

Whilst we are in favour of the concept of increased housing and the benefits offered to the school, we object to the Planning Application on the points below. We offer an alternative approach to alleviate the issues raised, which caused us enough concern to reject the application.

We are unable to support the parts of the Planning Application that involve the safety of the children. There have been accidents already in Priory Road and indeed the results of the latest accident are still present in the form of the part demolished school wall. This is a good indication of the speed that is achieved on this hill. Currently, the articulated lorries that deliver to Marks & Spencer and The Chilterns regularly use Priory Road. We asked to purchase the latest road traffic statistics for Priory Road and Priory Avenue from Jacobs Consultants. The latest statistics, are for June 2006 and only refer to Priory Road so are far too outdated to be of use. The only conclusion from this part of the exercise is that traffic density continues to grow and that the speed of the Priory Road traffic is generally greater than it is in Priory Avenue. The construction of a roadway into Fair-Acre from the Priory Road school would finally virtually legitimise the (currently unofficial) rat run from Priory Avenue properties to the Temple End rail viaduct. The temptation to children of a new roadway that already has unofficial access to Temple End could well be too attractive; unfortunately these inquisitive children are also the most vulnerable ones who may easily be led to the railway bank or the greenery at the end of the Temple End railway viaduct. Either have their own dangers due to the amount of cover afforded by the neglect of Network Rail to maintain their fences and land. The idea of increased security in these plans is a joke using the philosophy of the 1950s. Small side roads mean sex, drugs, molesting children and the use as a public toilet. We cannot believe that anyone would like this type of behaviour to be encouraged by this intended development of Fair-Acre. We consider that the school supporters of this proposal, no doubt recommended by the school, have not been presented with any alternative solution which would result in greater safety for children of primary school age.

We support only the parts of the Planning Application which benefit Priory Road / Hampden School. We support the developers offer to donate a green area to the school and see no reason why our alternative access suggestion should prevent this. Our proposals would negate many of the safety hazards that are apparent in this planning application. The (mainly) school supporters have only been presented with a 'yes / no' option and are not aware of an alternative solution that could be preferable and more profitable to all parties involved - this would presumably also allow the financial donation of unknown amount to the school funds.



A) To attain realistic entry to Fair-Acre (via Priory Avenue) would involve just the demolition of one house (No 47) and allow a far wider and safer access to the housing. This would result in both the school and Fair-Acre having independent and exclusive access to their respective properties.

High Wycombe is now a University Town and we feel that the Planning Officers should take more note of the habits of the students coming from other places and insist that Planning Application be drastically modified. Many of the ideas and opinions are 40-50 years out of date. There are very local public houses where civilised people may enter but exit as drunken beings - drug usage is also a high risk and this area suffers from both. As shown, this would increase the width of the entry to Fair-Acre to 7.8m. The dimensions give a "real world" idea of the intended 3.1m and 4.1m road widths in this Planning Proposal. (See para F) The current Planning Application ignores these facts and should therefore be rejected.

B) We consider that the number and style of houses on this application to be a short-sighted, short-term drastic under-utilisation of the land which in the current application takes no consideration of the remainder of the adjoining land that is the property of the same owner. The application does not in any way conform to the policies applied by The Council to developments and alterations to properties directly adjacent to this land. The letter sent by Henry Homes to all of the occupiers affected by the intended development refer to Fair-Acre as decrepid and dilapidated - this intended development could well be considered the same in just a few years. The development should be looking to the state of them in 10-20 years time to minimise numerous future applications for re-development and modifications. The restrictions on new developments has become more relaxed in the past few years and is forecast to continue to do so. As a precedent to this, the re-development of numbers 27 - 35 Priory Avenue(adjoining) encaptured much forward thinking. The new Fair-Acre should be the 'Phoenix' Fair-Acre, rising from the ashes (of complete site clearance, excepting the land already promised to the school) and reflect the forethought of the 2007 Planning Committee in thinking of the requirements of the children and the housing of fifty years hence. The current Planning Application ignores these facts and should therefore be rejected.

C) Since the death of Mrs Joan Perkins (late occupier of Fair-Acre), 10 years ago, nature has taken over much of her garden. Few of the neighbouring properties house permanent residents and are hence not at all interested in either the past or future of the land. Priory Avenue (as may be seen from the number of Planning Applications for conversion to flats and / or multiple occupancy) is not an area of family housing and it is unlikely that the intended higher social class of purchaser that the developers wish to attract would feel at home in this area. One side is bounded by Priory Avenue, the other by the recent development known as Temple Gate. Temple Gate is one block of 27 flats on 3 levels with 7 parking spaces as dictated by the Council's Phillipa Jarvis. It was originally intended to be 18 flats with the lower level being for car-parking. The number of car-parking places for Fair-Acre is far in excess of this previous policy where Ms Jarvis insisted that the flats were so near to the town-centre that it would only be necessary to have the 7 car spaces, but to supplement this with bicycle parking for the residents. This bicycle shed is 1 metre from the Fair-Acre northern boundary. The owner of the adjoining 39, Priory Avenue was forced to build a bicycle shed at the bottom of his garden as a condition of conversion to 3 flats. These are just two precedents concerning adjoining properties. The number of car parking places in this application is excessive and encourages the use of even more cars, yet again contravening both Local and National Government recommendations. The current Planning Application ignores these facts and should therefore be rejected.

D) The Henry Homes website (as of 3rd April 2007) mentions only 11 properties whereas this application is for 15 properties. This application in no way allows for the Government pleas for more social and affordable properties. This application should be amended to at least 30, if not up to 50 properties in a 4-storey format to conform to the Council Policies applied to (current) high-density occupation in Priory Avenue, Temple Gate, behind the Church in Priory Road and all over High Wycombe. It is more fitting for 'luxury' houses to be placed outside the main town. The mention of 3 bedroom properties immediately implies encouraging the presence of children. There are no facilities for children and the traffic density of Priory Avenue and Priory Road will not allow safe 'play places'. The (previous) Lady Verney School site, off Benjamin Road, is a typical local example of local family housing - children play on the road and are still present even in the late evenings. The School playground and the new school green area would be so close that children of any age would show their skills at gaining entry to them by any means, out of school hours. The change to separate entrances to the school and to the residential areas would allow the school to erect the 2.4m high secure fencing right across to the railway boundary making a clear and impenetrable line of demarcation. The current Planning Application ignores these facts and should therefore be rejected.

E) The current Planning Application takes no consideration to reducing or stopping the 'rat runs' from Temple Gate via Fair-Acre to Priory Avenue and Fair-Acre to Priory Road, via the railway bank. (Access is currently gained from the Temple End viaduct 'garden'.) The proximity of Sainsburys and Morrisons, both to the occupiers of the intended properties and also people who use Priory Road will prove just too tempting if there were a roadway that goes 90% of the way from Priory Road to Temple End. The installation of CCTV on the perimeter of Fair-Acre has drastically reduced the number of trespassers. The current Planning Application ignores these facts and should therefore be rejected.

F) A discussion with the Council Contractors for waste and recycling has supplied the vehicle statistics and revealed the most commonly encountered problems with new developments. The intended roadway that tapers to 3.1m, with a gated access, is completely impractical for the purposes of refuse and recycling collections. The usual Scania 8-wheel collection trucks are 3.8m tall, 2.5m wide and 8.7m in length. In Imperial units this is 12' 6" tall, 8' 6" wide and 28' 6" long. The required turning circle is around the width of 2 - 3 average roads. This means that with no obstructions, there is a clearance of 268mm (10.5") on either side, hardly appropriate when schoolchildren may be in this section of the roadway. Considering that there is a 2.4m security fence on one side and the trees on the railway property on the other side and that the truck must also pass the retained trees where the roadway curves after increasing to 4.1m, it is not a feasible means of entry. The trucks also require a large radius entry. There is not enough room for a car approaching from the other direction and / or pedestrians without compromising safety. This fact alone dictates that the entrance to Fair-Acre should be from Priory Avenue to allow a larger radius entry point for big vehicles. If the school access road on this application is not "adopted" by WDC or Bucks CC the school will have little power over 'short-cutters', cars parked for town shopping or even cars dumped at night unless they employ private contractors; it would not be a good idea for the school to be forced into this expenditure; the school needs money injected, not money taken away. The current Planning Application ignores these facts and should therefore be rejected.

G) The arboricultural survey is apparently admirable but past experience in this very same area has seen the rapid demise of at least one protected tree by allowing it to be completely surrounded by asphalt whereas permission to fell what are effectively large, uncultivated sycamore trees at 43 Priory Avenue was refused. Local knowledge will show that sycamore (as on the adjacent railway is) may be considered as no more than a weed that originated from a long felled tree at 10, Temple End (c.1950); it may be likened to the buddleia that was removed from the Temple End railway arches in 1993 which has subsequently regrown. Apart from a walnut tree and a red beech tree it would be far more cost effective to remove the remainder of what were beautiful, lovingly cared for trees, in the same way that the shrubs have been ignored, preserving only the trees within the area donated to the school. The Google Earth view demonstrates the excessive amount of greenery as compared with the surrounding area. The current Planning Application ignores these facts and should therefore be rejected.



H) The ecological survey is equally admirable. The badgers are very active at present as may be seen from the fresh earth. Re-housing badgers has proved very successful in other areas and we feel that they will be quite happy to move their habitations to the railway bank adjacent to the property. The badgers were preceded by foxes and as far as we can ascertain, all of the wildlife has adapted to the changes made over time. The neglect of the property for ten years has vastly increased the wildlife but we can only hope that the school (assuming that they still receive the green area) may also encourage wildlife. Many children do not even understand where food comes from. We feel that by disallowing the intended new access, the school may be able to retain the walnut tree and experience their own pickled and ripe walnuts and also see the beauty of the magnolia that is present in this area.

Conclusion :-

No-one can surely deny that the school could benefit from the green area, but cannot afford it at a market price. The loss of such a large area of their current playground would result in a long term loss of weekend and holiday car parking revenue that they currently receive. Increasing the dimensions of the new intended access to a safe and practical size would further reduce the play area. The intended roadway can only be seen as an unnecessary waste of land and the cause of safety hazards to both the drivers of vehicles and pedestrians, especially school children and also another outgoing maintenance cost for the school. Granting this Planning Application would increase the 'rat runs' between Priory Road / Priory Avenue and Temple End. The developers may need to negotiate with local parties regarding demolition to allow our alternative suggestion but may already be assured of full and friendly co-operation. We must all accept that all of our objections and proposals are just accelerating what is inevitable in a country so lacking in housing. We urge the Planning Committee and the developers to be daring, forward thinking and seriously consider all of the points, many relating to safety. Failure to do so will result in a development being owned (presumably) as freehold and a repeat of the same pattern of extensions and applications for multiple occupancy as the present Priory Avenue. Just 20-30 years ago, Priory Avenue was a residential area for middle class families and no-one could have forecast the current change to flats and student accommodation; therefore, we should all accept that (again, excepting the green area for the school), attempts to create higher priced properties in this area are futile and could be likened to the rebuilding of Buckingham Palace in Castlefield or Micklefield. We have not even mentioned 'green issues' like solar panels for water heating in our objections. In ten years time, no-one will miss the

trees or the wildlife, but the school would have the honour of being guardian of what was initially a lovely orchard and later became the pride and joy of a wonderful lady who had a beautiful garden that was completely planned and maintained by herself. Neither myself nor any of the other objectors that I represent will gain anything from this either now or in the future. We are only accepting reality and urge the Planning Committee to follow our example and we request that this complete Planning Application be rejected..

Phil Perkins and others.