

Comment on a planning application

Application Details

Application: 24/1835/FUL

Address: Nelson Primary School Nelson Road Twickenham TW2 7BU

Proposal: Alterations to existing entrance to school car park to provide vehicular and pedestrian access gates, and alterations to car parking layout.

Comments Made By

Name: Mrs. Annette Nienhaus

Address: 19 St Vincent Road Twickenham TW2 7HJ

Comments

Type of comment: Object to the proposal

Comment: I object the proposal.

Adequacy of parking/loading/turning

"The proposal seeks to enhance the vehicular and pedestrian access to the school and improve safeguarding by providing a separate access between pedestrians and cars during school opening and closing hours."

1. The alterations are out of proportion to solve the issue of separating the car park from the pedestrians. The proverbial "sledge hammer to crack a nut". There is no need to use the gate in St Vincent Road because the front of the school along Nelson Road is at least 60 meters long (if the plans are to scale) so surely a solution can be found in this area.

For example, the car park entrance could be moved to the left side of the site on Nelson Road. Cars could go in from the left, students from the right. It would be safer than the current proposal because only 2 cars, rather than all of them, would have to cross the zebra crossing, most likely before the children arrive because teachers arrive at school way before the kids turn up.

Further, the planning application gives the impression that pedestrians can only enter the school through the small main entrance on Nelson Road. It omits that pedestrians are using the gate to the right of the main building. The gate is at the end of a drive along the side of the main building, a bit set back from Nelson Road. This gate (behind our garden wall) is in use because we can hear people gathering there at the beginning and at the end of the school day. This gate can handle large crowds because hundreds of participants use it to gather in the school playground for the start of the St. George's Day Parade every year.

2. Effect on St Vincent Road

As already mentioned in another comment, the area around Vincent Road gate is inadequate to accommodate a large number of people. It is just a small gravelled area, not big enough for up to 391 pupils, their parents and siblings. It's the only area where residents can turn around their cars.

Currently St Vincent Road does not have parking restrictions. Part of the planning application is to turn the road into a school street. The implications for residents are considerable because we would have not only a CPZ but additional restrictions and hassle. The issue of the school street is not mentioned in the Neighbourhood Consultation letter. It seems that a majority of residents are not in favour of a CPZ.

Noise and disturbance from use

We are used to the impact the school has on our road because there is a steady stream of kids and parents twice a day with a lot of chatter. However, currently they are just walking down the road but if the gate at the end of the road will be used there will be lots of people standing in the little area at the end of the road, and the noise will be considerable. If St Vincent Road was situated on a dangerous road, for example on a dual carriageway, I would never mention this but that's not the case. Nelson Road is not the problem the planning application is trying to solve.

COVID

School streets are primarily designed to reduce a number of vehicles around schools which is not the issue here anyway. Another purpose was to provide social distancing in response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Opening the school gate in St Vincent Road will lead to many people crowded into a small area which is the opposite of social distancing. COVID has not gone away as the Olympics just showed. And yesterday the WHO declared the mpox outbreak in Africa a health emergency of international concern.

Pre-Application Response

In their response the case officer does not mention the pedestrian gate in St Vincent Road with a single word. There does not seem to be a risk assessment whether it is safe to open this gate for pedestrian access twice a day for a large number of people.

Projected cost of works

Up to £2m. I am assuming this means £2 million. Surely, the council will be able to find more cost effective ways to separate cars and pedestrians at Nelson School.