

I can only say that this development is long overdue. To date this school have been surviving off its reputation alone. The condition of the school's classrooms and sporting facilities are an embarrassment particularly when compared to the likes of Dame Alice and Goffs Academy which have either modernized or built completely new facilities. It is equally shocking that this school does not have an all-weather sports pitch similar to the ones at the schools just mentioned. If the school has to up the pupil intake in order to facilitate this much overdue development then I fully support the school with this approach.

Much has been said about the alleged negative impact upon the Greenbelt but common sense should dictate that the education needs combined with the improved health / fitness needs of our children far outweigh any perceived impact upon the Greenbelt. It is also worth mentioning that the nearby RVC (Royal Veterinary College) has been allowed to expand into the Greenbelt over the past twenty years, its last successful application being the expansion of the RVC's sporting / gymnasium facilities coupled with student / staff car parking. This was permitted on the grounds of exceptional circumstances and if this was permitted for the RVC then a higher degree of weighting should be applied to the school as I am sure everyone will agree the benefits to the school far outweighs the benefits to the RVC.

If this application is not approved then we should all question the schools long term outlook which does not look good, the only viable option as suggested by many of the objectors is to close / relocate the school. The upside to this being the freeing up of land for much needed housing and the school grounds would contribute to a great number of housing units. Local residents may prefer this option but seeming as most of their objections is against increased traffic / congestion along Pine Grove then I suspect given an option most would prefer to see the school development as opposed to the housing option.