.30	26	0	6

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