

Planning Application 6/2019/0085/MAJ

Chancellors School, Pine Grove, Brookmans Park, Hatfield, AL9 7BN

I am resident at 80 Pine Grove Brookmans Park, AL9 7BL, and I wish to file the following comments which I trust may be taken into consideration when assessing the above Application by Chancellor's School to expand its premises and pupil numbers.

This plan if carried out as it stands will bring serious problems affecting the local environment. It will impact on residents with an unacceptable increase in traffic most of the day on a cul-de-sac which has always been poorly maintained This problem gets worse during the school year as more 6th Formers get cars.

Radical thinking needs to be applied to eliminate traffic in Pine Grove created by the school. No serious thought or consideration has apparently been given to this! This is a school within the Green Belt. This plan means further removal of green land and trees. Why not replace the existing single story buildings with two-storey constructions instead of the dismal design of more unattractive buildings?

PARKING:

I have been resident in Pine Grove for many years, and the environment has deteriorated from being a quiet residential road to a busy thoroughfare with all-day parking both sides of the road, a cost-free privilege... which the staff and pupils seem not to appreciate and which rarely exists elsewhere. Pine Grove must have the same kind of parking provisions met locally in Brookmans Park in its Primary School, or elsewhere. This would mean some form of restricted parking in Pine Grove and adjacent roads, Bull Lane, Georges Wood Road and Moffatts Lane by time, e.g. 11-12 a.m., or yellow lines, or 'resident and visitors only' parking.

TRANSPORT PROBLEMS AND SOLUTION:

Pine Grove itself was adopted for 'maintenance purposes only' by the local authority when the school was built. It was not designed for the traffic to which it is now subjected on a daily basis; it has been a poorly maintained road with numerous potholes and repairs; and has been the location of numerous minor accidents in recent months. School traffic must be eliminated from Pine Grove... And on-site parking at the school should be diminished, not expanded to ensure that this happens. Walking or cycling to school should be encouraged or even insisted on by banning pupil delivery near the school ... that means in Pine Grove... by private car. This would be compatible with the national aim and county policy to make for a healthier population.

When the school was built some 55 years ago, there was adequate Public Transport provision along the Great North Road. Now, an inadequate public transport system means that pupils are transported by family car, or a limited number of what I understand are expensive (non-subsidised) buses. If the plan goes ahead, it must be coupled with a transport solution that will endure over the coming years, and not just for the short term.

The serious congestion at the junction of Georges Wood Road with the Great North Road, widely used approach road, for those coming from the main catchment area in South Hatfield may lead to

the requirement of traffic lights for safety here where the speed limit of 40mph is already dangerously high.

Pupils and staff must be discouraged from using personal vehicles parked throughout the day whether on site or in Pine Grove. Suggestions that pupils might walk from an off-loading point on the Village Green near the Station are interesting and such a walk twice a day would be healthy for pupils and staff!

Source of Pupils:

I understand that only 15% of pupils originate in Brookmans Park, the remainder being transported in from elsewhere, in 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, apparently fairly close to the main source of pupils, and where further population growth is anticipated?

CONCLUSIONS:

1. I am opposed to the enlargement of Chancellor's School on the basis proposed in this Application.
2. The design is disappointing without consideration of the environmental impact on residents and the Green Belt provisions.
3. On-site parking should be reduced, not expanded to ensure that a sustained and considered transport plan evolves for the immediate and long-term future which might see even further expansion of pupil numbers from those currently projected.
4. No serious consideration of the consequences of the plan for the local residents has been made.
5. 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.
6. 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 where as many as 30 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!
7. Residents should petition for 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. The local community should not have to tolerate this environmental abuse and alternative solutions should be found.

80 Pine Grove, Brookmans Park, Hatfield, AL9 7BW