

Planning Application 15/5637M

27 Houses School Lane Marton

Marton Parish Councils response to HSL's comments of 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016

FAO Louise Whinnett (Snook)

Dear Louise,

It is unclear what the applicant is attempting to convey in this document, they seem to be trying to justify their proposed housing development as a means of filling a shortfall in pupil numbers at Marton Primary School. If this is the case their arguments are both inaccurate and flawed.

Firstly we need to look at the actual numbers involved, the Edubase census of January 2015 shows the school has a capacity of 210 and at the time had 200 children, the shortfall is spread over 7 age groups. This will be soon updated but gives a general idea of the numbers involved. It is wrong to assume that pupil numbers are lower than capacity because of lack of housing. There are many reasons why parents choose schools, and in this case why they may prefer an alternative even if it is further away. Marton is a Church of England school & parents of other religions may choose one more appropriate to their beliefs, the latest Ofsted report is not favourable, plus many parents are concerned about the dangerous parking.

We now need to look at the catchment area, the applicant implies this is confined to the 7 villages listed, this is not the case as it also includes parts of Congleton to the South of Eaton. If you were to superimpose over the catchment area, developments with either recently granted planning permission or those sites allocated for development in the emerging Local Plan it becomes evident that not only could they fill Marton Primary School it will probably justify the building of a new school to accommodate the numbers.

The applicant yet again quotes the Head Teachers response to the community consultation exercise presumably believing that if you say it often enough then it will become fact. We have refuted this statement many times in the past, the simple truth is that the original response was ill advised & done without consulting the Governors who have on two subsequent occasions confirmed their support for the Parish Councils opposition to this development.

There are many reasons to justify development but to argue that Marton has more facilities than some of the surrounding villages is not one of them. The future housing requirements for Cheshire East are well documented in the latest version of the Local Plan which now states that there is no requirement for additional dwellings in the rural area.

Marton Parish Council