

Deputation by County Councillor Fairhurst

Members—I am at a loss as to why we are once more looking at this application. I was under the impression it was due to go to appeal next month and can only assume the developers feel they might lose once again. After all the planning inspector threw out plans for development on this site once before and might well do so again.

Why don't the developers wait until the examination in Public of the local plan - why the hurry to get this through before that can happen? Why ignore the decision of the DMC - a democratic refusal by councillors – do they think they can wear you and HBC down before the planning inspector has his say?

Looking at the changes made by the developer I can see no substantial change to what has gone before - the main problems have not gone away, the reasons for refusal last time haven't gone away, and your unanimous refusal still applies.

The Roman road is still too narrow for two-way traffic and pedestrians to co-exist safely with no ability to create pavements.

However, the main problem is the damage this will do to a conservation area which is much valued by not only the local residents but the wider population of Havant as a whole. Old Bedhampton is a real asset to the borough, a place where members of the district come to escape for a while and enjoy the ambience and surroundings. Before Covid struck it would not be unusual to find many people from all parts walking around the area. As a dog walker I would frequently talk to people from Cowplain, Hartplain and Waterlooville who had come to enjoy the area.

We have building going on all over the borough and we do need more houses. But we need to recognise that there are some places where it is just not right – that, after all, is why we have local councillors involved, to make local decision-making a reality rather than a sham. There comes a time when we as councillors should say enough is enough. You would think twice would be sufficient, but now it seems you have to do it all over again.

I also do not think the minor alterations to the developers plan alters in any way the fundamental objections the DMC held regarding this site. I would go as far as saying it is a bit of an insult to suggest leaving such a small extra space will sway your decision.

Members - please reject this as you did before.