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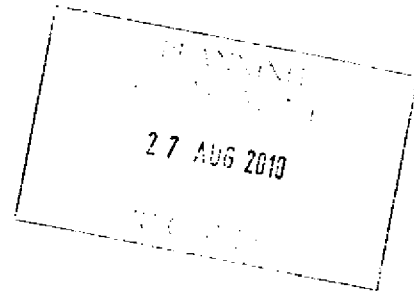
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**BUTLERS, FORE STREET, OLD HATFIELD, AL9 5AN**

25th August 2010

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Planning Department  
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council  
The Campus  
Welwyn Garden City  
AL8 6AE



**Planning Reference S6/2010/1711/FP (11 August 2010)**

Dear Sirs

**Re: Formation of replacement car park for business use including layout of additional parking for residential occupiers, paths, landscaping and ancillary works at land adjacent The Viaduct Hatfield Park Church Lane HATFIELD**

There was considerable opposition to planning application S6/2008/0690/FP by local residents who subsequently formed the Old Hatfield Residents Association, to construct the new Georges Gate entrance in Church Lane for Coaches and HGVs because;

- Highway safety was a major concern, plus the fact it was unlikely, with such a large investment by the Gascoyne Cecil Estate (the Estate) that this entrance would be confined solely to Coaches and HGVs.
- The Estate assured local residents that there would not be a constant stream of car visitor traffic using this new entrance as this has always been a concern.
- The Planning application was based on the clear fact that this entrance would be for the use of Coaches and HGVs only owing to the damage that was being caused to the main gate by this specific type of road traffic.

We now find this is not so, as this current planning application proposes to make the very same gate which was strongly opposed, the main entrance for all tourist visitor traffic to Hatfield House and Gardens, including the now open all year restaurant, retail outlets etc and the soon to be opened Children's adventure playground. This is precisely what local residents were afraid would happen and were assured by Estate representatives that it would not.

As a member of the local community and a member of the Old Hatfield Residents Association, forgive us of gross mistrust of this application!

With reference to paras 1.13 and 1.14 re. Highway Safety versus inappropriate Green Belt use. It is a puzzling argument because if it is hazardous outside the existing entrance at Station Lodge, where there are four lanes for traffic on the A1000, plus a wide pavement for pedestrians, providing no restriction for the flow of traffic, north or southwards when queuing arises. Surely it would be much more hazardous at the proposed site further down the A1000 which would have to facilitate the huge increase of car traffic throughout the year.

Car traffic travelling North can only do so via a narrow and curved slip-road which necessitates a sharp left-hand turn into The Broadway, before reaching the A1000 roundabout, and not as indicated in the application, direct access to the roundabout. This is clearly mis-leading.

Coaches and HGVs cannot negotiate the slip-road, so can only turn southwards and the next turning opportunity is a roundabout, completely unsuitable for this type of traffic.

Pedestrians would also be at risk as there are no pavements in Church Lane.

When can we expect the next planning application to move the roundabout to the bottom of Church Lane, ostensibly for Highway Safety, but opening up many other opportunities for the Estate?

The need for the Estate to be commercial and competitive in running its businesses is completely understood, but the implication throughout this application that the Old Hatfield Charette was the vehicle for public consultation, is simply untrue. As is, the continual mention of the 'significant benefit to the local economy and community' when yards away from the Estate's 'ongoing programme of building and renovation and letting for commercial and residential purposes' it is visually evident that this historic Old Town is dying on its feet, without any assistance from the Council or Estate.

Despite the road safety issues raised on the original Church Lane application in 2008, Highways made clear that it was the responsibility of the WHDC as planning authority to ultimately determine the application following the consideration of all views received. These were ignored and I can only implore you as our local council to consider this further application very carefully in this conservation and residential area.

This application together with the recent licensing application made by the Estate dated the 6<sup>th</sup> August for the sale of alcohol between 6am to 2am is very worrying when viewed with this planning application not least because of car visitor traffic between these unsociable hours.

Kindly therefore clarify the following;

1. That this application by the Estate, effectively closes Station Lodge to all tourist traffic, making Church Lane / Georges Gate the main entrance for all tourist visitors and activities.
2. Planning proposal 1, paras 3.6 and 3.7 which refer to visitor traffic to large events such as 'Living Crafts', Proms etc and the additional large number of visitors the Estate expect next year to the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. Where will this traffic enter and exit?
3. Planning proposal 2, para 4.12, and fig 6. Page 15 (new car park, paths etc approximately behind Hill House up to Park Cottages and the maisonette block in Park Close) – please clarify that the 'path' is not in effect a newly constructed road, and where does the gate or doors indicated lead?
4. As you are aware there is a very valuable parcel of land, known as 'The Orchard' situated behind 16 Fore Street (owned by the Estate). Planning applications previously submitted were unsuccessful on the grounds of 'Access', but if 'the path' indicated in Fig 6. Is in fact a road, linking up to the residential 'Whitstone House', it would provide the essential and perfect access into this site.

I look forward to hearing from you and please do not hesitate to contact me on [REDACTED] if you wish to discuss further.

Yours faithfully  
[REDACTED]