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HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Ms Mairi McClean
Chief Executive
Northampton Borough Council
The Guildhall
St Giles Sq
Northampton
NN1 1DA



Sally Keeble MP
Northampton North

Our ref: NHLT5833

30 August 2006

Dear Ms McClean

Mr Brian Canavan of 21 Spinney Hill Rd, Northampton, NN3 – development proposals for former Parklands middle school site

I am writing again on behalf of Parklands residents association about the proposals to build on the site of the former Parklands middle school site.

Residents have expressed objections to the proposals to develop the site in general. They also have some very specific objections which are as follows:

- i) there are I believe proposals to build over 100 homes on the site, with access via two routes, one off Devon Way, and one off Goodwood Avenue. Both of these are quiet residential roads serving one and two storey houses with a substantial number of retired people. There are also three schools in the area, and therefore a lot of children walking around the streets. There are real concerns about the consequences of the new development for traffic in the area and for pedestrian safety.
- ii) In addition there is a Tesco shop at the entrance to this residential area. It creates a large amount of traffic in a very restricted area, and it is a source of constant amazement that there has not yet been a serious accident in the area. There does not seem to have been attention paid to the impact of extra traffic on this restricted area.
- iii) There does not seem to have been any discussion with residents or any proposals put forward to them about how the access to the site would be managed during site preparation and building. The prospect of heavy vehicles travelling around the area given the traffic issues set out above is a cause of real concern, and would need to be dealt with very carefully.

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- iv) The residents association is concerned about the loss of playing fields, and has approached the DFES about this. It appears that the relevant application has not yet been made about disposal of playing field.
- v) The residents association is concerned that it has not been kept informed about the timetabling of the application, and has not been consulted about the proposals or the planning application.
- vi) There should presumably be some benefit to the community from any planning approval – a section 106 agreement. The community has lost a community asset, and the extra housing will impact the environment. The residents expect to be consulted about the use of any funds from a section 106 agreement with the developers.

These are some of the concerns and issues that I flagged up in my earlier report on the disposal of school sites in my constituency – copies were sent to the borough and other authorities earlier this year. I am most concerned that despite this early warning of the need for care in the disposal of these sites, my constituents have not been properly consulted.

Last week I wrote in similar terms on behalf of Eastfield Residents Association which has had similar concerns about the handling of the disposal of the former St Gregory's School Site and part of the former St Mary's Middle School site.

Please could you look into this matter and let me know what steps are being taken by Northampton Borough Council over this site development.

I am writing in similar terms to the Northamptonshire Local Education Authority which owns the site concerned, the West Northamptonshire Urban Development Corporation which presumably has to take the planning decision, and also the DFES and DCLG which have an overview of these matters.

Yours sincerely,

SALLY KEEBLE MP
NORTHAMPTON NORTH
Cc Mr Canavan