

Introduction

Essex Highways categorise the Highway Network as follows:

- National Highways Road
- Priority 1 Road (PR1)
- Priority 2 Road (PR2)
- Local Road
- Private Road

The A414 is classified a PR1.

Woodhill Road, Well Lane, Bicknacre Road, Penny Royal Road, The Common, Mayes Lane, Little Baddow Road, and the B1418 are PR2s.

All other parts of the Highway Network other than private roads in Danbury are classified as Local Roads without differentiation.¹

All traffic from Danbury to Maldon, Chelmsford and the A12 must use Priority Roads 1 and/or 2 for the journey.

The local roads, footpaths and bridleways are very well liked and seen as forming an important part of the character of Danbury. This was identified from the results of the Adult Questionnaire August 2017 in response to the question ‘What do you like about Danbury?’ - 83% of respondents selected the Lanes/Footpaths/Bridleways.

Sites D8, D9, D10 and D20 are located on Danbury’s Local Roads and any development will affect the Local Roads from the site to the Priority 1 Road A414 or Priority 2 Roads.

The purpose of this paper is to consider the impact on the local highway network from the increased traffic flows generated from each site to/from Chelmsford in the west and Maldon in the east. The routes available are described below.

Sites D8 & D9

Route to A414 and Maldon,



¹ ECC Highway Record <https://www.essexhighways.org/interactive-maps-and-live-travel-information/highways-information-map>

The proposed access of Site D8 is in Mill Lane (south on right). The journey will begin by turning right into Hyde Lane.



Site D9's proposed access is in Millfields. Photo above is of Hyde Lane looking south, with Mill Lane crossing horizontally from the right.

From D9, the direct route is to turn right into Mill Lane and then turn left (North) into Hyde Lane which is a dangerous blind junction shown on the right above.



Hyde Lane above is a very narrow single track road. It is often necessary to use a private drive to allow traffic to pass. The junction at Cherry Garden Lane to A414 has a very poor line of sight.

Route West to Danbury, Chelmsford and A12



Traffic from both sites will turn into Mill Lane (photo above).

Continue on Mill Lane turning right into The Avenue which has limited off-street parking, therefore cars are parked on both sides of the road leaving only a single lane for traffic (photo below).



The alternate route is to continue along Mill Lane, where the road narrows into a single lane with no pavements. (Photo below shows The Avenue junction on right and Mill Lane as it narrows).



Another photo of Mill Lane with a passing place. This part of Mill Lane has protected status.



Join Gay Bowers Lane, which is a blind junction, and turn right to join Copt Hill and turn left at the A414. This is the start of the Air Quality Management Area in Danbury.

Photo below shows Mill Lane on left joining Gay Bowers, which has protected status.



The Avenue is the likely preferred route for traffic to the A414 including delivery vehicles to and from the site.

The Danbury AQMA runs along the A414 from Butts Lane to Eves Corner. Additional traffic into and out of The Avenue will increase traffic congestion on the A414 causing traffic to queues on both roads with additional pollution in this already polluted area.

Site D10



Photo of Capons Lane (site access via gate).

Two access are under consideration.

Suggested access via Capons Lane

The favoured route to both Maldon and Chelmsford will be via Hyde Lane and Cherry Garden Lane to gain access to the A414, described above.

It should be noted that Gay Bowers Lane (where it runs past the site) is a protected Lane. Also, the area of Capons Lane south east of the site from Hawks Close to Hyde Lane also has protected status.

Capons Lane is a single track, with bends, poor visibility, narrow junctions and few passing areas.

Suggested access in Jubilee Rise

This is a residential area and the route to both Maldon and Chelmsford will be via Pedlars Path into Mill Lane using The Avenue to gain access to the A414, described above, described above.

Site D20

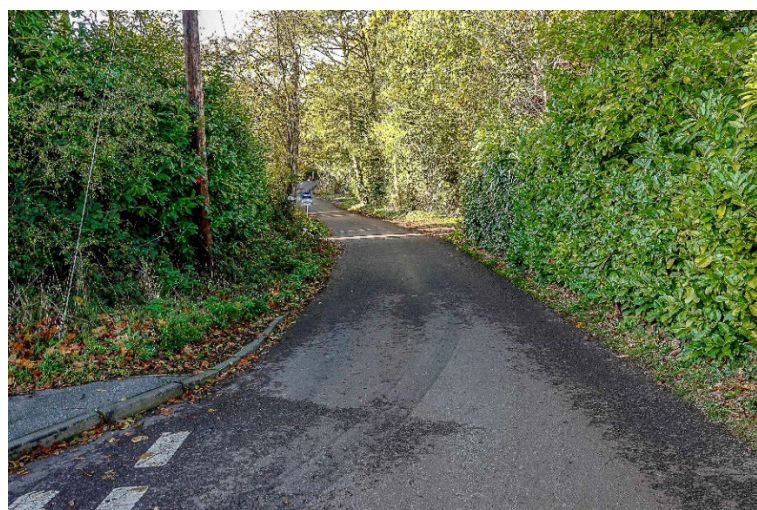


Photo of Elm Green Lane (site access on right - in sunlight).



Photo of Riffhams Lane towards A414.

Riffhams Lane from Graces Lane to Elm Green Lane has protected status.

Route West to Chelmsford

There are two options. Via Elm Green Lane to the A414. Elm Green Lane near the site access is particularly narrow. Elm Green Lane is impassable after snow due to the steep incline.

The second route is via Riffhams Lane to Main Road. There are no pavements from the site access on Elm Green Lane to Riffhams lane. Riffhams Lane is a very narrow single lane road with some passing places for one vehicle. Often vehicles are seen reversing or using private drives to allow passing. There are no pavements on Riffhams Lane.

Route East to Maldon

Via Elm Green Lane to the A414 as described above.

Conclusion

The narrative above provides details of the likely routes to Maldon, Chelmsford and the A12. Inevitably there will be increased traffic volumes on the local highway network if any of sites D8, D9, D10 or D20 are selected for development within the Danbury Neighbourhood Plan.

Such increase in traffic will lead to intensification of the local highway network causing these sites to score less well in the assessment against the Vision and Objectives of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks to preserve the character of Danbury.

The conclusion of the Steering Group is that purely on the highway consideration, the sites adjacent to the lanes will cause more harm than those having a direct access from the A414 or another main road.