


Susan Hamilton IP Ref: 20029058

Submission – Deadline 3

It concerns me greatly, following the hearings last week that the forecast increase in traffic through Cowley Village was deemed to be low-level and would not impact the community adversely. As a resident, I have a birds eye view of Cowley Lane and can report that a great many more than 18 vehicles currently use this stretch of road. I can in fact confirm that the number of vehicles on Cowley Lane indeed surpasses NH's worst case scenario figure of 118 (this figure was rounded down from 188 during last week's ISH2).

Cowley is quite unusual in the fact that we have 5 roads coming into the village, all of which converge in the centre of a picturesque conservation area. The current speed limit on Cowley Lane approaching the village centre is 60mph. There are many blind bends passing through the village where it is only just possible for two cars to pass one another. Even at 30mph on the blind bends, the current number of cars, pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists present a real accident risk. I include a picture of a recent accident spot on Cowley Lane where a vehicle careered off the road and into a field when travelling at speed on one of these blind bends – **PHOTO 1** (blind bend accident).

The village also encompasses several business and entities which rely on the quiet roads in which to operate safely. For example, Cotswold Alpacas frequently use the lanes around the village to allow visitors to walk their herd through and around the stunning scenery. This is a unique and popular activity which brings much joy to villagers and tourists alike


Cowley Manor offers a quiet and secluded setting for guests who enjoy walking the many pleasant routes in and around the village. And the Gloucestershire Girl Guide Headquarters is set in the heart of the village, requiring access for parents and for children to enjoy the facilities, safely.

There are very few pavements around the village and none whatsoever on Cowley Lane, so pedestrians currently must scramble to safety when encountering oncoming traffic (I refer to the 60mph speed limit currently in place). I have included a photo with my submission to demonstrate the current issue with pedestrian safety on Cowley Lane – **PHOTO 2** (Car and pedestrian).

There are very few reasonable passing places along Cowley Lane. This has been known to lead to road rage situations with vehicles having to reverse quite some way to be able to reach a safe place for passing. I witnessed such an incident this week and have included a video with my submission – **VIDEO 1** (lack of passing places causing disruption).

Furthermore, the current state of Cowley Lane is very poor. In some places, deep gulleys have formed alongside the single-track road caused by the vast amount of water which runs down the lane during heavy rainfall – the lane essentially becomes a river. Over time the run-off water has washed more and more edging from the road leaving large drops. Veering ever so slightly off the tarmac can cause damage to vehicles. I speak from personal experience when I ripped my tyre recently, trying to pass another vehicle and ditching in the gully. Luckily, I was able to move my vehicle to safety but had that not been the case I

would have blocked the road until assistance arrived. I have included 2 further photos with my submission – **PHOTO 3** (gully 1) and **PHOTO 4** (gully 2).

Access to and through the village can be very difficult for delivery vehicles. A combination of lack of knowledge of the local roads, single track carriageways and few places in which to pull over or pass safely means that the roads are often blocked, for example when villagers have fuel deliveries, septic tank drainage or when using removal services. This can lead to frustration and delays in journey times, particularly if any of the lanes remain blocked for lengthy periods of time as turning to take a different course is extremely difficult. Blocked lanes also prevent emergency vehicles accessing the village easily – and an increase in volume of traffic increases the likelihood of these services being required. I include 2 further images with my submission – **PHOTO 5** (vehicle blocking lane) and **PHOTO 6** (truck stuck).

I would also like to draw attention to the bridge that sits on the far end of the village on the approach to the A435. This bridge sits within the conservation area, and I have seen no evidence throughout the planning process which suggests that the bridge is safe to carry additional traffic. I have included **PHOTO 7** (conservation bridge) with my submission.

Question: Can the ExA be satisfied that the Applicant/Joint Councils have properly considered any risks associated with this bridge? It sits within the conservation area (see map included with my submission – **MAP 1**) therefore is it listed/ protected? Has the safety and integrity of the bridge been tested for a higher volume of traffic and if not, why not?

Question: I am aware that the ExA will have sight of the data gathered by our local community in recent days, in another IP's submission. Given that our findings are so wildly different from the projected figures shared by NH in last week's ISH2 it raises questions about the honesty and integrity submitted not just in relation to these figures, but perhaps assumptions across the whole planning and consultation process are 'smoke and mirrors' rather than truth and accuracy. What does the ExA make of this uncovered discrepancy?

Request for accompanied site visit. During ISH2 the representative speaking on behalf of the Joint Councils admitted that the Cowley Lane and surrounding roads are not suitable for carrying additional traffic. With this in mind, and further to points raised in this submission, may I politely request that the ExA consent to an accompanied site visit to the village of Cowley to include Cowley Lane, Village Centre and the Conservation Bridge?