

20, The Layne,
Bognor Regis PO22 6JL

Dear Cllr Lury,

August 5th 2019

Re : Planning Application Y/103/18/PL and Meeting August 7th

Resulting from the detailed notes published last week in preparation for the meeting on Wednesday there are many points that need to be aired before the meeting.

1. The number of cyclists has increased beyond 150 per day as cited on page 79 note c. I requested the figures for the day on which the meeting on August 7th was rescheduled, July 24th. On that day there were 238 passes recorded. This demonstrates the ever increasing use of the path and makes a mockery of the initial figures supplied in the application. The increase is therefore 88, or 58%. If the initial February figures are used, the increase is over 700%!!
2. Reference is made to the Road Safety Audit on page 90. The 57 page document submitted by the Agent on June 24th, just four days before the initially scheduled meeting – why with such short time to be properly scrutinised? – states on page 21 para 1.1.8 ‘The audit consisted of a desktop study as a site visit was carried out on Saturday Feb 2nd’. (The English here is garbled with ‘which’ appearing nonsensically in the sentence.) Why was the site visit done on a Saturday? I repeat my complaint that the shared path was not even mentioned. It is as though it is deliberately ignored. The use of a Saturday and the lack of observation of the shared path are obfuscations. No way to submit a balanced application. Furthermore the Road Safety Audit uses the figure of 19 cars (38 crossings). Why is a car park with over 100 spaces needed?
3. From the outset a demand has been made for priority to be given to users of the existing shared path. That is reasonable and fair. Any changes for this path will result from the works for access to the crematorium. It turns out that such priority is envisaged in the form of ‘refuges’ to cross the newly created road. This is not priority for cyclists, pedestrians, disabled carriages, etc. People will be running the gauntlet of cars: exactly the opposite of the aims of the shared path. At this

juncture the users of the shared path need to be identified. They are not a homogeneous group as drivers are with their licences, sight tests and regulations. Users of the path are some of the most vulnerable users of roads and extremely diverse. Children and teenagers use the path. Did the applicant know that the firm constructing the path donated bicycles to a Primary School in Felpham and a Secondary School in Littlehampton? They shared the vision of WSCC for a path for all: teenagers, children with parents, joggers (usually with earphones!!) kids on skateboards, non-drivers, elderly people using e-bikes, accounting partly for the exponential rise in numbers of cyclists, those with hearing impairments and vision impairments, folk who have surrendered their driving licences. In short, the users of the path represent the most vulnerable sections of society. At the moment they are safe on the path. They will not be if they have to run the gauntlet of car traffic. One section of society underrepresented amongst cyclists is women. They are more risk averse than men and will opt for safe and risk-free routes. In our cycling group we have just welcomed a lady who was knocked off her bike and is just now daring to use her bike again. Her new found confidence will be undermined by finding cars crossing the shared path. The less wealthy are also found in numbers on the path. They cannot afford cars and their upkeep. They also do not have access to ways of complaining and certainly do not understand the arcane methods of approaching the council. All that I have spoken too are in disbelief that 'their' cycle path is to be violated. Their reaction, 'those with money will do what they want' is the gist of their opinions!!

4. The most shameful aspect of the application is the revelation that Grevatts Lane West was closed illegally for the benefit of the landowner. The landowner now wants to reopen the road, again for his benefit. Would this have come to light if I had not asked the question in my letter to Cllr Lury, subsequently published on the website? It is unconscionable that a public asset, yes Grevatts Lane West is a public road, and now the cycle / shared path can be manipulated following the earlier illegality. Did the Applicant inform WSCC of his illegal closure of the road and the possibility that it would be opened again before the shared path was constructed at a cost of £2.4? If not, why not?

I apologise for the length of this objection but I consider the above points to be vital for the consideration of Councillors and of the public to whom the Councillors are accountable.

Yours sincerely

Christopher S Cooper