

I wrote in early October outlining the reasons why the 12 governors of West Berkshire's Englefield CE Primary School expect our local authority to accept a proposal for a modest carpark, generously provided for their school at no cost to the authority by the Englefield Estate, who are the highly respected, long-standing custodians of Englefield Village, our school and the surrounding unique environment in a large part of West Berkshire.

Our Headteacher has also written a second submission adding to the overwhelmingly strong case for the benefits the carpark will bring at a time when the authority has built Theale Primary School on our doorstep generating traffic congestion in Englefield Road and annoyance to me and my neighbours in North Street with parked cars awaiting pick up at the end of the day.

Since first writing, the governors have seen the only objections to the proposal - those made by the conservation officer.

The objections of the conservation officer seem to be based more on technicalities than on experience and knowledge of the actual village environment that we all want to protect

Despite the fact that limited development is permitted, the objection centres on 5 aspects claiming that the car park will be to the detriment of a green space and a countryside vista which is in part of the special character of the village

As anyone who knows the village will tell you there are good reasons why this is not the case

Firstly there is a long open vista to the left of The Street as you travel into the village - more than 60% of this will be retained - and I will still be able to see when the horse mushrooms and puffballs are ready to be gathered in the field!

Secondly the conservation officer may not be aware that there is already parking on the other side of The Street - an eyesore causing a muddy mess and disrupting the view of the similar open field on that side of the road - This extends further than the proposed carpark so there will be a net gain of open field vistas in addition to the tidying of the area and improvement to green infrastructure at the base of a magnificent stand of trees.

Thirdly although the view of and from number 10 The Street will be marginally diminished from one of 4 sides to the building, it will remain in an open setting.

On the other hand the view of numerous other buildings, including the school, church and Englefield House with its magnificent deer park will be majorly improved by the absence of a long string of parked cars blocking the road and the view of anyone walking down the Street. Including the parents, children and staff of our school coming to and from the school twice a day.

Chris Gittins

Chair of Governors

474 words