

COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

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Land to the Rear of 42-100 Tollgate Road & 42 Tollgate Road, Colney Heath

CD 9.21

date	Issue version	Revision
22 Aug 2023	1	Issue to Planning Inspectorate

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Colney Heath Parish Council Rule 6 Party

Planning Inquiry

PINS Ref : APP/B1930/W/23/3323099
LPA REF: [5/2022/1988](#)

1 SUMMARY

Colney Heath is a village whose infrastructure does not provide a sustainable way of life for residents. This is because public transport links are poor, active transport options are extremely limited and essential services are almost entirely lacking. Residents are obliged to use cars for the purposes of travel to school and work, for shopping (including food shopping) and access to healthcare and other facilities.

2 EDUCATION

2.1 Pre-School Education

2.1.1 The pre-school Treasure Tots, held in the Village Hall, is 800m from the site. The walking routes assessment (CD 9.18) identifies this route as unsatisfactory, scoring only 23 or 57.5% and therefore below a satisfactory standard of 70%.

2.2 Primary Education

2.2.1 The only school in the village is Colney Heath School and Nursery which is 1125m from the site. It is currently operating at or near capacity, with only some years having one or two spare places. However, with a 100 dwelling development in the village having been approved, the school is likely soon to be oversubscribed and unable to take all the village children. None of the alternative primary schools is within acceptable walking distance for children of this age group, nor on a bus route, and they are therefore only accessible by car.

2.3 Secondary Education

2.3.1 Most parents in Colney Heath wish their children to attend a secondary school in St. Albans, and many, but by no means all, are successful; in 2022, 17 of 28 children were allocated a place in a preferred school, mostly in St Albans. Of the 13 possible schools, 9 are in St Albans; some of these, are reasonably close to the 305 bus route and are therefore accessible. Other schools in St Albans, however, are not accessible by bus and, as the most direct cycle routes are considered to be dangerous (CD 9.17) and walking distances too great, travel by car is the only alternative. Of the 4 other possible schools only one has a suitable bus service.

2.3.2 It should be added that in most cases the available bus service is suitable for a standard school day but is unlikely to be of use to children staying after school for sports and other activities.

2.3.3 The nearest secondary school is Nicholas Breakspear School in Colney Heath Lane, some 3200m from the site. As a single religion (Catholic) school this has restrictions on its intake. The pavement assessment (CD 9.18) identifies this as an unsatisfactory route for walking and the cycling assessment (CD 9.17) identifies it as high risk.

2.3.4 Set out below are the distances from the proposed entrance to the site (No. 42 Tollgate Road, AL4 0PY) to the nearest schools (Hertfordshire County Council data).

School Name	Town	School Type	Phase	Gender/Faith	Distance (m)	Is it the nearest school?
Nicholas Breakspear Catholic School	St Albans	Academy	Secondary	Co-educational Roman Catholic	2860.6	No
Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School	Hatfield	Academy	Secondary	Girls	3013.4	No
Onslow St Audrey's School	Hatfield	Academy	Secondary	Co-educational	3374.3	Yes
Beaumont School	St Albans	Academy	Secondary	Co-educational	3899.6	No
Samuel Ryder Academy	St Albans	Academy	All Through	Co-educational	4135.6	No
Chancellor's School	Brookmans Park	Academy	Secondary	Co-educational	4781.2	No
Verulam School	St Albans	Academy	Secondary	Boys	4950.2	No
Sandringham School	St Albans	Academy	Secondary	Co-educational	5447.2	No
Loreto College	St Albans	Academy	Secondary	Girls Roman Catholic	5696.1	No
Dame Alice Owen's School	Potters Bar	Academy	Secondary	Co-educational	5945.8	No

2.3.5 It can be seen that some are faith schools, either single sex or co-educational, and therefore not available to all children. The appellant promotes the proximity of the Links Academy in St Albans to the development. The Links Academies in St Albans and in Hatfield are Pupil Referral Units for a small number of children with complex social and emotional needs, and therefore not appropriate for the vast majority of children.

2.3.6 The distances given in the table above are "as the crow flies". The Hatfield schools are on the other side of the A1(M) and can only be reached via the underpass. Onslow St Audrey's is the school with the least demand, is non-faith and mixed sex. It is therefore often allocated to village children.

2.3.7 Appendix I contains travel plans for Onslow St Audrey's school.

2.3.8 Many of the schools in the table above are, or are close to being, oversubscribed. Many also have very small catchment areas. Beaumont School, for example, has always been a priority school for Colney Heath children and one of the easier schools to reach by bus or bicycle. It is almost 4,000m away but consistently has a tiny catchment area - just 840m in 2022. The recently approved Boissy Park development (5/2022/2557) will put a further 40 dwellings between Colney Heath children and a number of their nearest schools; indeed, these new dwellings are on the doorstep of Nicholas Breakspear School. Along with the 100 dwellings to be built at Bullens Green Lane, these properties will exacerbate pressure on school places yet further.

2.3.9 The table below indicates the demand for places in the 13 possible schools in 2023.

School	No. of applicants vs. no. of students admitted (2023 data)	No. of applicants ranking school as 1st choice vs. no. of students admitted (2023 data)	Was the school oversubscribed with regard to first preference applications
Nicholas Breakspear Catholic School	589 applicants for 180 places	184 first choice applicants for 180 places	Yes
Bishop Hatfield Girls School	496 applicants for 150 places	200 applicants for 150 places	Yes
Beaumont School	1269 applicants for 210 places	349 applicants for 210 places	Yes
Onslow St Audrey's	201 applicants for 150 places	127 applicants for 150 places	No
Samuel Ryder Academy	789 applicants for 120 places	145 applicants for 120 places	Yes
Chancellor's School	676 applicants for 210 places	244 applicants for 210 places	Yes
St Albans Girls School	779 applicants for 240 places	228 applicants for 240 places	No
Marlborough School	676 applicants for 212 places	205 applicants for 212 places	No
Townsend School	303 applicants for 150 places	90 applicants for 150 places	No

Verulam Boys School	435 applicants for 186 places (changing to 150 places moving forward)	90 applicants for 186 places (changing to 150 places moving forward)	No
Sandringham School	1064 applicants for 240 places	294 applicants for 240 places	Yes
Loreto College (Catholic Girls school)	454 applicants for 150 places	126 applicants for 150 places	No
Dame Alice Owen's School (partially selective - entrance exams)	727 applicants for 200 places	339 applicants for 200 places	Yes

Source: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/schools-and-education/admissions/application-and-allocation-statistics-secondary-and-upper-2023-24-1-march-2023-pdf-1.8mb.pdf>

2.3.10 An important consideration is the possibility of social harm to Colney Heath children who consider themselves part of the St Albans community but are having to go to secondary school in Potters Bar, Hatfield, Brookmans Park and even, in a very few cases, as far as Stevenage, leaving their friends and community behind. The same will soon be true for primary age children in the village who would reasonably expect to attend the village school.

3.0 ENTERTAINMENT

3.0.1 There are no restaurants, entertainment establishments, cinemas or theatres within a reasonable walking or cycling distance of the development and no public transport in the evenings or on Sundays.

4.0 RELIGION

4.0.1 St Marks Church of England Parish Church, Colney Heath is the only place of worship within a reasonable walking or cycling distance of the proposed site. There is no public transport on Sundays to take churchgoers to the nearest services.

APPENDIX 1

Travel to Schools

According to Google Maps, Onslow St Audrey's School is a minimum of a 57 minute (2.8 mile) walk if you are prepared to walk through the A1 underpass (not something that most parents would allow their children to do, particularly in the dark or heavy rain) see pavement assessment or a 1hr 13min (3.7mile) walk along the A414 and through Hatfield. The acceptable maximum distance for children of this age group to walk is 3 miles or 4.83km.

Walking routes:

Route	Time	Distance
via Woods Ave	57 min	2.8 miles
via Great North Rd./A1000	1 hr 4 min	3.2 miles
via N Orbital Rd/A414	1 hr 13 min	3.7 miles

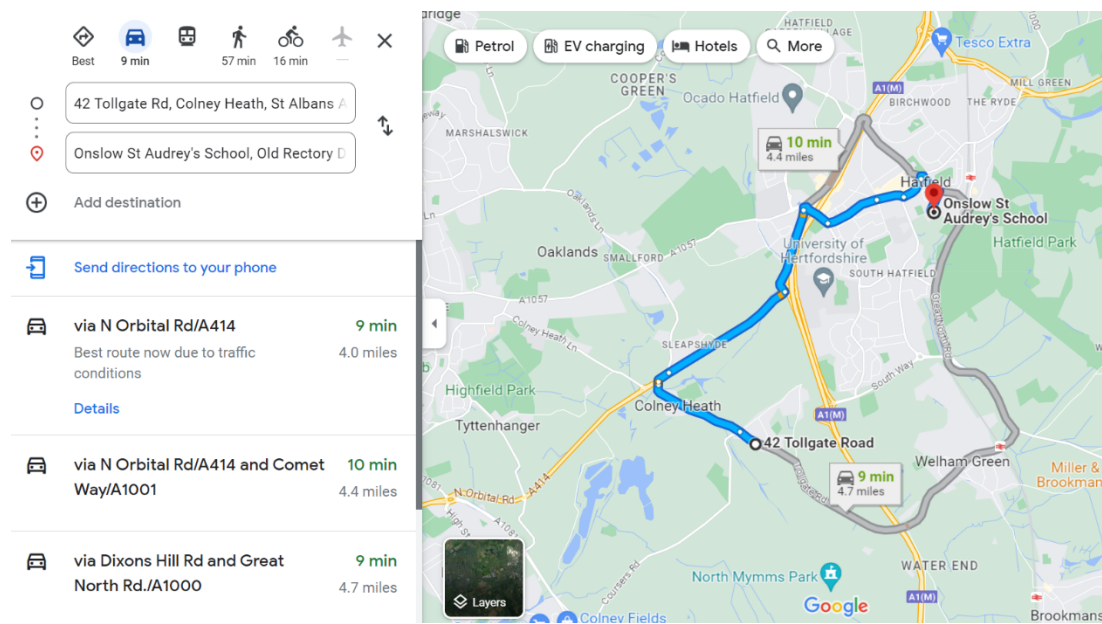
To cycle, avoiding the underpass and unlit roads, adds an additional mile to the route and should take 22 minutes for an adult to cycle the 3.7 miles.

Cycling routes:

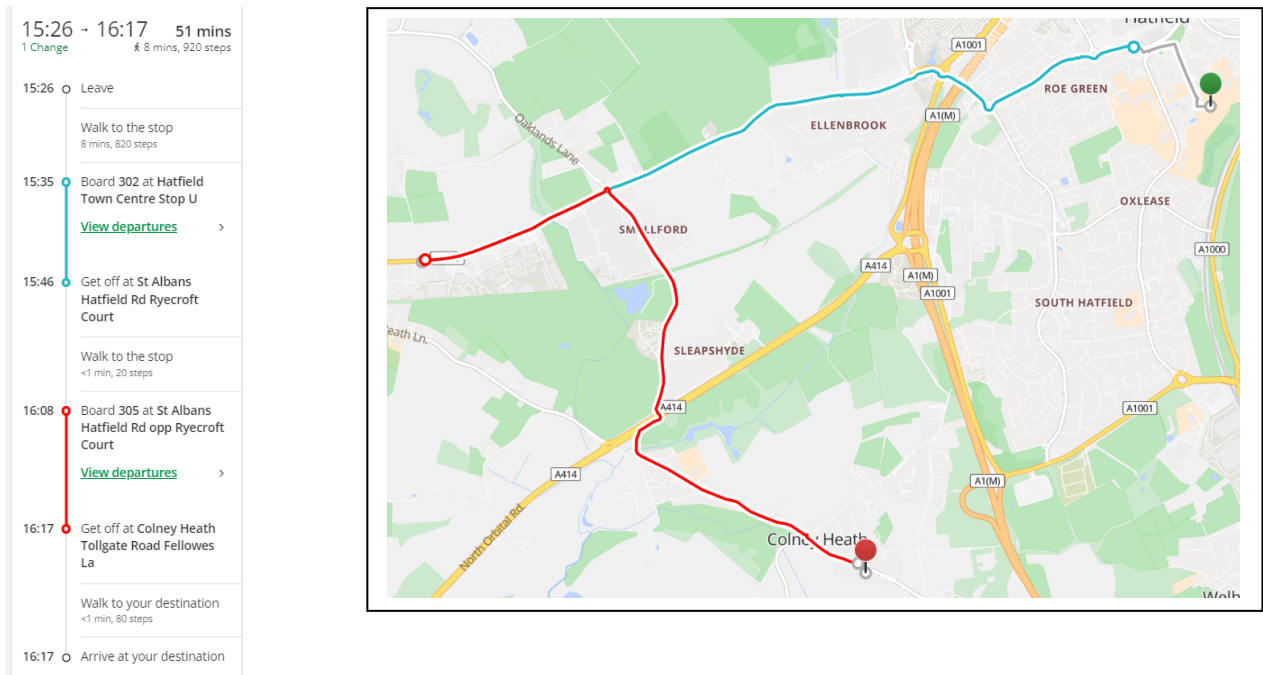
Route	Time	Distance
via 61	22 min	3.9 miles

By car, Onslow St Audrey's is over four miles away.

Car routes:

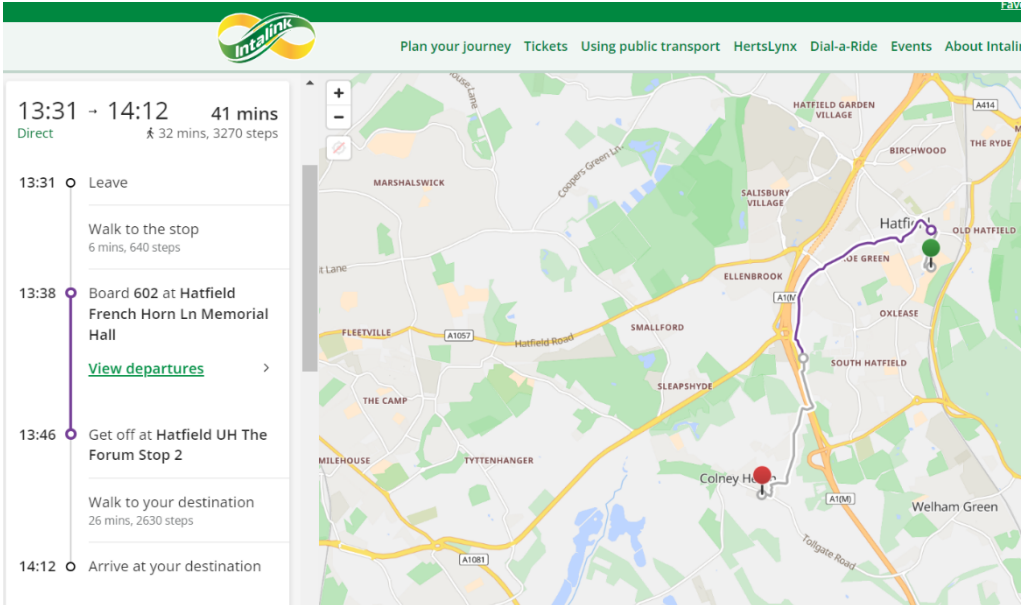


Travelling by bus is possible, but difficult. According to the Intalink website, to get home from school on Friday 22nd September 2023, it would take 51 minutes, including 8 mins of walking and two bus journeys.

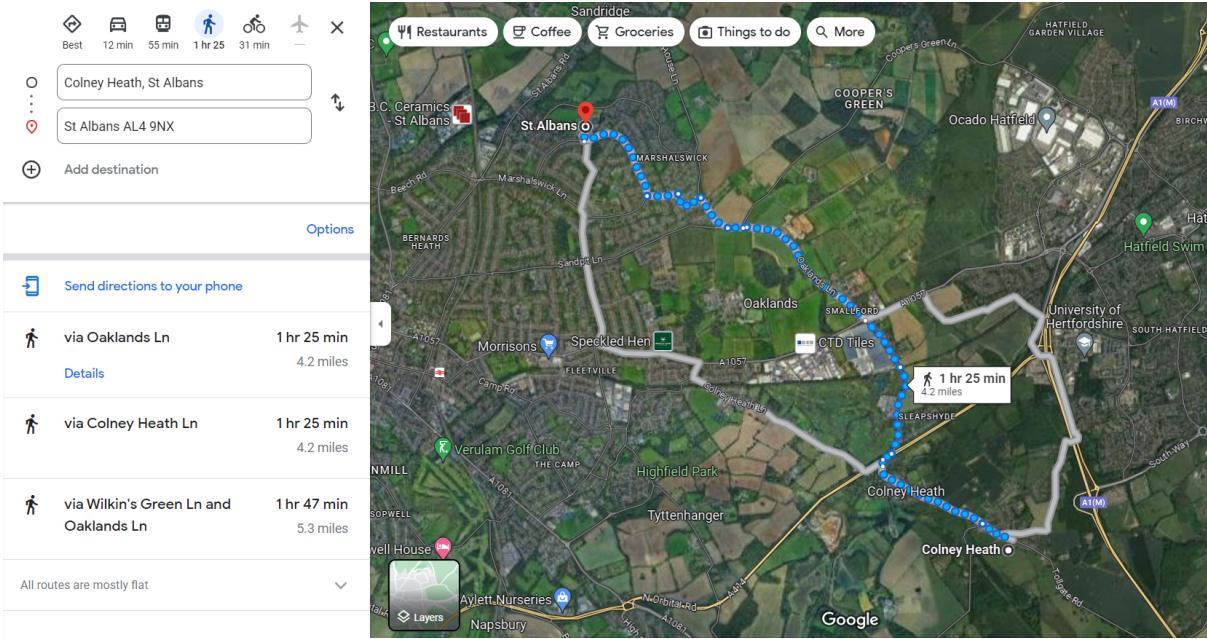


The next bus would be 38 mins later and take 41 minutes (32 mins of which are walking, including through the A1(M) underpass). It hardly seems worth paying a bus fare for nine minutes on the bus.

Typical journey times range from Onslow St Audrey's to AL4 0PY range from 36-55 minutes, depending on the time of day. All require significant amounts of walking, or multiple buses.



Sandringham School is popular with parents, as can be seen from the table in 2.3.9 above. However, its location is such that bus travel to the school is difficult.



Walking to the school takes 1 hour and 25 minutes, which is well beyond an acceptable distance. Travel by car is the only realistic option for this school.

Best 12 min 55 min 1 hr 25 31 min

O Colney Heath, St Albans
 St Albans AL4 9NX
 Add destination

Leave now Options

Send directions to your phone

via Oaklands Ln **12 min**
 Fastest route now due to traffic conditions 4.4 miles
[Details](#)

via Colney Heath Ln **13 min**
4.5 miles

Explore St Albans

