



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Sean Harriss
Chief Executive
Harrow Council
PO Box 57
Civic Centre
Station Road
Harrow
Middx.
HA1 2XF

6 August 2020

Our Ref: GT41258

Dear Mr Harriss,

Re: Special TARSAP Meeting 10th August 2020

I am writing to you with further urgent correspondence regarding the proposed changes to George V Avenue, Harrow, which I understand will be considered during a special meeting of TARSAP next week.

As you will be aware, I have previously raised concerns the Headteacher, teaching staff and Chair of Governors of Nower Hill High School have informed me of in relation to the Council's plans to make alterations to George V Avenue. The school staff are concerned that the changes planned using Transport for London's (TfL) London Streetspace Programme, will have a negative impact on the provision of parking, which school staff and parents are reliant on. Indeed, I understand the school community would like to formally oppose any restrictions on parking along George V Avenue, which I would like the meeting to be fully aware of and take into careful consideration whilst deliberating on this matter next week. I would be grateful, therefore, if you would ensure that the contents of this letter are formally taken into account at this imminent meeting.

I understand that the current proposal entails the introduction of a 24 hour no waiting restriction along the length of George V Avenue, which will prevent road parking along the road concerned. With 2000 pupils and 250 staff, with access to only limited on-site parking, changes to George V Avenue will result in the loss of the current parking provision that many members of the school community rely on. The school fears this loss will inevitably force those needing to park close to the school into utilising neighbouring residential roads, causing congestion and reducing the availability of parking for local residents.

I also understand the school community expects the removal of road parking along George V Avenue will create issues beyond the school day, during parents' evenings, concerts and other such events when parents and carers will again be required to park on neighbouring residential roads. This could lead to difficulties for local residents, but the school also fears this will adversely affect parental attendance at such events, which could negatively impact the school's current high levels of parental engagement, which the school has worked very hard to achieve.

I am also of the understanding that the Council hope that the issues caused by the planned changes can be negated by staff, pupils and parents utilising public transport and reducing their reliance on personal vehicles. In light of the ongoing Covid-19 risks from shared spaces like public transport, and the need for parking in close proximity to the school for disabled school staff and pupils, I would also like the committee to take into consideration that such an expectation is not feasible for everyone to meet. The loss of the current parking will place further pressures on the school, at a time when schools are already facing exceptional

difficulties returning to operating as normal. Indeed, the school understands the Government's Covid-19 guidance actively discourages staff from using public transport on their return to work in September. Thus, although some staff live close enough to the school to take up walking, cycling or using public transport, for the vast majority this would simply not be feasible. Headteacher, Louise Voden has informed me that she is also concerned about the effect the parking issue will have on the school's ability to recruit and retain staff who need to drive to school. I would appreciate the committee giving particular consideration to this situation - the crux of this issue.

I welcome the funding from TfL, and like the Council, am in favour of improving and increasing the cycling provision in our Borough, as well as encouraging the public to shift towards greener and shared modes of transport. However, I also recognise and sympathise with the understandable issues and reasonable points raised by the school. As such, I would like to see the Council utilise the funding and implement their plans for increasing cycling provision, but whilst finding a parking solution that mitigates the likely difficulties that the current plans would cause the school and its community.

I would be grateful for the committee's careful consideration of the objections to the current plans from the school community, as well as the possible future issues for local residents, should the school's parking issues spread into the neighbouring roads. I would welcome their efforts finding a solution to this issue that meets the needs of the school community, neighbouring residents, cyclists and the wider public.

I would be grateful for your assistance ensuring the above is taken into account by the committee. I would also appreciate if you would provide me with an update on the outcome of the meeting, which I could also pass on to Ms Voden.

Please could you also include my reference number on all correspondence.

Thank you for your continued assistance with this urgent matter.

Yours sincerely



Gareth Thomas MP
Harrow West