

## Application Summary

**Address:** Land south of, Lower Road, Havant  
**Proposal:** Erection of 50 new dwellings together with access, landscaping and open space (Revised Scheme).  
**Case Officer:** Daphney Haywood

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## Customer Details

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Address:**

## Comments Details

**Commenter Type:** Complainant

**Stance:** Customer objects to the Planning Application

**Reasons for comment:**

**Comments:** I wish to register my objection to the proposed new housing in the fields south of Lower Road in Old Bedhampton, ref APP/20/01031.

Whilst I recognise the need to provide new housing in the borough, construction on this site would fundamentally and irrevocably change the character of the area. The village of Old Bedhampton is a Conservation Area, offering a unique combination of historical buildings and green recreational space which must both be protected. It is one of the few areas in the Borough which provides a clear link to its history dating back hundreds of years. The area is used and enjoyed by the residents of Bedhampton and beyond.

The roads in the village are very narrow and in several places unsuitable for two cars to pass. The road was constructed at a time when vehicular traffic was not a problem, but now that most households have at least one car this is already a concern from both a safety and logistical perspective.

In some places the road not wide enough for a pavement, causing pedestrians, cyclists and dogs to walk in the road. I regularly see 'near misses' particularly around the double bend outside The Elms where there is no pavement and visibility can be poor. Construction of 50+ new dwellings would approximately double the number already in Lower Road and Lodge Road, increasing these risks significantly.

Over the past 10 months there has been a marked increase in pedestrians and cyclists using Lower Road for exercise in lockdown. Many of the users are families, elderly or vulnerable, which obviously significantly increases the risk when combined with an increase in vehicular traffic.

The adjoining road of Bedhampton Hill is very well-used as it provides access to the A3 and A27, and beyond to Portsdown Hill, Farlington, Leigh Park etc. Traffic often queues in all directions from the mini roundabout, back to the 'Rusty Cutter' roundabout and to the junction with Hulbert Road.

Increasing the number of vehicles in Old Bedhampton (which have no alternative but to drive up Bedhampton Road from Brookside Road to the mini roundabout, irrespective of which direction they wish to travel) would exacerbate the safety and traffic issues here. Combined with the large new housing development at Forty Acres off Havant Road, which would impact on the same network of roads, this would significantly increase congestion.

The fields adjacent Lower Road also provide a welcome green space for the residents and wildlife of the area. The fields are actively used for agriculture and provide strong ecological value for wildlife. This is something that must be protected for all.

Ref: Objection to APP/20/01031 regards road safety concerns

Please find attached a 44 second video clip capturing a recent near miss incident as I drove around one of the blind bends on Lower Road (NOTE: recorded date and time shown is incorrect). This is certainly not the first time I have needed to take action to avoid a collision on this section of the road due to lack of visibility.

On this occasion the closing speed was very low (approx. 15mph) and provided sufficient time to prevent an accident. Luckily no pedestrians or cyclists were on the road at the same time. The legal speed limit on this bend is 30mph (resulting in a closing speed of 60mph). Had either party been travelling at this speed then I am certain serious harm would have resulted.

The local residents have raised their traffic safety concerns along Lower Road with HBC on many occasions. A number of near misses has previously been reported but there continues to be a lack of understanding and responsibility for the safety of residents. This video is yet another recorded example of the dangers already present on the blind bends of Lower Road and any increase in traffic will obviously create greater levels of risk for the local residents and the many visitors to the area.

Please add this video evidence, graphically showing the current danger on the blind bends, to the APP/20/01031 objections and please also consider what a 41% increase in traffic levels, as predicted by the proposed development, would mean for the local resident's safety.

The "impeccable" safety record presented by Bargate is highly disputed by the local residents. A number of declared previous accidents has been provided to HBC and, along with this near miss video, provides a clear record of the current dangers already encountered on this section of the road. Any increase in traffic flows will only lead to greater danger and harm to all who use Lower Road.

Regards

A large number of objections have been sent regarding the roads and wildlife but this comment is to do with environmental and climate issues. The development does not lie within the boundary of the Warblington and Denvilles Residents Association so I cannot speak for them.

I would like to direct the Havant Borough Council to insisting that provision is made, in accordance with future governmental plans for the removal of vehicles using fossil fuels, to new developments to provide electric car charging facilities at each house or nearby, the installation of solar electric panels to aid the government climate program and black water treatment so that the water discharged to the sewage system is clean and will not have an impact if the current local water treatment plants have to discharge into the sea as frequently happens with excessive rainfall.

These comments should be considered for all future developments

I have worked on our Local Plan since its inception following introduction of the Local Development Framework under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004.

We are a small urban Borough of just 55sq kilometres as opposed to our neighbouring rural authority East Hampshire which is ten times the size of Havant.

Both authorities have their own sets of challenges when setting out to meet housing targets set by government; but without exception, we are asked to carefully consider our area in every detail to reach a sustainable five-year land supply.

This is not an easy task, but all potential development sites must be judged as to their suitability without fear or favour least our choices be overruled by the government inspector under examination of our Local Plan proposals. We have experienced what happens when potential sites are omitted, and what happened when planning applications arrive for development of land that had been previously avoided due to local sensibilities and desire to keep development to a minimum for a variety of emotional reasons. Under the current Local Plan provisions, this can no longer be an afforded luxury.

Old Bedhampton is indeed a treasure to be valued as are its many environmental attributes such as its conservation status and ecological advantages. It does of course - as do many small settlements - suffer from highway limitations and flooding issues for which engineering solutions can be introduced, with implementation protected by planning conditions. Weighing these issues against the need for us to comply with the sustainability requirements set out under the National Planning Policy Framework, we are challenged with adequately justifying why any sustainable site should be excluded and protected from development. Our officers balanced judgement does this with great care and due diligence before preparing their recommendations for determining planning applications.

I contend that this is the case with the Old Bedhampton site under consideration today. We must act following the detailed advice provided to us by our professional advisors whilst protecting what we can and avoiding possible loss of planning gain advantages should the application be determined by the Secretary of State at the pending appeal. I therefore support this application asking that we go forward in harmony with the applicant, to maximise the planning gain from what must be a quality development extending and enhancing the precious Old Bedhampton settlement for others to enjoy and cherish for future generations