

## 19/00314/VOC RCMRA Deputation

We understand that traffic related and other planning issues, cannot be revisited in the current application for NM7. However, decisions taken solely in relation to NM7 will have a significant impact on the wider issue of road traffic and pedestrian safety and on the Royal Clarence Parking Strategy.

It is in this broader context that we believe the NM7 application should be reviewed as it offers a last-ditch opportunity to correct a strategic oversight and address a serious safety issue.

The parking strategy has always focussed on optimising the number of parking spaces. What has never been optimised at any stage is the safe and efficient flow of traffic into and out of the development.

The entry into Royal Clarence from the bottom of Weevil Lane is at a complex and busy bend with five closely spaced entry/exit junctions and with key wayfinding decisions having to be made soon after rounding the bend.

Traffic slows and sometimes comes to a halt as drivers wonder which way to go. The layby on the immediate left is regularly blocked by cars and lorries, which often narrows the entry road. The road at this bend is also crossed by pedestrians making their way from the car park.

The NM7 access road is the sixth junction to be added to this busy area and the direction of its one-way flow can either add to the problems at the bend or decrease them.

Diagram A shows the currently proposed direction with entry from the East. We understand that this was changed from a West flow to enable heavy goods vehicles to access the bin stores at the East end of the road.

However, traffic rounding the bend will need to quickly see the NM7 turn and cut across the flow of exiting traffic. Because the junction is reached quickly there is every likelihood of it being missed as driver attention will naturally be to the left as they round the corner.

If they cannot find a parking space at NM7 they will have to circulate around the bend again to reach the car park. To further complicate wayfinding the second junction to the right for this car park follows a few feet after the NM7 turn.

Diagram B. shows the flow of the one-way system from West to East.

This filters NM7 traffic off from Weevil Lane, meaning less traffic around the bend and only one turn to the right needing to be signed.

Heavy goods vehicles can still access the bin store area without blocking access NM7 from the Weevil Lane end.

However, there is another simple to implement change that can greatly decrease the complexity at the corner and clear traffic from the danger area.

Diagram C. shows how, by closing off the current access into the North Meadow car park and creating a wider entrance further down the road, traffic can be moved quickly away from the congested corner.

The current entry location was dictated by plans for a residential block on the first half of the car park. This is no longer planned, making central access now possible.

The car park is on two different levels but this can be accommodated by a ramp between them, making the whole of the parking area accessible from one point of entry.

In conclusion:

We believe that it would not be difficult to design a much safer and more user-friendly route for traffic flowing into and out of RCY. Diagrams B and C illustrate this.

Optimised traffic flow is the base discipline that needs to be fixed before one can then sensibly address all the other important issues such as parking space layout, wayfinding, lighting and safe pedestrian access.

We would therefore ask you not to approve a plan which manifestly fails to offer the optimum and least confusing flow pattern for traffic and one that is actually unsafe.

If you don't want to refuse the application, we suggest that you defer your decision until you have visited the site to see the problems and opportunities for yourselves.

If, however you are minded to approve the application, we would ask that you consider doing so with additional conditions to ensure that the NM7 road

direction decision is reconsidered and that steps are taken to further optimise the traffic flow and address the safety issue.