



BROADLAND
Cluster of Schools

COLTISHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL
ST. JOHN'S CLOSE
COLTISHALL
NORWICH
NR12 7HA

Dan Mckeown

www.coltishall.norfolk.sch.uk

office@coltishall.norfolk.sch.uk



Tel: 01603 737481

Tel: 01603 736 118

GNLP Team – by e-mail

22nd March 2018

Dear GNLP Team,

Greater Norwich Local Plan and Coltishall Primary School

On behalf of the Governing Board of Coltishall Primary School, we are writing to express grave concern about the possibility of further greenfield housing development (GNLP0265 and GNLP0388) on or near Rectory Road, Coltishall. School concerns centre primarily on two issues: safety and capacity.

Safety

Our school community already faces a series of safety and access challenges. We are situated in a cul-de-sac adjacent to the village medical practice. The amount of manoeuvring traffic is therefore already of concern. Rectory Road itself is a designated Speedwatch site and bus route and suffers from alternating congestion and speeding through the day. It is not uncommon for cars to mount the pavement to avoid or get around buses and bin lorries. Our 'safe route to school' from the Ling Way estate crosses a dangerous road, made ever more dangerous by the development of housing in North Walsham for people commuting (often at illegal speed) through our village to Norwich. It is already the subject of a bid to the Parish Partnership Scheme to introduce safer crossing and has recently attracted unwelcome media attention through dashcam footage of a 'near miss'.

The school has previously expressed concern about the proposed development of thirty houses at the north end of Rectory Road. This concern was ignored in granting the site outline planning permission last year. The consequences of that decision are yet to be realised, but our expectation is that Rectory Road will become even more dangerous for our children than it already is.

It is in this context that we read the following text of the site suitability appraisal for site GNLP0388 (and similar wording appears in relation to GNLP0265):

"Initial highway evidence has indicated that an acceptable vehicular access is likely from St John's Close. Also it is believed that, subject to suitable footpath provision, any potential impact on the functioning of local roads could be reasonably mitigated."

The Governing Board finds this to be both inexplicable and, frankly, complacent of the safety of our children.



WE PROMOTE STAFF WELL-BEING



Capacity

Coltishall Primary School is a one-form entry school, which currently educates around 205-210 students, depending on in-year movement and appeals. Our site contains two large mobile buildings already, one of which is used as a classroom and one as a staffroom and library. This accommodation is far from ideal as we suffer from regular heating issues. The staffroom was flooded during recent bad weather as an internal pipe fractured leaving 10cm of water across the whole floor space.

The additional 30 houses already planned for Rectory Road will place a significant additional burden on the school, which will either mean that we have to find ways of expanding accommodation, once more at the cost of the children's play and leisure areas or we will have to disappoint families from our extensive rural catchment to Horstead and Belaugh who have always sent their children to our school. The fact is that they will live further away from the school than the new development, which will stand some 300 metres away.

These are issues that the school will simply have to address as the decision to develop, for better or worse, has been made. Naturally, the Governing Board and staff will do everything to ensure that the outstanding quality of education at the school is maintained notwithstanding any loss of facilities due to buildings expansion.

However, we can only express our dismay and disbelief at the prospect of further housing development on or near Rectory Road even being considered at this time.

Conclusion

We are aware that Coltishall Parish Council will be writing to you on behalf of parishioners to object to any further housing development in the vicinity of Rectory Road. We have therefore chosen not to raise wider issues in relation to this development in any detail. However, we would wish to point out on behalf of our children that they have a reasonable expectation of living in a Broads village and attending a rural community school. That expectation is being eroded by the actual and proposed development of greenfield sites and the associated congestion it brings to our constrained infrastructure. We would ask you to think very carefully about changing the character of our community and our school in the face of widespread local opposition.

Yours sincerely

Mr Dan Mckeown Headteacher	Bob Grindrod Chairman, on behalf of the Governing Board
-------------------------------	--