
From: Arthur Spencer
Sent: 26 September 2018 18:45
To: Planning Comments (Shared Mailbox)
Subject: Ref No 6/2018/2178/full - Comment: This maybe a second copy of my Opposition Statement

Welwyn Hatfield Council
Planning Department
A A SPENCER
69 Pine Grove,
Brookmans Park, Hatfield Herts.
Application 6/2018/2178/Full
26 September 2018

Dear Sirs

I wish to file Objections against the above Application.

As a resident of a house adjoining the school, I was surprised to learn only on Sunday evening, 23 September 2018 that the closing date for filing Objection was 26/9/18. I immediately contacted a Councillor and on 24/9/18 the Planning Department when I was assured that adjoining houses would receive the statutory notice with a further period of Objection. At the time of writing no such Notice has been received, and many residents in Pine Grove are unaware of this appalling communication. My comments are therefore hurried and may not be the last submission I make on this matter.

It may be pleasing to hear that this school which was threatened with closure at one time is enjoying such success and that it is again looking to expand its capacity of students. However this inevitably will bring further problems affecting the environment in its broadest meaning, and increased impact on residents with an unacceptable traffic load at the present time, and often double-side parking in a narrow cul-de-sac most of the day, a problem which gets worse during the school year as more 6th Formers get cars.

Located as it is deep within a residential area and approached by a relatively narrow road this must be a matter of real concern to the plan and the development. No thought or consideration has apparently been given to this, other than to ignore it as not being the school's problem. This is a school within the Green Belt. The plan envisages further "waterproofing" of land with the new buildings, and carparks and probably removal of grassed areas and more trees. No thought seems to have been given to replacing the existing single story buildings with two-storey constructions. The proposal is that the extended site will be spread over an enlarged area comprising an aesthetically unattractive ramshackle collection of buildings in unsatisfactory materials.

Transport:

Inadequate consideration of the impact on the transport needs of pupils and staff has been made apart from creation of 'increased parking'. The latter is an expensive privilege... which the population in a rural area cannot sustain without suffering the environmental cost and inconvenience caused, in particular to residents in Pine Grove. Elsewhere in Brookmans Park, and Potters Bar etc such a cost-free parking privilege no longer exists. Public Transport means need to be consulted to ensure that adequate services can bring large numbers of people close to the site in large double deck buses as happened in the earlier years of the school. Congestion of the junction of Georges Wood Road with the Great North Road which is the widely used approach road for parents of people coming from the main catchment area in South Hatfield may lead to the

requirement of traffic lights for safety on the Great North Road/Georges Wood Road junction a road where the speed limit of 40mph is already dangerously high.

Parking:

It is essential that Pine Grove should have the same kind of parking provisions met elsewhere locally in Brookmans Park in its Primary School, or adjacent to schools in for instance Potters Bar or Hatfield, or further afield in Cuffley. This would mean restricted parking in Pine Grove and adjacent roads, Bull Lane, Georges Wood Road by time, e.g. 11-12 a.m., or yellow lines, or 'resident only' parking at cost.

It is vital that if this future plan is adopted that it embraces a more constructive solution for bringing pupils and staff to the facility. Pupils and staff must be discouraged from using personal vehicles parked throughout the day whether on site or in Pine Grove.

Walking or cycling to school should be encouraged or even insisted on by banning pupil delivery near the school by private car. This would be compatible with the national aim and county policy to make for a healthier population.

It is apparent that the local government plan parking recommendations are already greatly exceeded in the existing apparent use by the school. See

<http://www.welhat.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1075&p=0>

It is worth noting that Pine Grove itself is a road that was adopted for maintenance purposes only by the local authority when the school was built. The road was not designed for the heavy traffic to which it is now subjected on a daily basis. It is a poorly maintained road with numerous potholes and repairs and central surface erosion. It has been the location of numerous minor accidents in recent months, though I understand that only one was of a serious nature where vehicles collided head-on on the bend where visibility is poor.

Source of Pupils:

I understand that only 15% of pupils originate in Brookmans Park, the remainder being transported in from elsewhere, I particular South Hatfield. I understand also that the Welhat Council has also a proposal for consideration of building a new school on the 'Barnfield' site, surely adjacent to the main source of pupils, and where further population growth is anticipated?

Contact with the School:

I have had limited contact with the school during the consultation with residents and a subsequent meeting with the Headmaster, and the Business Manager. They have referred to a Transport Assessment undertaken by the County authorities, though I have not seen any detail of it. I am suspicious that this Assessment is old, rather superficial and does not pay due regard to the true current or foreseen situation, and I suspect that it was undertaken when the school was on holiday! Whatever the situation is, nothing was revealed at the meeting with the school to persuade me that the Assessment was favourable to the development. Suggestions that pupils might walk from an off-loading point on the Village Green near the Station are perhaps also unrealistic in terms of distance from the school even though such a walk twice a day would be healthy for pupils and staff!

Other Comments:

1. The prime attention of the school has been made to the planning application and provision of further parking on site without declaring whether these are for pupils or staff, and without any consideration of the consequences for the local residents of the substantial increase in traffic envisaged.
2. It is understood that there has been a substantial decrease in demand for the buses provided since the local authority removed the subsidy to the operator or school in charging fares to the pupils.
3. If adjacent roads are used for pupils to walk to school, provision of footpaths in such roads as Georges Wood Road, Mymms Drive, and possibly also Bell Lane may be necessary. The latter road is widely used on a loop back to the Great north Road for delivering and collecting pupils. As many as 50 or more cars are lined up in the afternoon for collecting pupils, and there is often also parking near the Great North Road on the existing Yellow Line non-parking road!
4. A proposal for possible use of The Drive, the potholed bridle path N of the school, and now a private road but with pedestrian and horse access seems unrealistic. Further, although use of that

part of the Drive towards Golf Club Road to promote a circular traffic flow one way would necessitate conversion of the bridle way to a proper road and may be objected to on other environmental grounds. There is of course no footpath in Golf Club Road.

Pine Grove Residents' proposals:

I am aware that many residents in Pine Grove have long been envious of the situation elsewhere in Brookmans Park where parking limitations exist. If the plan goes ahead in anything like its present form, I predict that the residents will seek this kind of potential solution to the problem in Pine Grove. This might be coupled with some form of speed limitation to enforce what is assumed to be a speed limit in Pine Grove of 20mph as in Georges Wood Road.

Safety: Right of way: Pine Grove users should have right of way; with appropriate halt / give way road marking on exiting from the school approach road, also called Pine Grove.

Conclusion:

I am opposed to the enlargement of Chancellor's School on the basis proposed in this Application. I believe that it is essential for alternative ways to be studied and realised to greatly reduce traffic and parking in Pine Grove.

I believe that the local authority should consider building a school in the catchment area of the school rather than transport pupils and staff over considerable and unnecessary distance. The local community should not have to tolerate this environmental abuse and alternative solutions should be found.

The proposed plan does not take into consideration the current environmental needs and travel needs of the school.

A A SPENCER