

12 MAR 2019
HAND DELIVERED
PLANNING

To
WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL,
PLANNING DEPARTMENT,
THE CAMPUS,
WELWYN GARDEN CITY,
HERTS.
AL8 6AE.

32, Pine Grove,
Brookman's Park,
Hatfield,
Herts. AL9 7BS.
9.03.19.

Dear Sirs,

I live at 32, Pine Grove. I have read the objections expressed by other residents of Pine Grove to the proposed expansion of Chancellors school. I have walked to the school access road and the junction with Georges Wood Road at peak pupil drop-off and pick-up times to see things for myself.

Residents living in houses with a number greater than mine have cars parked in the road outside their houses for most of the day. A large percentage of these cars belong staff and pupils at the school. The number of cars is much reduced after school hours. The width of Pine Grove is such that there is not enough room for two cars, driving in opposite directions, to pass each other with cars parked on both sides of the road.

Pine Grove is a cul-de-sac. Pupil drop-off in the morning is at its most intense between 7.45 a.m. and 8.25 a.m. Some are dropped off on the school premises. Others are dropped off in Pine Grove close to the school access road. The vehicle needs to execute a three-point turn in Pine Grove, with cars parked on both sides, in order to drive the opposite way to leave. Meanwhile arriving traffic builds up. Everyone wants to drop their children off and leave as quickly as possible.

Having driven back along Pine Grove the vast majority of cars turn left into Georges Wood Road to access the A 1000. There is a queue of traffic from the T junction of Pine Grove with Georges Wood Road to the junction of Georges Wood Road with the A 1000. This queue can extend into Pine Grove by a good number of cars. At this time in the morning the A 1000 is very busy with traffic from the Hatfield direction. Also, on the opposite side of the A 1000 is Kentish Lane [B 158] which joins the A 1000 at a T junction. Thus, Georges Wood Road and Kentish Lane form an " off-set " crossroads with the A 1000. At this time in the morning there is a large volume of traffic coming from the Hertford on the B 158. Most of this traffic turns left onto the A 1000 in the direction of Potters Bar. The drivers in the stream of traffic on the A 1000 are reluctant to let cars from Georges Wood Road and the B 158 onto the A 1000. In addition to this there is a set of traffic lights about 100 metres along the A 1000 in the direction of Potters Bar. Traffic queues from these traffic lights to the Georges Wood Road / B 158 junctions and on towards Hatfield for another 50 metres. So, there can be great congestion on these roads at this time.

In the afternoon pupil pick-up occurs mainly between 2.45p.m. and 3.25p.m. Cars are parked, both sides of Pine Grove, for nearly the entire length of the road. The drivers wait for pupils to walk from the school access road. Other drivers drive up to the school access road and chance that they can park near there. Some drivers stop their cars on the yellow lines on Pine Grove near to the school access road. 3-point turns are executed in Pine Grove with cars parked on both sides. Arriving cars are held up. When the cars leave Pine Grove there is a queue in Pine Grove and

Georges Wood Road similar to that in the morning. However, at this time in the afternoon the A 1000 and the B 158 are not so busy. It is too early for "rush hour" traffic and so queuing cars can disperse more quickly than in the morning.

I have tried to convey the intensity of the situation from the drivers' point of view. They are presented with the challenges of heavy traffic and the requirement to manoeuvre a car quickly in a restricted space. All the while, they are trying to do what they see as in the best interests of their child. In such pressured circumstances people can panic, get angry, act impulsively and unwisely, and accidents can happen.

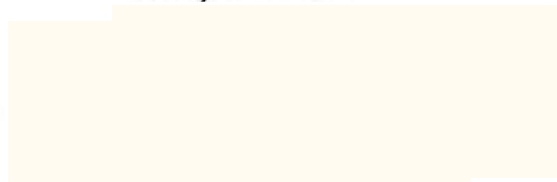
In Pine Grove, the traffic and car parking has got close to crisis point at drop-off and pick-up times for Chancellors School. Any increase in pupil numbers will create a very difficult situation indeed.

I have looked at the Herts. County Council website-education; sub-headed Secondary Planning Areas. Here, a table of figures shows a forecast shortage of Year 7 school places in Hatfield of over 20 % for each of the years 2024 to 2027. The figure peaks at 30 % for 2026. Looking 10,20,30 years ahead, surely it would be wise for Hertfordshire County Council to "bite the bullet" and start planning now for building a new secondary school in the Hatfield area. Could it be argued that the total cost of enlarging existing schools over the next few years would be greater than the cost of a new school? I can see that a new school in the area would compete with Chancellors School for pupils in the short term. [85 % of pupils come from the Hatfield area]. With general population growth that competition should ease with time.

In conclusion, I am very much in favour of the provision of facilities which give as many children as possible a good standard of education and a liking for exercise. However, I feel that the road layout around Chancellors School, as it stands, will not allow any expansion of the school without concerns about safety, particularly at school pick-up and drop-off times. Also, the reasonable enjoyment of life of residents of Pine Grove will be undermined, especially of those living in areas most severely affected by traffic and parking.

For the reasons given above, I would ask that planning permission for the expansion of Chancellors School be refused.

Yours sincerely,

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