

**WEEK 2 PLACES AND SITES – NORTH WALSHAM WEST**

I want to begin this submission with a copy of a letter the Chair of Coltishall Parish Council sent to the Minister of State for Transport:

Right Honourable Mark Harper MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
Great Minster House  
Horseferry Road  
London

11 October 2023

Dear Sir

My name is Richard Germany, I am the chair of Coltishall Parish Council, a small Broadland Village north of Norwich which comes under the jurisdiction Broadland & South Norfolk District Council (B&SNDC). A few miles north of our village, along the B1150, lies the town of North Walsham which comes under the purview of North Norfolk District Council (NNDC). You will glean from this that the parish of Coltishall lies along the boundary of the two local authorities mentioned above.

NNDC have produced a local plan which includes an extremely large development and link road for North Walsham. The plan, I believe, is presently with the Planning Inspectorate. The development will increase the size of North Walsham by almost 40% and thus includes a considerable amount of highway improvement to cater for the attendant increases in traffic including HGVs. Meanwhile a few miles down the road and over the administrative boundary through our very small high street and over our single carriageway bridge spanning the River Bure no improvements whatsoever have been proposed other than a vague reference to offsite improvements to the strategic road network.

Traffic volumes passing through our extremely narrow high street are already at an intolerable level with larger vehicles and HGVs regularly mounting pavements in order to get passed each other. This practice, which is a daily occurrence, is posing real danger to the safety of other road users, pedestrians and cyclists. Vehicles are damaged every week and I am fearful that it is only a matter of time before someone is seriously injured or worse.

We are so concerned with this situation that Coltishall and the neighbouring village of Horstead have formed a B1150 Special Interest Group (SIG), chaired by our local District Councillor, to try and engage with NNDC. The main issue is the reluctance of NNDC to consult with B&SNDC despite being obliged to do so by National Planning Policy. It is obvious that the strategic road network outside the development area of North Walsham is woefully inadequate to cope with the significant increases in traffic volumes. Our SIG, local and district councillors have tried repeatedly to address this issue with NNDC but have been met with a combination of silence and delaying tactics.

This development is simply unsustainable from a highway perspective, our narrow aging roads and single carriageway bridges are overwhelmed now and further increases will present an unacceptable danger to the health and safety of our communities. I request that

you use your position as Minister for Transport to intervene and force NNDC to reconsider their plans such that they are safer for the people of Coltishall and Horstead.

Yours faithfully

Richard Germany  
Chair  
Coltishall Parish Council

The fact that this letter had to be written is a sad indictment of the highway situation in Coltishall and Horstead. NNDC's plan to develop North Walsham and built a western link road that leads onto the B1150 will spell disaster for our communities.

The B1150 Special Interest Group along with numerous concerned residents have been campaigning to raise awareness. Our local councillor has been interviewed by TV, articles have been published in local press and the village magazine. A coordinated social media strategy has provided large amounts of evidence to show that the highway infrastructure (B1150) through Coltishall and Horstead is dangerously inadequate now and can in no way sustain the increase in traffic that the North Walsham Development will produce. A recent Change.org petition to highlight our plight already has over 500 signatures. Our community has been represented at numerous council meetings in attempt to get the message across. NNDC and a consortium of developers were forced to conduct a public consultation in Coltishall on the 6 December 2023 the outcome of which is as yet not know as this piece was written on 4 December.

The facts are simple and proven. The B1150 through Coltishall and Horstead is inadequate for the volume of type of traffic using it now. Every day HGVs and other large vehicles mount the pavements, contrary to rule 145 of the Highway Code, putting pedestrians and other road user in real danger. There are also several pinch points where large vehicles cannot pass each other without using the oncoming lane. The bridges over the River Bure and Bure Valley Railway are also a concern given the tonnage of traffic toing and froing over them every day. Congestion and damage to property occurs on a daily basis. There is also the issue of a deteriorating air quality and noise pollution for the residents and businesses in the High Street.

I submit that the plan to development North Walsham is unsustainable, from a highway perspective, and poses a serious threat to the health and safety of the residents of Coltishall and Horstead. NNDC have gone to great lengths to negate the effect of increased traffic in and around the new development but have spectacularly failed to apply the same considerations to communities just

over the border. I can assure you the traffic problems do not somehow disappear when they cross of the boundary to B&SNDC.

Solution. The obvious solution is to connect the proposed North Walsham western link road to a relief road that will by-pass not only Coltishall and Horstead but other similarly affected communities such as Hoveton & Wroxham. This would not only solve the current problems but future proof highway integrity for further development in North Norfolk.

Bill Musson

B1150 Special Interest Group Member & Coltishall resident.