

Deputation Submitted by Mr Stewart

Dear Councillors,

I strongly object to this application - one of the Hayling Islanders who voted 578 to one against it. I wish to highlight an issue which I am concerned will lead to serious accidents.

Station Road, which extends east from Sinah Lane, is the sole and shortest direct route for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicular traffic, including disabled mobility buggies, going from the proposed Barratt development to the shops and schools at West Town/Mengham - and to get off the island.

It has a severe pinch point where the road is only about 4.8m wide - so narrow in fact that buses and large trucks, which go in both directions, have to stop to let even small cars pass. The footpath on one side of the road is precisely 45cm wide and on the other narrows down at one point to about 65cm. On the northern side (the same side as the development entrance) there is no footpath at all for stretches up to about 40m.

The photo below illustrates the issues - it was taken looking west on Station Road towards the development, halfway between it and West Town. A pedestrian, a medium sized van, a car, narrow road and footpaths - an accident waiting to happen? Imagine a group of school children "messaging about" on the footpath! Imagine the increased danger when 500 new residents arrive and 300+ cars, plus all the heavy construction vehicles over the reported 5 year build period.

And yet if you read Barratt's description of this scene in their Travel Plan, you will see absolutely nothing about this section of the road. Instead, in a blatant misrepresentation, they show photos of and write about the 1.8m wide footpaths with grass verges of Sinah Lane and Staunton Avenue which, apart from about 40 metres of Sinah Lane before it joins Station Road, are simply not relevant.

Plus they write about an enhanced footpath and pedestrian crossing on Station Road which they say resulted from their Oysters development. However the fact is that the "enhanced" footpath is 65cm wide at one point and there is no pedestrian crossing! This all begs the question - what other misrepresentations have not been critiqued and/or corrected by HBC staff or the consultee, the Highways Authority (HA)?

I have had recent correspondence with the HA - these are direct statements I received:

- "It is acknowledged that there are sections of the footpath into West Town which are below minimum widths."
- "... the existing restrictions on Station Road are not ideal, we are constrained by the highway boundary limits."

In addition there were comments which strongly indicated that the HA, with Barratt's consultants and HBC staff involvement, have not done a proper investigation of the

local situation. An alternative to using Station Road as the direct and shortest pedestrian route, is being proposed especially for school children, through Hayling Park. The applicant will contribute £35,000 for “wayfinding” enhancements. However, this is absolutely not a solution. The “way” is already well known by kids but is seldom used because it is longer; it bypasses the shops at West Town where kids gather after school; the park has been frequented by gangs and druggies; in the winter months when it is dark and the park is empty, can anyone really expect kids to walk on this route, especially if they are alone.

But the HA does not see this as a problem because, to quote, “these schoolchildren are of an age which means they are likely to be accompanied to the Mengham schools by a parent”. This shows that the HA is not even aware that there is a school catering for 11-16 year olds - who don't want parental supervision. Parents from the Sinah Road area do not walk their infant kids to school - they drive them, it's too far and too dangerous.

The disturbing thing about this lack of research and understanding of the local scene is that the “solution” is supported by HBC planners who are recommending “Grant Permission” after the consultee HA, and they are not alone, has been somewhat lacking.

Councillors, the “below minimum limits” and “not ideal” Station Road will not be fit for purpose. The consequences of proceeding with this application are clear and obvious. You are being asked to make decisions based on incomplete information. This project should be put on hold until a detailed and independent review is carried out of the Station Road problem.

Yours,
Ray Stewart

