

Comments on Bressingham & Fersfield Parish Council's

South Norfolk Village Cluster Plan. SN4036 . SN3019 . SN4037

Location in Norfolk: South Norfolk particularly the area that borders Suffolk can in no way, or by any stretch of imagination, be considered Greater Norwich, Diss lies 25 miles south of Norwich and Bressingham is a village outside Diss and lies on the Norfolk Suffolk border. While South Norfolk Council and Broadland Council work closely together. Broadland is a good deal closer to Norwich. To access rail connections at Diss a bike, car or taxi will be needed to reach the station, the bus service through Bressingham does not currently provide a service that makes connecting to onward transport options easy.

Regards location, size / density of preferred sites under consideration:-

The existing proposal of possible sites involves a disproportionate concentration in a small area with nothing elsewhere – how is this a good idea?

There are NO housing estates in Bressingham, all existing housing and small developments occur along roadside (ribbon style) and those currently living on High Road, School Road including the Primary School and Fersfield Road will be overwhelmed and disproportionately affected.

Topography: It is surely possible that additional development in fields is contra indicated due to the topography of the area, being on the side of a river valley, hence the ribbon style pattern of housing that exists in Bressingham village today??

2 of the 3 sites situated in close proximity to the school are owned by the same people, in the affected area we hope how ever ill considered the proposal to situate ALL the 3 sites in one small area is not the result of any private arrangement or favour but simply a desk job decision following the requirement that and I quote from Village Clusters summary, 'each one should be centred around the local primary school', how very convenient for those villages that do not have primary schools. To date children have managed to get to a school in a neighbouring village even when they have a school in their own village (Mellis and Gislingham Suffolk) why is close proximity so required?????

School Road is a country lane which broadens and narrows along its length requiring traffic to pull in and wait while traffic approaching from other direction passes. School Road inclines from the Waveney River valley, A1066, with an open ditch along part of its eastern side. The existing drainage on the road, along the length is inadequate and currently water run off travels down the road, High Road is the same, which during cold winter snaps become icy and a hazard. Road edges are in a bad way through heavy amount of traffic and large heavy lorries so 'patching' is everywhere and doesn't last long because current solution is a short term fix.

Quiet Lane status and OS Spot Height Marker: Fersfield Road is designated a 'Quiet Lane' as is Folly Lane (although the post marking it as such has disappeared and needs replacing) beyond this Lady's Lane also a 'Quiet Lane'. Just north of High Road, Bressingham at junction with School Road, **Folly Lane has an Ordnance Survey spot height marker indicating a high point from there the land slopes south down to A1066 and this is the route run off water will take.**

Has any consideration been given to these designated Quiet Lanes and the impact of an overwhelming number of homes (all likely to have at least one vehicle and no doubt more) proposed within such close proximity of Bressingham Primary School in the proposals?

Alternative Sites: Why have no areas along the A1066 (Low Road Bressingham) been considered as possible new development sites? There is one particular plot which appears to be derelict / unused, north side of road adjacent to or part of Nursery site already with concrete roads for vehicular access, and Bluepump Farm, where Samson's Lane runs north from A1066. Alternatively smaller sites within the village boundaries between High Road and Bressingham Road that could be used for infill housing with some existing pavement for pedestrians. Why is nothing being suggested along Common Road or in the village of Fersfield that has a good road to A1066 near South Lopham?

Local Primary School currently at capacity. In addition concerns at drop off and pick up of children to and from school already presents pedestrian safety and traffic issues despite a number of parents parking at village hall and walking to school from there to relieve some of traffic congestion at road junction, and also in consideration of the existing housing near the school and cars belonging to residents parked on roadside, during peak times.

Has Bressingham Primary School been approached and asked for their feedback on these planning proposals?

Increasing pollution in the area from additional traffic will have an impact on air quality and on school children through airborne particles in the playground and through open windows in to classrooms, we are still decades away from all electric vehicles.

A1066 speed limit 50mph a lot of traffic exceeding the limit: Vehicular Access at junction on School Road junction(s) with A1066 (Low Road) is poor, although speed limit on A1066 is 50mph vehicles often exceed this and in reality it would be appropriate and an improvement if speed limit was 40mph with flashing speed awareness measures to draw drivers attention to this NOW.

Environmental Impact and Climate Change: Increasingly in the news with more extreme weather events happening around the world and in the UK, flooding is a particular concern.

At the moment shortlisted site **SN4037** and preferred site **SN4036** have remained wild for at least the last 15 years during this time they have become invaluable havens for a growing diversity of wildlife, flora and fauna and **provide a natural based solution for tackling water management in these times of climate change, the Council should be preserving grasslands and meadows to protect the environment, prevent flooding events and help with carbon capture, not building developments on it.** In the last 10 years I have never seen Wortham Ling and surrounding Waveney river valley flooded to the degree it has been this year and the length of time it remained so.

These wild areas are already absorbing 'run off ' thereby helping to tackle absorption of rainwater and reducing the impact of increased flooding in the Waveney Valley as well as the homes at the southern end of School Road and along the A1066;

These 2 sites are now precious wildlife habitats and just as important when the surrounding area is one mainly of agriculture with broad grass margins predominantly devoid of diversity although helpful for hedgerows and their inhabitants. Will Norfolk Wildlife Trust be invited to carry out site visits and make their observations? Ecology survey required.

SN3019SL has an existing footpath running along a small section of School Road western boundary, this site is agricultural land providing food to feed the nation.

Why has proximity to a school in the overall plan over ridden all other considerations, depending on the type of housing proposed, surely proximity to a school isn't what everyone needing a home is looking for?

Why aren't planners considering smaller plots of land where there is better access to an arterial road, IF residents need to access the school, which I have already mentioned is at capacity, some pupils and their parents already use country footpaths and bridle ways to journey to and from school? The amount of work to make School Road and the junctions at either end of it suitable for the increase in traffic and more importantly worsening issues relating to run off water that your current proposals will be hugely expensive for the public purse. There are better roads connecting to the A1066.

Are the Planning Department aware that all Bressingham residents, Common Road, Bressingham Road, High Road, Baynards Green use School Road to get out of the village whether or not they are heading west or east on A1066?

Preserve wildlife habitats to provide places where wild animals can be protected, bring up their young safely and South Norfolk can be seen and be proud that they are committed to moderate the impact of climate change, particularly not to increase run off causing flooding issues by tarmacking over what is currently providing a really good nature based flood prevention solution.

In Conclusion I write this as Bressingham experiences it's 4th heavy and prolonged downpour of rain today, water on the High Road runs like a river towards the cross roads and down School Road and I wonder how South Norfolk Council will explain the sense of these proposals to Bressingham residents as and when increasingly frequent flooding events affect them and their homes at the southern end of School Road and the poor drainage channels under the A1066 and beyond.

I think if you lived near the top of the sides of a river valley you'd understand the concerns.