

**Additional Objections of 22 November 2013 by the Denmead
Neighbours' Association (DNA) to Planning Application 13/2102**

**Safety and congestion at the Wensleydale Road/Carlisle Park
entrance**

A resident who lives close to this entrance, Mr. M.Chidzey, emailed the Council on 21 November to inform them that the School's use of this area for school coach parking is increasing and is unsafe and unacceptable. He reports recent incidents where there were two coaches parked in the morning, in one incident blocking a driveway completely. Visibility for emerging traffic (for residents and for Carlisle Park users) was very limited and the road was narrowed and congested, all with a significant safety impact for motorist and pedestrians – including of course pupils. The photos and analysis of sight lines he provides show this clearly. There is no mention in the school's evidence at all of the safety aspects of the presence of a coach or coaches on this road, yet they typically park for long periods (usually with the engine running). (There is still use of the Gloucester Road entrance by coaches, which now park on the pavement.)

Parents can be seen routinely using Carlisle Park car park to pick up/drop off pupils from Denmead, in spite of the School's assurances to the contrary.

**School operations strongly affect parking and traffic – commuters
are not the problem – see the photos below**

We notice that many comments in support of this application refer to the parking/traffic problems as the result of commuter parking. This is not the case, and we have taken a series of "before and after" photos that demonstrate very clearly that this is not the case. The difference between the numbers of vehicles parked when the school is not open, and when it is, is dramatic.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS STRONGLY AFFECT PARKING AND TRAFFIC

OUT OF TERM



30/10/13 08:47



30/10/13 08:34



30/10/13 08:31

IN TERM

Gloucester Road



4/11/13 08:41

Wensleydale Road



6/11/13 08:35

Wensleydale Gardens



8/11/13 15:31

The “invisible” pupils – over 14% of pupils going to school are excluded from the school’s traffic measurement

The school’s evidence does not mention or count the use of two out of the four access routes to school for pupils. This is pointed out in the Traffic Report from RGP Transport and Planning in our Statement of Objections lodged in July 2013. The result is that there are serious flaws in the School’s traffic evidence, as these “invisible” pupils come and go without being recorded and the cars that drop them off are also “invisible” to the school’s traffic experts.

The pupils themselves are visible to the naked eye, as are the cars that bring them and drop them off in Wensleydale Gardens, Scotts Drive/Carlisle Road (all cul-de-sacs), and Wensleydale Road by Denmead infants. To quantify the size of this omission from the School’s evidence, a resident has now carried out a count in Wensleydale Gardens over a number of days to establish how many pupils use Wensleydale Gardens to get to or leave the Denmead Gloucester Road site. This count recorded between 22 and 8 pupils using the route, with an average of 16 (the numbers may well be more if pupils were missed but will not be less).

A few of these pupils are accompanied by a member of staff, so the School know about the use of the route.

We estimate other pupils, about 4, use Scotts Drive/Carlisle Road. So at least 20 pupils (over 14% of the 144 total) are excluded from the School’s traffic measurement.

In our view the omission from the school’s evidence and modelling of 14% or more of the total number of pupils is a significant gap in its methodology and produces a distortion that invalidates its conclusions and predictions. The school propose a process of continued monitoring in the future, which of course would have to include use of all four access points to be meaningful.

There is also no consideration in the School's evidence of the safety aspects of use of Wensleydale Gardens or Scotts Drive/Carlisle Road cul-de-sacs for pupils or road users. This use only started when the school recently opened up the Carlisle Park gate. We have had one recent incident where a parent became enraged at being asked to move a car away when it was blocking a resident's driveway, and the parent then drove up and down Wensleydale Gardens far too fast. The police were informed. Parents doing three point turns is also a hazard. Pavements are on one side of the road only in both the stretch in Wensleydale Gardens near the Carlisle Park gate and in Scotts Drive in the section where parents park, and in both cases the result is that pedestrians often walk down the middle of the road.

Further, this use of Wensleydale Gardens would increase the risks of allowing either construction or emergency access via Wensleydale Gardens.

Reversion to the Gloucester Road gate

We also think it right to point out that in spite of the school's efforts to divert access to alternative - and more distant - routes, the tendency for parents is always to revert to using Gloucester Road, whether because of wet weather or other factors. This is not recognised or included in the school's traffic evidence or modelling, making it an inaccurate description of traffic at present and an unsound basis for modelling the future. Similarly, parents are asked by the school not to park in Wensleydale Gardens for drop off or pick up, but they do, on a daily basis.

Conclusion

The residents ask the Council to bear all these points in mind when considering this application. The school's traffic evidence is seriously flawed in a number of ways (as both our experts and we ourselves have pointed out) and is not a sound basis on which to grant permission for a building with capacity for over 200 pupils. The school's suggestion that this should go

ahead on the basis of monitoring does not represent an adequate method of control, made worse by the unsound nature of the evidence they have lodged. We are advised that planning conditions on numbers would be of doubtful enforceability. The residents are very concerned that granting permission on this application would produce a situation where the school's expansion and the traffic and safety problems in the roads adjoining the site would not be adequately controlled and would be against Council policy.

22nd November 2013