

NOTES OF THE DENMEAD LIAISON GROUP MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15 JUNE 2015
AT 6.00PM AT 24 WENSLEYDALE GARDENS

Present: Councillor Suzette Nicholson
Alison Edwards Chair of the Denmead Neighbours' Association &
Wensleydale Gardens resident
Elizabeth Hossain DNA Committee Member & Resident of Wensleydale Road
Andrew Munday Governor of Hampton & Denmead Schools
Anne Bartlett Hampton and Denmead School Deputy Bursar

Apologies: Tim Smith Denmead Headmaster

Andrew Munday began by welcoming everyone to the meeting. He introduced AEB and explained that as she had particular bursarial responsibility for Denmead that it was more appropriate that she should attend these Liaison Group meetings. AM reminded the Group that the meeting was being held to discuss items of mutual interest and to encourage good relations between neighbours and Denmead School and asked what matters were to be raised for discussion.

Building works

AE said that generally residents' view of the works was concern at the size of the building, and that there was a good deal of noise. AM said that the seedam roof would make the building seem smaller. AE said that whilst the neighbours had their grumbles they accepted that things should improve as the work went inside the building.

It was agreed that the Site Manager, Dave Waters was doing an excellent job and had established good relationships with the local neighbours. He was very responsive and had an open approach to managing the site and liaising with the neighbours. The Group had been informed that he was on holiday, had been given his dates and the name and contact details of his replacement during that time. AEB pointed out that Dave had been chosen with care by the School as he had experience of working on an almost identical project which he had successfully managed.

Travel and Parking

There had been an incident some time ago where a cherry picker had arrived at site too early causing a nuisance before it obtained access. Also a large vehicle had unexpectedly arrived (a smaller one had been agreed) again causing some concern. In both case Dave Waters had dealt with the situation quickly and effectively.

It appeared that more parents were parking in Wensleydale Gardens despite requests from the Denmead Headmaster that they do not. A further note would be sent out by the School.

AE referred to the email from Mike Chidzey, which the school had not seen (SN to check if it can be forwarded to the school). The school have heard nothing from the Council on the points raised by Mike about site lines and use of small rather than medium/large vehicles to transport pupils. A brief discussion took place regarding the parking of the coach in Wensleydale Road in the afternoon. The

view was expressed that the end of Barlow Road, its usual waiting location, was the best location but it was acknowledged that this isn't always available.

EH asked if it were possible for her and perhaps one other to join the Travel Plan steering group. AEB pointed out that consultation with the neighbours regarding travel related issues was generally done in writing. EH said that she was aware that we do not have to invite neighbours onto the steering group but had checked with TFL and they confirmed it was feasible. AM said that consultation about travel to and from the school was one of the purposes of this liaison group and that the School would welcome observations from its neighbours.

AEB informed the Group that Denmead had been awarded the Gold accreditation for this year's TP. AE asked what period the TP covered and was interested to see the version that would be in place once the building was completed. AEB suggested inviting the Deputy Head, Dean Richards, to the next meeting so that he could talk the Group through the process.

Information regarding which entrance was being used at 'drop off' was also of interest to the Group as a spread was desirable. Doubt was expressed as to whether the data gathered for earlier travel plans were sufficiently refined so as to identify drop off points as opposed to mere data about gate entry points.

General Items

Trees

Looking at the trees on the southern boundary, which are almost all deciduous, there was a discussion about screening in the winter months. AE said that her primary concern was the maintenance of a good wildlife habitat for the considerable bird life that used this line of trees, which would best be maintained by native tree species, although screening was a concern. AEB and AM would consult with the Landscape architects and discuss further with AE.

AE also mentioned that there was a wish on the part of residents in Gloucester Road to talk to the school about planting some trees to cloak the new building. The school said they had had discussions about boundaries, but not about trees.

AE informed the Group that the overriding feeling in the neighbourhood was the building was very large. She was sure it had been built to plan and within building tolerances but never the less it was much larger than some had envisaged.

Building size

AE said that neighbours had asked her whether the building was in fact taller than the plans envisioned and that she had raised the issue with David Waters who had shown her that in fact the new building was 0.1 of a metre taller than the plan. AE suggested that no one was going to worry about 0.1 of a metre.

AM asked whether there had been any unreasonable and avoidable noise from the site but AE said that residents understood that although it was intrusive some level of noise was unavoidable for a building site of this size.

AE asked about the completion date of the building project. AEB informed the Group that the building was due to be completed by mid-February at which point the old buildings would be demolished and landscaping commenced, with final completion expected in Summer 2016. AE had a copy of the Parish Magazine which contained an advert for Denmead School which showed a completion date of September 2015. AEB to look into this and ensure the advert is not used again. AM opined that that had possibly been an original target date but delay by the local planning department had put start and therefore completion back considerably.

Wensleydale Gardens Gate

AE raised a concern about the contractor's gate, at the bottom of Wensleydale Gardens, being used by the School after the project was completed. She said that she had seen Tim Smith use the contractor's gate. AEB said that as he was an attendee of site meetings that was unsurprising. AM and AEB assured the Group that this would be a locked gate for emergency use only. AM was firm that the school would not break its promise to residents that the emergency access gate would be locked and not be used by staff or parents. AE raised concern that once the building was completed an application would be made to increase the pupil numbers.

Carlisle Park Use

EH is also Secretary to the Friends of Carlisle Park and raised some issues which had been discussed at their committee meeting on 27th may. She informed the Group that there were rumours that Denmead was trying to have dogs banned from the park. This was refuted by AM and AEB. It was also a concern that Denmead was thought to be using the park far more frequently, although it is understood (and SN confirmed) that the School pays to hire the facility. AM did not know whether use had increased during the building works being undertaken but imagined that it probably had. SN mentioned the possibility of overuse of the park.

AEB asked whether advance notice of matters to be raised could be given so that she could research matters in advance of the meetings in order to be in a position to provide relevant information and to deal with issues raised.

EH asked if something could be put in writing stating these last two points that could be distributed, with a notice to residents of the upcoming AGM, in the interest of putting minds at rest. This document would be required by 22 June.

Possible dates of the next meeting were agreed as 21, 24 or 28 September 2015. AEB to confirm.

Note provided by EH post meeting.

I include below the section of the minutes of the Friends of Carlisle Park committee meeting held on 27th May 2015. You will realise that TD and JD are also members of the FoCP committee.

Relationship between park users and Denmead

TD reported that he had heard unsupported rumours about what Denmead was and wasn't going to do in the park, including that they had applied to have dogs banned from the park. EH also reported that several dog owners had complained to her about comments made to them by Denmead staff and parents. Agreed that rumour could be quashed by more information. Denmead did seem to be using the central field area more than in the past but this may be temporary because of their building works. EH offered to raise issues at the next Denmead Liaison meeting and JD suggested that ill feeling might be dissipated by Denmead doing a leaflet drop and explaining what is happening and pointing out they are paying for use/extra use.

Committee's view echoed that of the dog owner who emailed EH,
'It would be ideal if we can all share the park together'