

Supplementary Information **Deputations**

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET
11 September 2019

Dear Councillor

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at meeting of the Cabinet, to be held on 11 September 2019 the following supplementary information that was unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No	Item
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7	<u>Old Bedhampton Conservation Area Appraisal</u> (Pages 1 - 12)
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Deputation – Edward Rees

Members, I address you today not only as a member of the Bedhampton Residents Alliance but as someone who was born and raised in the ward.

Bedhampton is my home, it is my family's home and I speak on behalf of my community and my neighbours.

The Bedhampton resident's alliance has one purpose and one purpose only. To promote, protect and enhance the historical and cultural characteristics of Bedhampton.

Old Bedhampton is one of the oldest and most precious areas of our Borough. For years it has been protected by the conservation area, and while the world has moved on around it. Old Bedhampton has been protected for the unrelenting forces of modernity.

For many years now the residents of Bedhampton have asked 'is the current conservation area fit for purpose. Does it truly encapsulate the cultural and historical importance of the area?' A question that has not been asked of this authority since the year I was born.

Indeed, it was five years ago that residents asked me if the council would deliver a review of the conservation area. Due to significant local government cuts and under the advice of the previous cabinet I was informed that no funds could be made available for the task.

I note paragraph 3.1 states 'The designation and review of Conservation Areas are an important part of the Councils statutory duty.' Perhaps not the case in 2014.

Despite this, community organisations funded this privately. What David Cameron would call 'his big society at work'

Members I will not quote aspects of policy or show you maps. I have every faith that you are in command of the facts to make an informed decision about what you shall vote on today.

To be clear the Bedhampton Resident's Alliance accepts the 9 recommendations set out in the management plan.

However, we look advise this cabinet of some further recommendations to be considered.

In summary, the conservation area should be extended to include Lower road, its verges, hedges some of which are over 100 years old and banks along with Narrow Marsh Lane and the railway bridge.

These are all part of the original historic network of lanes, which predate all of the current listed sites and buildings of local interest. They are all at least 300 years old and probably date back to the 13th century given the age of part of St. Thomas Church.

The importance of the historic architecture in Old Bedhampton is now well established. These historic routes and the Architecture are more valuable than the sum of their parts and it is now time to recognise and protect them as a whole.

Much debate has surrounded what is and what isn't a sunken lane. Lower Road is part of the original turnpike from Havant to Fareham and is without question a sunken lane.

This was proposed by Eimear Murphy the Planning and Conservation consultant but refuted on numerous occasions by officers.

To solve this matter Emeritus Professor John Boardman of Oxford University, the country's preeminent expert on sunken lanes visited the area to make a finding. I quote directly from Professor Broadman "This is perhaps not the best example of a sunken lane in the in the UK but certainly is part of an extensive historic network, arguably the best in Havant."

Despite Professor Broadman's credentials, officers have not agreed with this assessment and have described it as a carriage way taking two-way traffic. As you have all visited the site you will agree this is disingenuous as in parts it will only take single file traffic and the entire length of road has no pavement or pedestrian refuge.

On entering Lower Road in the west one certainly experiences a transition from the clamour of the Rusty Cutter roundabout to the tranquillity of Old Bedhampton. As one progresses eastward one passes The Old Manor Farm

complex 150 yards from the western edge of the current Conservation area. I have no doubt that you have noted the impressive historic architecture.

Historic England in their submission to the CAAMP consultation, 8th March 2019, state: "The informal semi-rural layout of the roads suggests that there is relatively little traffic through the conservation area and I assume that the place is relatively tranquil. If this is the case this needs to be described as character which is about experience which relates to sounds and activity as much as views."

It is hoped that it has been clearly demonstrated that Lower Road is part of historic network that enhances the core of the current Conservation area and why it requires more protection. To do nothing would allow creeping urbanisation which in turn will threaten to erode the integrity of the core of the Conservation area and undermine the character of a semirural village with an historic farming heritage.

I am the youngest active member of my community. There is perhaps a sense of irony that I stand in front of you today to protect its oldest treasure. I do this for no other reason that one day I hope my children will be able to enjoy this beautiful area as my parents and my grandparents did before me.

I ask you, no plead with you. Help me to preserve our past to protect our future.

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Deputation – Cllr Gary Robinson

Leader, Members of the cabinet.

As Councillors it is us that have a duty to determine our Conservations Areas and a responsibility to protect our heritage on behalf of the residents that elected us. Havant Borough currently has 14 Conservation Areas of various sizes and shapes with a large number overdue a review.

Over the last 12 months I have spent a considerable amount of time researching and reviewing the existing and proposed Conservation area in Old Bedhampton. I have not only worked with the residents but also the consultant who was contracted by the local community group following a recommendation by this Council. As you know our officers do not believe an extension to the current Conservation Area in the South West or South East meet the criteria of.....

‘Special Architectural OR, OR Historic interest’

I was deeply disappointed and somewhat surprised that in view of the fact that board members did not support the officers recommendation at Operations and Place Shaping Scrutiny back in July the papers remain unchanged for approval here today. As a council with a reasonably new Scrutiny arm, this is not how I or the local residents envisage this to happen. Surely the recommendation should have been modified.

The original report written by Eimear Murphy detailed a large number of points that seem to be overlooked by the officers’ report. Specifically, areas known as Donkey Meadow, Land owned by Portsmouth Water Company, Lower Road, the Land South of Lower

Road and Manor Farm Buildings. Around 90% of the experts' report was accepted but there is contention over a small proportion.

You may have heard or read about 'Sunken Lanes' are they, or aren't they?? The original officer's advice and response in the public consultation was that Lower Road is not Sunken. As there was so much uncertainty on this important point, I requested a visit from Professor Boardman of Oxford University who travelled specifically to review Kingscroft Lane and Lower Road and it was agreed on site that; Yes Both Kingscroft Lane and Lower Road ARE Sunken Lanes. They may not be good examples, but they ARE! I highlight that this is *both Kingscroft Lane aswell as Lower Road*, although you see Kingscroft is denoted in the papers. WHY??

I find this extraordinary as surely both Roads, according to the professor should hold the same historic value? These roads also make up the historic road network throughout the original settlement of Bedhampton. Even more that whilst they may not be great examples they are pretty much the only examples in Havant. To my knowledge there is only one other Sunken lane in the Borough and that is in Warblington so actually Lower Road makes up 33% of the Sunken Lanes in the Borough and therefore does have '**Historic interest**'. Lower Road is the most Westerly pedestrian entry point to Old Bedhampton Conservation Area and we should seek to preserve this passage to the main area.

I move to the Manor Farm Buildings, whilst an acknowledgement to locally list them within the papers I believe that these buildings should be included in the Conservation Area. They have great Special Architectural interest and should be connected to the Old Bedhampton Conservation area. Other Councils, Mole Valley District Council as an example have totally disconnected areas within one of

their Conservation Areas. In Havant, we too have unusual shaped areas. Emsworth and Staunton Park to name just two of many.

As a forward-thinking Council with a new Regeneration strategy we need a 'Vision to Protect'. This is our opportunity. If resources had permitted and the review had been undertaken back in the early 2000s this area surely would have been added. Conservation has intangible character that we should enhance and not neglect. When it is gone it is gone and only us as councillors can stop that happening. The additional protection of the Article 4 direction will help to prevent this.

Members, I understand that the officers have dismissed the idea of the full adoption of report plan submitted but I propose that there is enough Special Architecture and Historic Evidence to include Lower Road and the Manor Farm Buildings.

I would therefore like to see an update to the papers and cabinet recommendation to detail...

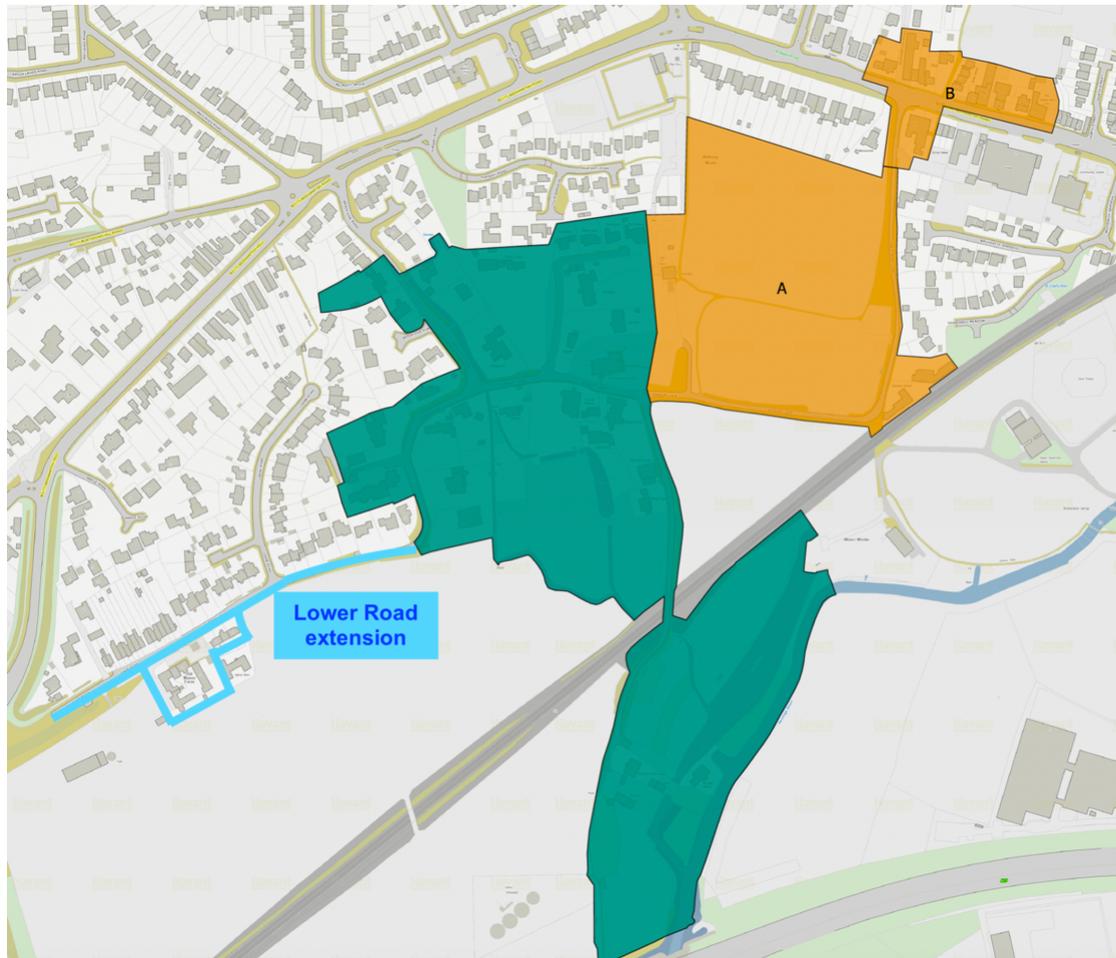
An amendment to Appendix 2: Townscape Appraisal to recognise Lower Road as a Sunken Lane,

Page 130 in the papers

AND

An amendment to Appendix 4: Proposed Extension to Conservation Area to include Lower Road and Manor Farm Buildings

Page 133 in the papers



Keith Mayor - Deputation

Good afternoon everyone and thank you for this opportunity to speak. I am a resident of Old Bedhampton and represent my neighbours and the local population. I must say this meeting feels a bit like déjà vu. The officer's recommendation has not really changed since the last time this went to the vote, on 17th July, when the motion was lost. Surely it is not very democratic to keep putting the same recommendation forward until the desired result is achieved.

The last Conservation Area review was conducted 25 years ago and there is no doubt that it will be many years before this area is ever looked at again so we need to get this right.

A recent review, by an independent expert in this field, recommended extensions to the Conservation Area included Lower Road, the Farm Cottages, Old Manor Farm, Narrow Marsh Lane and the surrounding fields. The Council officers dismissed these extensions within their consultation so most of the public were totally unaware of the omissions made. This did not give the public the full picture and resulted in poor feedback.

The main reason for cherry picking the comprehensive expert review seemed to be a denial of any special architectural interest in the fields and a reluctance to have a thin strip of land within the Conservation Area along Lower Road to include the farm cottages and the Old Manor Farm. I was also informed the distance to Old Manor Farm was too far away from the Conservation Area but this is simply not true. The pub north of the main road, which is recommended to be included, is at a greater distance.

At the drop in session, there was also a denial that Lower Road was even a sunken lane and that Narrow Marsh Lane was just a farm track. The revised acknowledgement that Narrow Marsh Lane was once an historical route has now been added, but apparently it is no longer an ancient road and therefore of little significance.

The fact that Lower Road is actually a Sunken Lane has also now been established but the subjective view of how good an example continues. The fact remains, that it is one of the best examples within the borough.

The revised recommendations include a car park and a fairly ugly shop frontage. What possible special interest does the car park provide?

Bidbury Mead is also to be included and one could say this is just a field not unlike the field south of Lower Road.

The inclusion of Narrow Marsh Lane is made out to be complicated because it is not recognised as a Public Right of Way even though the public have been using it for over 300 years.

The railway bridge on Narrow Marsh Lane also has some subjective views on whether it meets the special status.

It would be a great loss if all the residents along Lower Road removed the sunken lane banks to build walls and concrete driveways as one resident has already done. There is nothing in place to prevent everyone else from concreting their front gardens and removing the grass bank which creates the historical sunken lane.

I strongly believe the Old Manor Farm, the farm cottages and the sunken lane of Lower Road should be included within the Conservation Area. In fact this would be in line with the

officer's own Recommendation number 9 which seeks to prevent the loss of the verges, banks and hedgerows on the sunken lanes.

Narrow Marsh Lane is an ancient road and is clearly an important heritage asset worthy of inclusion in the Conservation Area, along with the railway bridge.

The field to the South of Lower Road which includes Narrow Marsh Lane is also worthy of inclusion as this is associated with the farm buildings in Lower Road.

This is the last chance, and also the duty of the elected Councillor's, to protect and preserve this unique area within the borough. The Old Bedhampton Conservation Area is within a beautiful village and worthy of protection and this review is an excellent opportunity to provide and expand that protection, enhancing the area even further for future generations.

Bedhampton Conservation Area – Statement to Cabinet 11.9.19

Board member were invited to a briefing at 4pm on the 17th July, by the Chair through Democratic Services. The purpose of that briefing was to ensure that all members had the papers they needed and that they understood the map that was going to be the point of reference for the board meeting. To aid members the recommendations were within the Management Plan on pages 60 to 69.

Mr Harris also explained the order of the meeting regarding people who were going to present or make a deputation to the Board. Members were also advised that Cllr Gary Robinson and Ms Murphy - from the firm of consultants who had been engaged by the Friends of Bidbury Mead, to carry out an appraisal of the conservation area - had been invited to join the meeting, meaning they would sit at a table and be able to engage in the meeting, through the Chair.

The board meeting opened, we had more than 300 pages of documents including appendices, and a very detailed, notated map to refer to; that we had had the opportunity to visit the site using a detailed map some visits with assistance of conservation officer prior to the meeting.

To assist Cabinet I am reporting on the board meeting of 17th July to this Cabinet meeting, Cabinet members may like to hear how the Scrutiny Board felt about the Appraisal of the Conservation Area at Old Bedhampton. My understanding of the position now, as far as Scrutiny is concerned, we did not accept the officer recommendation and, by default, chose the do nothing option. Cabinet will see from the minutes of the Board meeting the Board made no positive recommendation for change. Thank you.

Cllr Dianne Lloyd, Chair of the Operations & Place Shaping scrutiny board

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