

03 December 2020

To Planning Services
Havant Borough Council
Civic Centre Road
Havant
PO9 2AX

via Email

Planning Application (App/20/01031) Lower Road Bedhampton

I would like to submit the following comments in objection to the above application.

As a grandmother who regularly visits the Brookside/Lower Road area, I agree with other complainants in relation to road safety issues, Lower Road with its bends and lack of pavements is dangerous. I love to take my grandchildren to school and to Bidbury Park but to do so is a real worry. This road was never designed to take the current level of traffic but any changes to mitigate the danger would mean the loss of the character of the whole area.

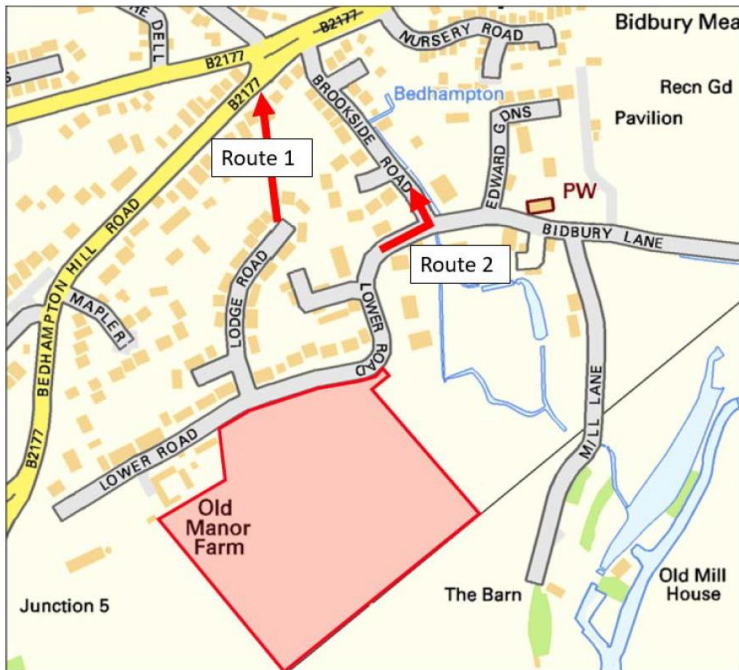
A walk around this area, with its historic homes and settings clearly illustrates the history of Bedhampton, the conservation area status recognises these buildings and the environment around them as important to Bedhampton, Havant and beyond. The comment from the Bedhampton Heritage Alliance, with their detailed understanding of the area's history, outlines the importance of protecting this area for now and for future generations. Development on this site is inappropriate.

Document SCI APPENDIX 1 which consists of a letter from Mrs D Haywood (Case Officer) to Mr G Beck (Agent) summarises the requirements as at 16 Jan 2018, this is a long letter that would seem to outline what would be expected for any development on the site. In the Development Engineer's section of the letter, it reads *"A footway will be need to be provided to Lodge Road within the proposed development in a form that will enable wider public use with the retention of the existing hedgerow and informal character of Lower Road; Lodge Road has an existing footway link to Bedhampton Hill and this existing route should be upgraded to provide a safe route for cyclists and pedestrians from the new development to the north."*

I was not aware that this footpath (ref 107) existed, so I decided to find it, this is not what I would call a footpath, more of a back alley and without widening into local gardens, it could never act as a cycleway, at the moment two pedestrians would struggle to pass in some places, let alone 2 push chairs or mobility scooters. It has hidden corners so people cannot see ahead and it does not have effective natural surveillance. I was unable to find any documentation from the appropriate authority giving details of plans to upgrade footpath 107 or how this could be achieved.

Even if improved, this route would be far from a pleasant walk/scoot/ bike to school or local shops especially during the morning rush hour as this would mean using Bedhampton Hill/Road for much longer. My view is that the inclusion of a walkway in the Bargate Homes' plan to link the development with Lodge Road and the Lodge Road footpath is just a distraction from the real issue, the dangerous conditions in Lower Road.

The Transport Statement's image 3.2 (reproduced below) "Main pedestrian routes from the development" is misleading in that it illustrates only two possible routes (via the footpath discussed above and via Brookside Road), which would be routes chosen to go to the nearest bus stop.



Source: Illustrated Extract of Figure T1

It fails to mention the Bidbury Lane/Bidbury Mead route that is shown below.



Route 1 is along Lodge Road using the alley to Bedhampton Hill Road

Route 2 is along Lower Road and then Brookside Road.

Route 3 is along Lower Road then Bidbury Lane and across Bidbury Mead the fact that this is not mentioned suggests that the survey failed to investigate the routes being used

From Lower Road, the natural way to get children to local schools or to go to local shops is via the safety of Bidbury Mead, from there, there are routes to Bedhampton Road giving access to proper traffic light-controlled crossings. It is also a natural place to take children to play, with swings, climbing frames etc. While it can be stressful accompanying young children along Lower Road and getting them across into Bidbury Lane, many parents do this, but with an extra 50 houses and the associated traffic, those that now walk may well decide that it is just too dangerous and add to the traffic by driving their children to school, a factor that I doubt has been taken into account in the assessments.

The Transport Statement image 4.4 (reproduced below) illustrates this danger, I would ask planners and members of the planning committee to place themselves in the position of a parent/grandparent with a pushchair and other children on foot, walking away from the camera and consider their situation. (The general rule is that you should walk into the traffic, but it is clearly not a possibility on this road).

Image 4.4 Lower Road 'between the bend' with no footway



You look out for traffic coming around the corner behind you, as a vehicle passes, another vehicle comes around the corner in front of you too fast/too wide, the vehicle that is overtaking you pulls to the left to avoid a collision.....

The local residents are mostly considerate, but there are now many more vehicles on local roads during the day, the move to on-line shopping increases the number of delivery vehicles, they often park inappropriately and are on tight delivery schedules which could increase the temptation for drivers to drive faster than they should. The Transport Statement goes into great detail with its statistics, but this is not about statistics it is about the reality of using this road as a shared space, it is about safety.

A development of 50 new homes will increase the risk to all road users, to suggest that, because no injury accidents have been reported, this shared space is safe, defies common sense. You only have to walk this route regularly to know how dangerous it clearly is.

The developers owe a duty of care to everyone using this road, they must show that a “*safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users*” National Planning Policy Framework June 2019 (paragraph 108) and that their development does not have “*an unacceptable impact on highway safety*”. (paragraph 109). In my opinion and that of local residents, they have totally failed to achieve this in their application. More vehicles in the area could result in a reduction in the numbers of walkers and cyclists and increase car use by current residents, even more worried for their safety and that of their families. This would be counterproductive to current campaigns to persuade people to use more environmentally friendly ways of travelling.

I would ask the planning committee to refuse this application

- To avoid increasing the safety risk.
- To protect the conservation area
- In the interests of the health and wellbeing of the current local residents, their visitors and the many cyclists and walkers who use these roads.

Yours sincerely

Name and Address Supplied.