

Ref No 6/2018/2178/full – Chancellors School: Proposed Extension and the Resulting Impact this will have to the surrounding area and its residents.

Serious consideration must first be given to the policing of the current unmanaged situation regarding dangerous parking practices by parents and safe turning facilities for buses and the present impact this all has to the local community.

Only once these present environmental and health & safety impacts have considered and a property resolution found can then a further consultation can be had on the new planning proposal.

Current situation:

The school is situated in Pine Grove, a culde sac reached via Georges Wood Road that leads on to the A1000

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It is my understanding that, neither Pine Grove or Georges Wood roads are adopted, although Welwyn Hatfield Council does re surface Pine Grove, which is in itself not designed/built to withstand the present heavy traffic loading. This is not only demonstrated by serious cracks and potholes and people drive erratically to avoid them; in addition to the high volume of cars at the start and end of the school day, over a period off approximately 1 hour I have witnessed the flow of cars to be in excess of 700 in number. This number does not include for the buses commuting the students to school.

The school/council and planning authorise is fully aware of the situation, the congestion and the safety concerns and environmental impacts, will be even more heighten with the proposed school extension. This will further impact to the village traffic and the surrounding road network.

Due to the foregoing volume of traffic in Pine Grove and in part to assist with the turning circle for the buses, Yellow lines have been painted at the mouth of school drive in an attempt to prevent parents and students parking cars there, but these are completely ignored and not policed.

In fact cars are parked on both sides of the length of Pine Grove during school term times which itself makes the movement of traffic and the buses extremely difficult and hazardous and unsafe. As the road is not wide enough for parking on both sides

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The result is that Pine Grove being an unsafe area because:

- Safety is compromised by the fact that buses cannot access the school at the access drive
- They must reverse and carry out three-point turns, which is extremely dangerous
- There have been numerous accidents (and the gates at the front of my house have been damaged multiple times by parents' cars)
- Parents and students, on foot, are running the gauntlet between moving buses and cars

- Residents are reversing out of their drives causing danger to pedestrians and other drivers and often find their drives obstructed
- Etc,

Plans to Expand:

The School intends to expand its numbers by 200 students. This will have a severe impact both on the environment and local area. It does not consider the fact that the additional traffic will put even more strain on the local road network, capacity.

The proposed extension will be on Green Belt land with any access proposed via the Golf Club Road or alternatively from the gated unmade private road from the A1000. And or If a one way system as also suggested as a possible alternative in Pine Grove then this in itself will encourage further high speeding of vehicles by parents and others.

This will totally change the dynamics of what used to be a peaceful village location. When Pine Grove was built, this access to the A1000 was denied by the Council/planning on those grounds, when Pine Grove was first developed and the same reason still applies today on the grounds of safety. The planning office is fully aware of this planning refusal/objection fact.

The school also fails to engage with the local residents over the use of its facilities, particularly out of hours uses. The school does, however, hire its premises to outside organisations with no restrictions, such as the Valentine's Day event, which consisted of over 300 parked caravans and associated vehicles, or the filming of Rocket Man. This involved heavy juggernauts and hundreds of vehicles arriving at all hours of the day and night and noise continuing through the early hours. I can quote many other examples of disturbance, which local residents feel powerless to counter and for which the school takes no responsibility.

Counter Proposal:

It is proposed that Pine Grove should have its access restricted to residents, pedestrians, the school buses and teachers.

An alternative Park and Ride area would address all the impacts described above and also reduce pollution in the area. The location of the Park and Ride must be assessed as part of the wider consultation.

It would also reduce congestion on the A1000, in Potters Bar and surrounding villages during peak collection/dropping-times.

Overall this would deliver a far more long term sustainable solution, reducing carbon footprint and danger to all parties.

Both school/planning authority and Council must not fail in their duty to fully engage with the communities who must live daily with the disruption and danger.

The Planning Office must refuse this planning application in its present form on the grounds of safety and sustainability.

In conclusion, serious consideration must first be given to the policing of the current unmanaged situation regarding dangerous parking practices by parents and safe turning facilities for buses and the present impact this all has to the local community only once these present impacts are considered and a property resolution found can then a further consultation can be had on the new planning proposal.

End.

Kind Regards,

Lefty

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