

Regarding appeal – reference APP/L1765/C/20/3254261

From Christine Mayhew, Bent Farm, Bent Lane, PO7 4QP

I am a qualified veterinary nurse with a post graduate certificate in equine nursing.

Before retiring, I worked for many years at a large, renowned equine hospital and at the same time, my husband and I, owned and ran a stud farm and horse training centre with an average of 30 horses on the property at one time.

I therefore feel that I am qualified to comment on horse care and management.

I have no formal qualifications in childcare but have raised my own, and now have two young grandsons who are like any other small boys, inquisitive and exploratory.

I reside in a property in Bent Lane near to the site being discussed.

I have no prejudices towards travellers or gypsies and have several times attended Wickham Horse Fair and have once attended Appleby horse fair.

My statement is truthful and honest

I question various statements made by Phillip Brown on behalf of the appellant, Mr Tom Maloney.

As listed by Phillip Brown:

SITE DESCRIPTION

2.2 The appeal site **DID NOT** have a gap of any kind or size in the frontage hedgerow. **The original hedge can be clearly seen on google maps and google earth from the road view.** The hedge was a continuous dense hedgerow of bushes and trees, typical of hedgerows on country lanes.

I have been walking my dogs down this lane since moving to the area in February 2017 and there was definitely **NO GAP** until that made by whosoever came in April of this year with heavy machinery and hacked out a gap in the existing hedgerow taking no account of the fact that this was the home of nesting birds

The Ariel photo that claims a gap in the hedge is in reality a lessening of tree height where the trees have been topped out to allow clearance of some overhead wiring. The photo submitted by Phillip Brown clearly shows lower hedging and no gap.

2.3 The caravans mentioned as being on Shirmal Farm, and later referred to as ‘the existing traveller site’ not a traveller site. They are situated without planning permission on a small plot of land that was purchased from the owner of Shirmal Farm. No planning permission for these caravans have been applied for and they are presently subject to investigation and action by the Winchester Planning Department -enforcement case reference 19/00238. The occupants of these caravans have also assured local residents that they are NOT gypsies.

The separate farmstead located to the north of the site is Shirmal Farm which has been there for many years and is about half a mile from this site. The farm to the South is a working farmyard and storage for agricultural machinery.

2.4 The description of Bent Lane is correct in as much as it is a single track rural lane with no footpaths or street lighting. It is also a very windy lane – hence the name. It is a lane that has to be maneuvered at a slow speed as there is not room for two cars abreast and there are plenty of cyclists and horse riders who use the lane.

The site is just under 4 (not 3) kilometres from Denmead schools and shops and there is no bus service to this area. There is also no street lighting and the surrounding network of lanes is all narrow and single track.

PLANNING HISTORY

4.0 The planning history is as stated but fails to mention that **WORK ON THE SITE HAD STARTED BEFORE PLANNING PERMISSION HAD EVEN BEEN APPLIED FOR**. Not only this, but work started just before a bank holiday, and during the first lockdown, which would give the impression that those who started the work were not expecting any visit from the planning department.

CASE ON BEHALF OF THE APPELLANT.

5.1 - The appellants are described as gypsies and horse traders and mention is made of horse fairs in Appleby and Stow on the Wold as if to prove gypsy status. I find it very odd is that no mention is made of one of the largest horse fairs in the UK, namely nearby Wickham, where gypsies congregate annually to buy and sell horses. Therefore, I do not think that the 'facts' presented to establish that the appellants are horse traders or gypsies are suspect. No gypsy horse trader would not know of The Wickham horse fair.

5.2 I can see no evidence of any facts to establish that the appellants are gypsies at all. If the only facts are those quoted above then I could easily claim to be a gypsy myself having also attended horse fairs, bought and sold horses, and travelled for work. Therefore this is **NOT PROOF OF GYPSY STATUS** and should not be used as such with regards to planning.

Phillip Brown states that the appellant travels away from home for 3-4 months a year and yet are also told that they have a need for a caravan site in **this area i.e. Southampton and Portsmouth which is** where they make their living. Surely one nullifies the other? It also begs the question of who looks after their horses when they are away for 3-4 months a year.

5.8 We are again told that they make their living in this area and that irrespective of the outcome of the appeal they will graze horses on the plot. Only a small portion of this plot of land is suitable for grazing horses and that portion is now covered with hard-core. The land is wet and boggy and downhill from adjoining land. Any horses grazing in what land is left to grass would be wading in wet soggy ground which can cause many health problems such as mud fever and liver fluke.

5.12 This site **WOULD** most definitely be isolated in the countryside and away from existing settlements and the eight children that are listed as needing accommodation, would find a very

lonely existence in an a site where they would be isolated without means of transport other than in their parents vehicles.

5.13 The site does NOT adjoin an existing traveller site, see enforcement case reference 19/00238/WKS The residential homes further north on Bent lane are quite definitely not 'substantial clusters of developments' nor are there 5 dwellings but are three existing homes of some history and one recent home. Two of these are not visible in any way from the lane. Hill House, much further along Bent Lane, quoted as having 4 or 5 dwellings actually has only 2 dwellings.

5.14 Two caravan pitches WOULD most definitely generate significant movement especially when you consider the number of people who would need a vehicle i.e. four adults, Johnny as he nears driving age, and within a few years Jimmy and Margaret. Added to which, most families living in caravans, have vans and trucks for business which could push the number of vehicles up to 10 easily. Gypsy horse dealers also have traps/carriages for driving their horses and will trot them along the lanes at speed. This constitutes a lot of movement in a very narrow, winding lane with limited visibility due to corners and vegetation.

5.15 Access to schools would be via private transport as there are NO forms of public transport in this area and this would increase traffic (as mentioned above) as Johnny and Jimmy and Johnny (2) and Margaret might be at the same school but Edward, Helen, Edward (2) and Ann would be going to separate schools due to the age differences.

5.16 The schools and shops in Denmead are nearly 4 kilometres away and only accessible from this site by more single track country lanes. To regularly walk this far on these lanes would be dangerous especially for young people.

5.17 The appellant suggests that a settled site would reduce the need for frequent travel by using the site as a base for horse dealing. Having experience of running a horse business on an acreage far greater than this site, I know that very, very little money can be made in horse dealing. Horses are also expensive to keep and need constant veterinary care, hoof care, worming's, vaccinations, and can and do drop dead from time to time. This land is also too wet and boggy to healthily keep horses.

5.18 **There is NO adjacent traveller site.** Enforcement case 19/00238. To then compare the size of site with the few existing homes in the area is absurd and should this be a relevant point then every area of countryside be it field or woodland would surely be open to occupation.

5.19 The quote 'traveller sites have a number of characteristics such as caravans, hardstanding's, utility buildings, residential paraphernalia and lighting' this conjures up the exact reason as to why this would be devastating in a beautiful part of established countryside. Why should some degree of visual harm be acceptable? It is the planning department who have tried to prevent the countryside from becoming an eyesore.

5.20 'The test for the countryside harm must be whether the development causes unacceptable harm which cannot be made acceptable with additional landscaping' I would reverse this whole statement and ask why a picturesque field with plenty of natural landscaping with indigenous species should be ripped apart with no permission causing unacceptable harm in the first place?

With no respect for planning authority, the likelihood of any landscaping to make the site look good again is, I fear, highly unlikely.

5.21 The development would most definitely affect the key characteristics of this area. Mixed farmland and woodland landscape forming part of the forest of Bere lowlands landscape character area and described as having an ancient character retaining historic landscape features and a network of winding narrow laneseven for those who have not visited this site, a mental picture of this description suffices and the area is admired by all who travel through on bike and horseback. With regards to the accessthere was no accessfurthermore I believe, as with other properties adjoining the lane, the strip of land next to the lane over which an access has been hacked, does not belong to the appellant . The hedgerow 'loss' should be described as the hedgerow decimated and decimated without permission from planning, without permission from the owner of the land, and during a time when birds were nesting. To refer to Little Oaks opposite is absurd as this is an agricultural building which is totally necessary in the countryside; it also blends in with its surroundings by virtue of the fact that it is a normal countryside feature.

5.22 The site is on the edge of a footpath which winds through the woods and would be visible for anyone walking the footpath to enjoy the beauty of the countryside. It would be very intrusive and would result in harm to the character and appearance of the countryside

5.23 The council has only approved planning for a storage barn only at the site referred to as Ydal Acres. See enforcement case reference 19/00238/WKS. There is no Little Acres address in Bent Lane.

5.24 There are no trees or hedgerows within the body of the site purely because they were destroyed at the same time as the hardstanding was laid – ALL WITHOUT A PLANNING APPLICATION AND WITHOUT PLANNING PERMISSION. There would be no point of planning permission subject to conditions when these planning laws were totally ignored?

5.25 Aerial photographs available from Google Earth show an area where trees have been lopped to clear the overhead cables nothing more. Land level photographs from the same Google Earth show a continuous hedgerow with no access to fields either side. Google maps show the same views. There was previously NO ACCESS to this field.

5.26 The access to Shirmal Farm is historic ...Ydal Acres which effectively shares this ... again see WKS. Enforcement case 19/00238. Applemore is a longstanding agricultural entrance.

5.27 I am sure, just using common sense and one's sight that an ecological survey would prove that there most definitely would be an adverse effect on the conservation interest of the nearby protected landscape features and species. A lack of such a survey should this development be given permission would surely be subject to scrutiny.

5.28 I do not know when Mr Phillip Brown took the time to come and observe the speed of vehicles in Bent Lane but on his visit to the area, he might have looked up and seen that his interpretation of google earths photo was incorrect if he had noticed the overhead lines that necessitated the topping of trees. The number of passing places are also exaggerated and most are actually mud tracks at the side of the road that are not safe for any vehicle that is not a 4 WD. Private entrances are exactly that and are not maintained by the owners for the benefit of further traffic !

5.29 Google maps ground view will clearly demonstrate the lack of visibility on this narrow lane.

5.30 It is my opinion, and I am sure all of those who use bent lane on a regular basis that there would be significant impact on highway safety.

5.48 The appeal site does not adjoin an existing traveller site see enforcement case 19/00238/WKS. A calf rearing barn is farm related and one would expect farm buildings in the countryside. I repeat, - There are NOT 5 dwellings at Bent Farm and there are NOT 4/5 dwellings at Hill House.

On the original application we were told that the appellants were to have a play area for children on an area of the plot which, it would now seem, is to be used for horses and trading of horses. If this is the case, it begs the question where are the children now to play? They would most certainly be in danger playing around horses.

With an agricultural yard opposite and heavy machinery manoeuvring around I am sure that any young boys, Johnny, Jimmy, Edward, Johnny the second, and later Edward the second, would be automatically drawn to the machinery as all boys are and this could lead to devastating accidents. As it is, when the initial work on the site started without planning permission, there were two young lads who had ventured up the road and presumably climbed a fence to gain access into a nearby field.

Without constant supervision which we all know is very difficult with children, it would therefore be an extremely dangerous place for them. There are no playgrounds in the area. There are no pavements to make walking along the lanes safe, and there is no street lighting. Add this to the fact that there are agricultural vehicles constantly using the lane, it would be an extremely dangerous place to rear children.

I therefore respectfully request that this appeal be rejected.

Christine Mayhew

I attach Google earth photos of Bent Lane visibility from proposed site and Bent Lane Hedgerow before destructionalso from Google Earth