



19th April 2021

2021/00423/FUL – Land at Bolston House, A48, Bonvilston

This application for a new development within the Conservation Area of Bonvilston was considered at our meeting on April 14, 2021.

The Community Council, **objects** to the construction of new dwellings that would subject their residents to **road noise** that is harmful to well-being and health. This Council also opposes new dwellings requiring access onto a primary road with a speed limit of 40mph. The footways that link the site to the shop, church, pub and Reading Rooms are substandard, and this must be rectified prior to additional dwellings being constructed. A more convenient protected crossing to the Reading Rooms is desirable.

LDP Policy MD7 (criterion 4) is particularly relevant

- Developments are required to demonstrate they will not result in unacceptable impact on people from noise or vibration.

The loss of Bolston House, constructed with visible components from Bonvilston House would be regrettable. The loss of this dwelling, the finite building materials and the energy embodied with it, does not fit with sustainability principles. The building should be deconstructed, rather than demolished, and new uses sought for components, particularly those that were reused from Bonvilston House – see Planning Policy Wales 11.

Demolition would not make efficient use of this building (MD5, criterion 1)

The Community Council would like this application to be determined by the **Planning Committee** for approval, and if approved, for the **S106 contribution** to be used to provide **Active Travel Infrastructure** along the A48 and correct the **speed limit** in line with the latest Welsh Government guidance. This would maximise the benefit to the community and mitigate the impact of the development on the local community and infrastructure. The Senedd circulated the following guidance on the purpose of S106 agreements in July 2015:

S106 agreements assist in mitigating the impact of unacceptable development to make it acceptable in planning terms.

Building Better Places (Welsh Government), July 2020

This document contains the following paragraph:

“The effect of noise can, in the short-term, disrupt sleep and increase levels of stress, irritation and fatigue, as well as interfering with important activities such as learning, working and relaxing.”

Planning Policy Wales 11

The new Planning Policy from the Welsh Government includes emphasising the need for planners to contribute towards:

- reducing exposure of populations to air and noise pollution,
- promoting active travel options and seeking environmental and physical improvements, particularly in the built environment.

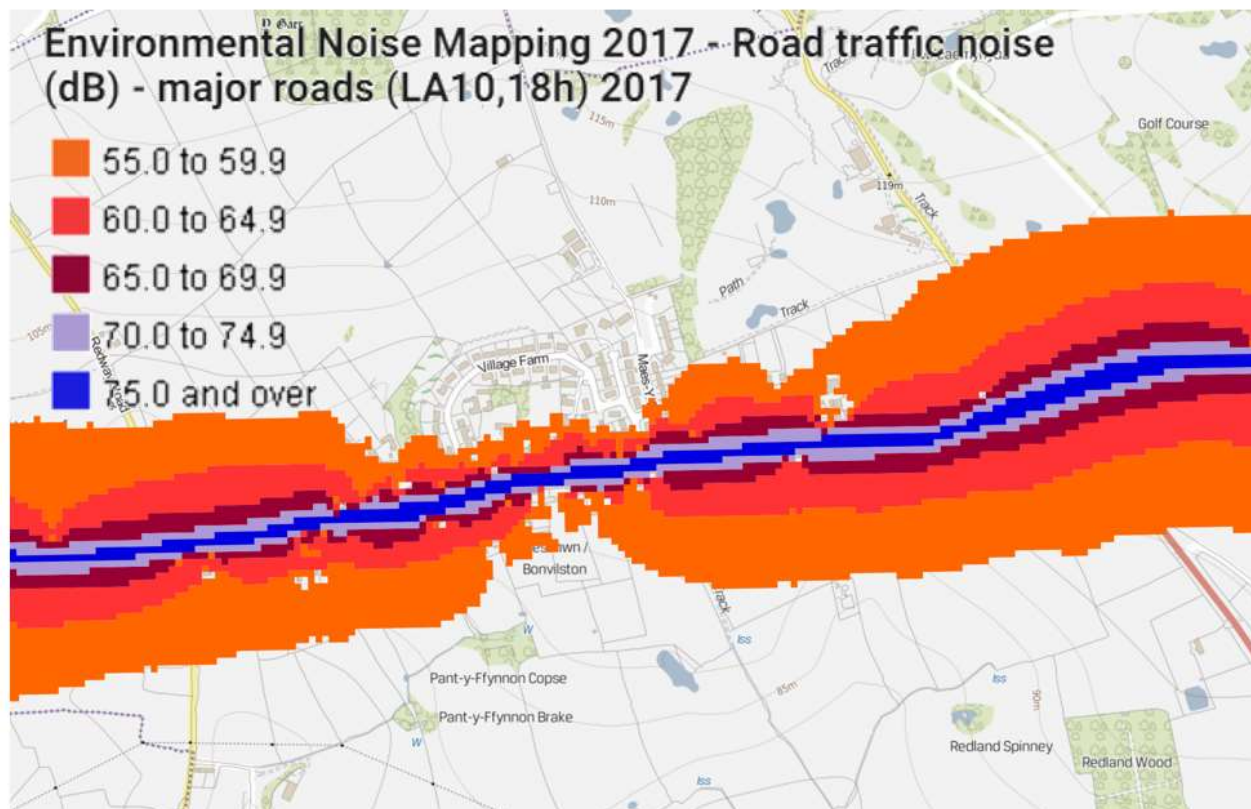
The Policy continues (emphasis added):

“**The planning system should maximise its contribution to achieving the well-being goals, and in particular a healthier Wales, by aiming to reduce average population exposure to air and noise pollution alongside action to tackle high pollution hotspots.** In doing so, it should consider the long-term effects of current and predicted levels of air and noise pollution on individuals, society and the environment and identify and **pursue any opportunities to reduce, or at least, minimise population exposure to air and noise pollution, and improve soundscapes**, where it is practical and feasible to do so.”

Soundscape

The Welsh Government has made Bonvilston a **priority area** for tackling unacceptable levels of **road noise** for a decade... The latest Welsh Government study includes the following survey results on the following page:





Planning Policy Wales 11 – Highways and Active Travel Infrastructure

Welsh Government Policy (emphasis added) states that:

“Local authorities **must** adopt an integrated approach to traffic management. They should consider how different measures can complement one another and contribute to the achievement of wider planning and transport objectives, **implementing the Active Travel Act and reducing exposure to air and noise pollution, taking into account the needs of the disabled and less mobile sections of the community.**”

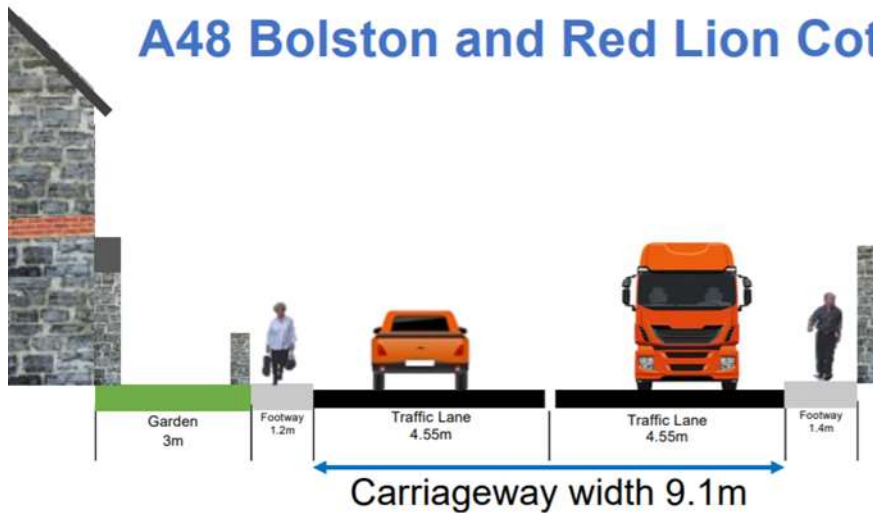
A48 Cross-sections

LDP Policy MD5 (criterion 7) – Development within settlement boundaries will be permitted when it “Makes appropriate provision for community infrastructure to meet the needs of future occupiers.”

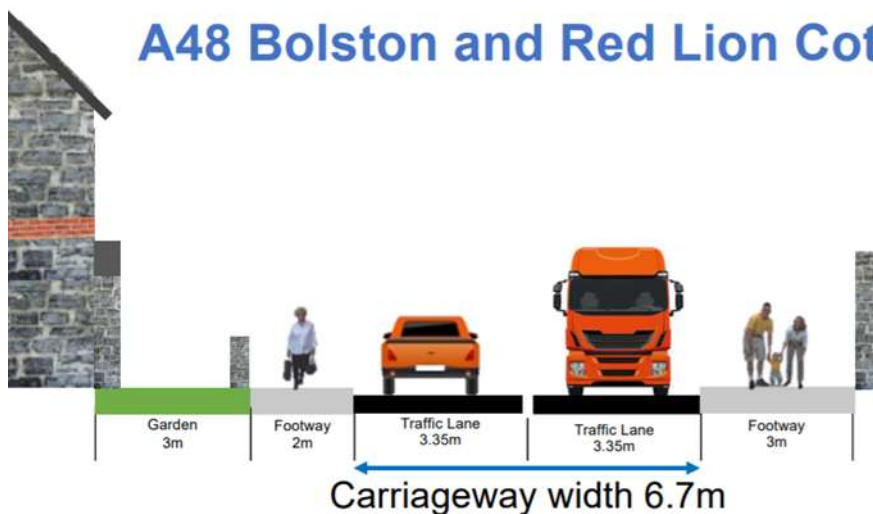
As the flowing cross-sections show, there is space for a 3m wide shared footway to the north, and a 2m footway to the south of the A48. **Manual for Streets 2**, which includes guidance on how to plan and improve busy urban and rural streets recommends traffic lanes that are no wider than those on the parallel M4, eastbound between junctions 34 and 33 – 3m.



A48 Bolston and Red Lion Cottages



A48 Bolston and Red Lion Cottages



In an ideal world, the developer would provide additional space for the footways to be wider, protected by a verge and not bordered by a high stone, blank wall.

Improvement of the highway, including footways, **must** take priority over “Affordable Housing” when it comes to securing S106/developer contributions. The road noise level is intolerable and the health and well-being of residents depends on it being tackled.

The Community Council hopes that there will be a positive reaction to this response to the current consultation – from both the applicant and the Planning Authority.

Cllr Ian Perry

For and on behalf of St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council

