

My objections to this proposed development fall into two categories.

Firstly road safety.

a) The small roundabout at the junction of Bedhampton Hill, Maylands Road and Brookside Road is already difficult to navigate , especially for those drivers who need to go from Lower Bedhampton towards the east, aiming for Havant, Leigh Park and Warblington . It cannot accommodate the extra traffic from the proposed development of 50 family houses which would be boosted not only by school runs but also inevitably by deliveries, especially given those increasingly generated by online shopping. The consequences for traffic emerging from Maylands Road and Portsdown Hill are obvious, while the resulting gridlock would encourage motorists to turn Lower Road and Kingscroft Lane into a 'rat run'.

b) Pedestrians are already at risk at the blind bends in Lower Road. This is a popular route for dog-walkers and cyclists who would be competing with the extra cars.

Secondly erosion of the conservation area.

Lower Road and Kingscroft Lane are the remnants of a sunken lane and together with Narrowmarsh Lane must have formed part of an ancient communication network. The latter must at least be the subject of an archaeological investigation before the development is taken any further. Given that St Thomas's Church is of at least Norman if not Anglo-Saxon foundation and that there is a scheduled monument west of Belmont Castle, namely Bevis's Grave and the adjacent Anglo-Saxon and early mediaeval cemetery, there may be evidence in Narrowmarsh Lane of life in the original settlement in this area.

In the period since 1960 when I moved here there have been changes which have taken away some of the character of Bedhampton, such as the demise of local businesses (grocer, butchers, greengrocer), the planting and house building on the western edge of Bidbury Mead and the enormous increase in road traffic. One of the delights of living in Bedhampton remains the possibility of escaping so quickly from the constant traffic of the main road to a rural area. The proposed development will go a long way to destroy that.