

Boreham Conservation Society (BCS): Written Representation

Summary

BCS support the principle of the A12 widening scheme improvements between Junctions 19 and 25 but does not regard the closure of the Junction 20a on-slip to the A12 between the villages of Hatfield Peverel and Boreham as an improvement. Closure of the on-slip puts more, not less, traffic on Boreham's local roads.

Alternative Proposal. Mr Charles Martin a BCS member has submitted an alternative plan to the Examining Authority (ExA) that would retain access at Junction 20a and maintain the desired three-lane carriageway. Mr Martin and BCS have responded to the Applicant's A12 JUNCTION 20A SOUTHBOUND MERGE ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVES REPORT, REP1- 023, REP1-025 and REP1-026 refer.

Traffic Modelling. BCS have significant concerns about the adverse impacts upon Boreham that are predicted to flow from implementation of the DCO proposals. BCS concerns are heightened by the realisation that if, as BCS contends, the Applicant has seriously underestimated the predicted increases in traffic, the knock-on impacts for Boreham and Hatfield Peverel would be many times greater than stated in the DCO. The closure of Junction 20a would be final without any future redress. If the Applicant's modelling under-estimates increases in traffic there are no practical remedies available for either Boreham or Hatfield Peverel; Junction 20a could not be reinstated. BCS's contend that there are credible grounds on which to question the Applicant's modelling of traffic flows and the capacity of local roads to cope.

Mitigation. BCS confirm agreement to the Statement of Common Ground for mitigation, for the B1137, submitted by Essex County Council. BCS adds that any practical mitigation measures, such as those proposed and supported by BCS could, nevertheless, be overwhelmed by traffic if the Applicant has seriously underestimated the volume of traffic that would be diverted on to local roads by the DCO proposals.

Dangers of rat-running traffic. The Applicant has publicly stated that increases in rat-running traffic are dangerous. BCS agree. BCS request that the Applicant provides an explanation for the residents of Boreham why an outcome, agreed to be dangerous, is planned for Boreham.

Protected Lanes. The Applicant's proposals would put increased, dangerous, rat-running traffic on Church Road, Boreham which would be in direct contravention of Chelmsford City Council Policy DC15. This increase would flow directly from the closure of the on-slip at Junction 20a and adds to the valid objections to closure submitted by BCS and many Boreham Parishioners. BCS estimate that more than 25% of all the letters submitted to the Planning Inspectorate with regard to the DCO application came from Boreham Parishioners objecting to the adverse impacts from closure.

Boreham Cultural Heritage. The settlement of Boreham is thought to date from 850 BC and contains many Listed Buildings. The village environment and unique Church are already

threatened by commuter traffic and the increases resulting from closure of the on-slip at Junction 20a would present an unwelcome and unnecessary increase to this environment.

The paragraphs below expand upon the Summary statements as appropriate.

1. Alternative Proposal.

BCS and Mr Martin rely upon REP1- 023, REP1-025 and REP1-026. BCS add that Mr Martin, following the scoring methodology of the Applicant's report, scores his proposal +8 above the Applicant's alternatives.

2. Traffic Modelling.

2.1 The Applicant's model predicts commuters arriving in the AM peak on the B1019 Maldon Road at it's junction with the B1137 (The Street) in Hatfield Peverel at the mini roundabout opposite the Duke of Wellington (DofW) junction in Hatfield Peverel:

88% of the will turn east to use new Junction 21 to reverse direction and head west towards their destination. Currently 100% of those wishing to travel west, turn west at the DofW towards their destination to access the A12 at Junction 20a or Junction 19.

12% of the commuters arriving at the DofW will continue to follow their established routine and turn west towards their destination. BCS adds that the Applicant admits that this cohort of commuters will be joined by commuters from the west of Hatfield Peverel who, as the Applicant admits, will find the journey to new Junction 21 too far to travel. BCS points out that these commuters who previously used the right road, the A12, via Junction 20a would be forced to use the wrong road, the B1137 through Boreham.

2.2 BCS contend that the decision to save a minute by using junction 21 or save a "mile" by using the B1137 is finely balanced and that a modelling output of 88% / 12% seems unrealistic. BCS do not have the capacity to question the methodology adopted. However, BCS do know that inputs flow through to outputs and those from the Applicant's model simply do not seem sensible. BCS also remain unconvinced by the statement in 5.12.1 / 5.12.2 of the Applicant's A12 JUNCTION 20A SOUTHBOUND MERGE ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVES REPORT that:

"Although the baseline DCO design may give drivers the impression of a detour, it provides for this movement via a dedicated link road between Hatfield Peverel and junction 21 with minimal interaction with property access and frontages, and junction 21 itself has longer slip roads which facilitate acceleration to speeds appropriate for a trunk road".

2.3 BCS contend that a sensible description of manoeuvres involving a right- hand turn at the priority decided existing mini roundabout opposite the Duke of Wellington, followed by left hand turn over a bridge spanning 6 lanes of the A12 to reach a priority decided roundabout to turn right over another bridge over the 6 lane

A12 to reach another priority decided roundabout to join the A12 to reverse the direction of travel is, in fact, a detour.

2.4 To help in establishing public confidence in the Applicant's assessments BCS request an explanation of the assumptions contained in the construction of the model. BCS also request the Applicant to advise whether their modelling produced a range of outcomes and, if so, to state where the predicted 88% / 12% lies in the range. BCS understand that the "Rochdale Envelope" principles apply to the scheme and, if so, the Applicant should have both a best- case and worst-case outcomes readily available.

2.5 The Applicant's mantra is that road(s) can cope with the predicted increases(s) in traffic. BCS has requested he Applicant to provide an explanation of the apparent anomalies between the assessed capacities of Boreham's local roads. The Applicant cites OFH1A but that report does not deal with the capacity issues. To do so requires data for the volume of traffic and the capacity of the road on which it travels. For capacity data, BCS relies upon the data provided by the Applicant, (which BCS acknowledges with thanks), as contained in an email of 11th March 2022 from [REDACTED] which stated:

"In a vacuum, a single-carriageway urban road would have a maximum capacity of 1,300 vehicles per hour in each direction, according to our traffic modelling. However, this figure is a best-case scenario which doesn't account for factors which may restrict a road's capacity in practice, such as junctions, parked cars, or narrow lanes. Therefore, each road in the area analysed in our traffic modelling has its capacity estimated individually; these numbers are calculated by a combination of standard capacities for different kinds of road, and real-life observations of traffic flows and speeds.

The traffic capacities you have requested for Boreham Main Road and Plantation Road are listed below:"

Road	Road type selected	Capacity (vehs/hr in each direction)
Main Road Boreham (between Church Road and Plantation Road)	Single carriageway B-road (30mph, high development)	800
Main Road east and west of . Boreham village	Single carriageway B-road (average condition, 40mph)	935
Plantation Road	Single carriageway C-road (30mph)	935

2.6 The real-life observations of BCS members who live in Boreham and drive these roads are:

Main Road is wider and straighter than Plantation Road which has twists and turns.

Main Road has some inset Bus stops, Plantation Road has none and all bus stops are at the kerb.

Main Road on road parking is a rarity whereas in Plantation Road it is not.

Main Road (formerly the A12) was constructed to A road standard, Plantation Road is and has always been a C class road.

Main Road flows through the village, Plantation Road is a short connecting road with T junctions at either end.

2.7 BCS do not have the capacity to question the methodology adopted. However, BCS do know that inputs flow through to outputs and, in the examples above, the outputs simply do not seem sensible. To help in establishing public confidence in the Applicant's assessments BCS request a detailed explanation for these apparent anomalies.

2.8 There have been many communications regarding whether Boreham's roads (especially Main and Plantation Roads) can cope with the volume of traffic predicted by the Applicant. BCS acknowledge the initial error of comparing the predicted two-way flow of traffic with the one-way capacity provided by ██████████ in March 2022. The Applicant advised, in their letter of 3rd August 2022, from ██████████ that "The two-way flow should be compared to the two way -capacity". A subsequent letter from ██████████ tts dated 16th September 2022 stated that "the two-way capacity of these roads is generated by combining the one-way capacity of each direction. The predicted traffic flows on Main Road, Waltham Road, Plantation Road and Church Road each fall well within this capacity as neither directional flow is forecasted to be above 50% of this two-way capacity." BCS thank the Applicant for the advice and explanations.

2.9 BCS requests the Applicant to provide the data for one-way traffic flows, (in each direction), for Main Road through Boreham and Plantation Road in Boreham for the AM and PM peak periods. This data will be crucial in providing public confidence that the one-way flow (on a single lane) is below capacity and will show the leeway between predicted one-way volume and assessed one way capacity. This data will also be crucial to establishing public confidence in the Applicant's contention that the adverse impacts for Boreham from closure of the southbound access at Junction 20a, are as stated in the DCO application. BCS comments that such adverse impacts assume that, following the closure of junction 20a, only 12% of traffic will turn left at the Dof W in Hatfield Peverel. BCS has a concern, widely shared by members and residents (demonstrated by the fact that Boreham parishioners submitted over 25% of the total Relevant Representations) that the actual traffic through Boreham will be significantly higher than predicted by the Applicant. The data requested from the Applicant should help allay such concerns. This data will also show the robustness of the Applicant's modelling of road capacities and directional traffic flows between left and

right hand turns at from the B1019 Maldon Road at it's junction with the B1137 at the DofW mini roundabout.

3. Mitigation

3.1 BCS have common ground with Kemi Badenoch MP, Essex County Council, Chelmsford City Council, Boreham Parish Council and Essex Police, that it is essential that the proposed reductions in speed limits are enforced by Average Speed Cameras. The need for such cameras would arise exclusively from the Applicant's proposed closure of Junction 20a.

3.2 Boreham parishioners will indirectly contribute, through general taxation, to the estimated £1.3bn cost of the scheme. Given the admitted adverse impacts upon Boreham parishioners BCS contend that it would perverse and inequitable if Boreham parishioners were required, through payment of Council Tax, also to contribute to the installation and/ or maintenance of these Average Speed Cameras. BCS therefore contend that the Applicant should pay for the installation and maintenance of the cameras and call upon the ExA to compel the Applicant to do so should the DCO be approved in its current form.

3.3 The Applicant's email of 16th December 2021 from [REDACTED] stated that a reduction in speed limit to 40mph is proposed between Junction 19 and Boreham Village. BCS requests confirmation that this remains the Applicant's intention and proposes that this stretch of the B1137 is included in the Average Speed Camera coverage.

4. Dangerous Rat-Running Traffic

4.1 In September 2022 Mr P Davie, NH Project Director for the A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme was quoted in Safer Highways and widely elsewhere that (in relation to the scheme):

“Anyone living locally will also know the issue of traffic including Heavy Goods Vehicles, using local roads as rat runs. This is dangerous and has an adverse effect on local villages and the surrounding communities. This scheme will put that traffic back on the A12 where it belongs”.

4.2 The DCO proposals would have the effect of putting more (not less) rat-running traffic through Boreham and on the local roads of Church Road and Hammonds Road (part of which is a Protected Lane running through a Conservation Area) in the knowledge that this will have adverse and dangerous impacts in Boreham and on these local roads. BCS do not accept that public money can be spent to increase the dangers, listed by Mr Davie, to Boreham parishioners. BCS repeats it's request for an explanation and will continue to do so until one is given.

4.3 BCS supports the scheme objective stated to “take long distance traffic off the local roads and put it back on the A12 where it belongs, so that local roads aren't used as rat runs, affecting local villages and their communities”. BCS does not support the proposal to close the junction 20a on-slip as this is diametrically opposed to the scheme's objective. Closure forces commuters from the west of Hatfield Peverel who currently access the A12 at the Junction 20a on-slip, to use the local road, the B1137, through Boreham.

4.4 The Applicant states in REP1- 002, RR -046 – 02, that “overall” there will be less traffic on Essex’s local roads and that more roads will see a decrease than those who will see an increase and this is welcomed. Nevertheless, the DCO proposals are specifically, detrimental for Boreham. Problems transferred to Boreham are not problems solved. BCS contends that adoption of the plan proposed by Mr Martin (see Alternative Proposal above) would have the following benefits:

Improve the DCO outcomes by increasing the reduction in traffic on Essex’s roads and increasing the number of local roads that would see a decrease rather than an increase in rat-running traffic.

Dispel the idea, held by many Boreham parishioners (and expressed at Village Hall meetings and through their responses to the DCO application, that the outcome from spending £1.3bn of public money will be a significant deterioration in their environment.

4.5 BCS remain concerned regarding the Applicant’s admission that the significant adverse operational impact of the scheme will be, for Boreham:

28 households will suffer, “increased operational traffic noise contributing to sleep disturbance and annoyance.

Increased operational traffic on Main Road contributing to moderate severance.

4.6 BCS would record that Boreham contains about a third of all households predicted to suffer significant adverse effects from the scheme’s operation and that as the B1137 effectively bisects the Village and an increase in severance is a material disadvantage for all residents. These are the admitted adverse effects predicted by the Applicant’s models that assume 12% of traffic will turn left at the DofW junction. If, as BCS contends, the 12% prediction under-estimates the actual decisions made by commuters, the significant adverse effects on Boreham will be even more severe and impact many more households and parishioners.

5. Protected Lanes

5.1 Church Road/Little Baddow Road is, because of its historic interest, designated from Shottesbrook to the river Chelmer Bridge, as a Protected Lane Chelmsford City Council/Essex County Council; Policy DC15 refers. These roads are narrow country lanes totally unsuited to commuter traffic; they are classic “rat-runs”.

5.2 The river Chelmer has always been popular with anglers and has many long -established stands along the river. The river and pathways have become increasingly popular with water-sports enthusiasts and walkers. The only practical area for road-side parking is on Church Road, travelling west from Boreham immediately before the bridge. This increased leisure use has recently necessitated the introduction of parking restrictions with double yellow lines now in place. The bridge has a weight restriction to exclude HGV’s but increasingly, to avoid congestion at junction 19, sat-navs seem to be directing HGV’s along Hammonds Road to the bridge Faced with a weight restriction and the practical impossibility

(due to road width) of turning, HGV's ignore the weight restriction and cross the bridge. BCS believe that the route and river Chelmer Bridge merit a site visit by the ExA.

5.2 BCS notes from REP1-002 / RR 158 -01 that the Applicant states:

“The protected lane status and the weight restrictions on Church Road and the River Chelmer bridge are proposed to remain to discourage traffic from using this route to bypass junction 19 and join the A12 at junction 18.”

5.3 BCS notes in 4.3 above that closure of the Junction 20a on-slip diverts traffic from the A12 and onto the B1137. The Applicant predicts increases in traffic on Plantation Road some of which will be as a direct consequence of closing Junction 20a. BCS contend that maintenance of the status quo is not enough to safeguard the local Protected Lane and calls upon the Applicant to bring forward additional measures to do so.

5.4 BCS notes from REP1-002 / RR-074-006, that the Applicant states:

“With the proposed scheme in place, some traffic is still predicted to travel from junction 18 to Boreham via Hammonds Road. Traffic on Hammonds Road is predicted to increase as a result of the proposed scheme by around one vehicle per minute. One reason for this is because, due to a slight increase in the amount of traffic on the A12 south of Boreham Interchange, journey times on the A12 between junction 15 and junction 19 are predicted to increase by around one minute overall in the proposed scheme opening year of 2027.”

5.5 The traffic referred to in 5.4 above, is heading east towards Boreham does not have priority at the river Chelmer Bridge and the sight lines at the bridge are difficult, especially in the spring and summer periods where vegetation hinders the view. In the peak periods, where commuters are rushing to avoid congestion, the Applicant predicts, on these Protected / Country lanes, increased traffic heading west from Boreham meeting increased traffic heading east towards Boreham, at the single lane, westward priority lane over the river Chelmer Bridge. BCS contend that the dangers of this situation should be clear to the Applicant and requests the Applicant to either adopt the alternative proposal submitted by Mr Martin (see 1 above) or provide a safe solution for this problem simply waiting to happen.

5.6 BCS request the Applicant to inform the debate on this issue by providing the following data:

The current traffic volumes (each way) for both AM and PM peaks periods.

The predicted increases (each way) for both the AM and peak periods.

6. Cultural Heritage; Impact upon Boreham's Listed Buildings

6.1 Boreham has two conservation areas, Church Road and Roman Road (Main Road, B1137) and within the parish of Boreham there are 38 listed buildings. Early settlement is known from at least 850 BC. The first mention of Boreham is in the Doomsday Book of 1066. The centrepiece of Boreham is the Grade 1 listed St Andrew's Church and the building

shows evidence of Saxon, Norman and Tudor construction. The church has a number of unusual features, including a central, square tower. The Church is accessed from a narrow pavement on Church Road and the road is used to access Main, Plantation, Little Baddow and Hammonds Roads. There is a priority lane (with permanent priority heading from Church Road to Main Road) directly to the front of the Church. This road is wholly inappropriate for use by rat-running traffic.

6.2 The predicted adverse impact for Boreham's parishioners is covered in 4 above. BCS would add that Boreham's heritage and village environment, unique locally in that separation has been preserved, is presently adversely impacted by commuter traffic. To propose the closure of the on-slip at Junction 20a in the full knowledge that more "dangerous rat-running traffic" would be directed through Boreham, is tantamount to a wilful decision of cultural vandalism.

6.3 The list of Boreham's Historic assets directly impacted by increased traffic from the closure of the on-slip at junction 20a is shown below. The LHS numbers shown are as allocated on the website of British Listed Buildings. The RHS numbers are taken from the Boreham Village Design Statement (VDS) and the book titled More About Boreham (MOB) ISBN. BCS are happy to provide copies of these documents.; please contact

 .

6.4 Listed Buildings from east to west;

28, The Cock Inn, on roadside of B1137, North side at Waltham Road Junction. VDS p55. MOB 36, 37

27 The Chestnuts, on roadside of B1137, south side opposite Six Bells, painted pink

25, Six Bells Public House, on roadside of B1137, north side at Plantation Road junction. VDS p54; MOB p28, 29, 30,38

2, 1, 2, and 3, Maltings Cottages; between Clock House & Plantation Road on roadside VDS p27

15, Clock House & Clock House Cottage, by B1137 on south roadside, drawing on p27 VDS

32, The Wine Barrel on roadside of B1137, North side at Church Road junction, used to be the old post office, now a barbers shop with a very old house behind it. VDS p47

Not listed, but a heritage asset all the same The Limes is a very attractive house on the roadside north of the B1137, photo VDS p31

8, Boreham House & registered historic garden with its ornamental canal coming right up to the roadside. Photo VDS p16

17, Generals, right on the roadside a former inn named after General Monke. MOB p40,41

6.5 Listed Buildings from Plantation Road heading to the river Chelmer Bridge:

24, Shottesbrook, on pavement where Church Road becomes Little Baddow Road.
VDS p37 MOB p220/1

6, Barn North East of Old Hall Farm, quite close to Little Baddow Road, black weatherboarded, with its own listing.

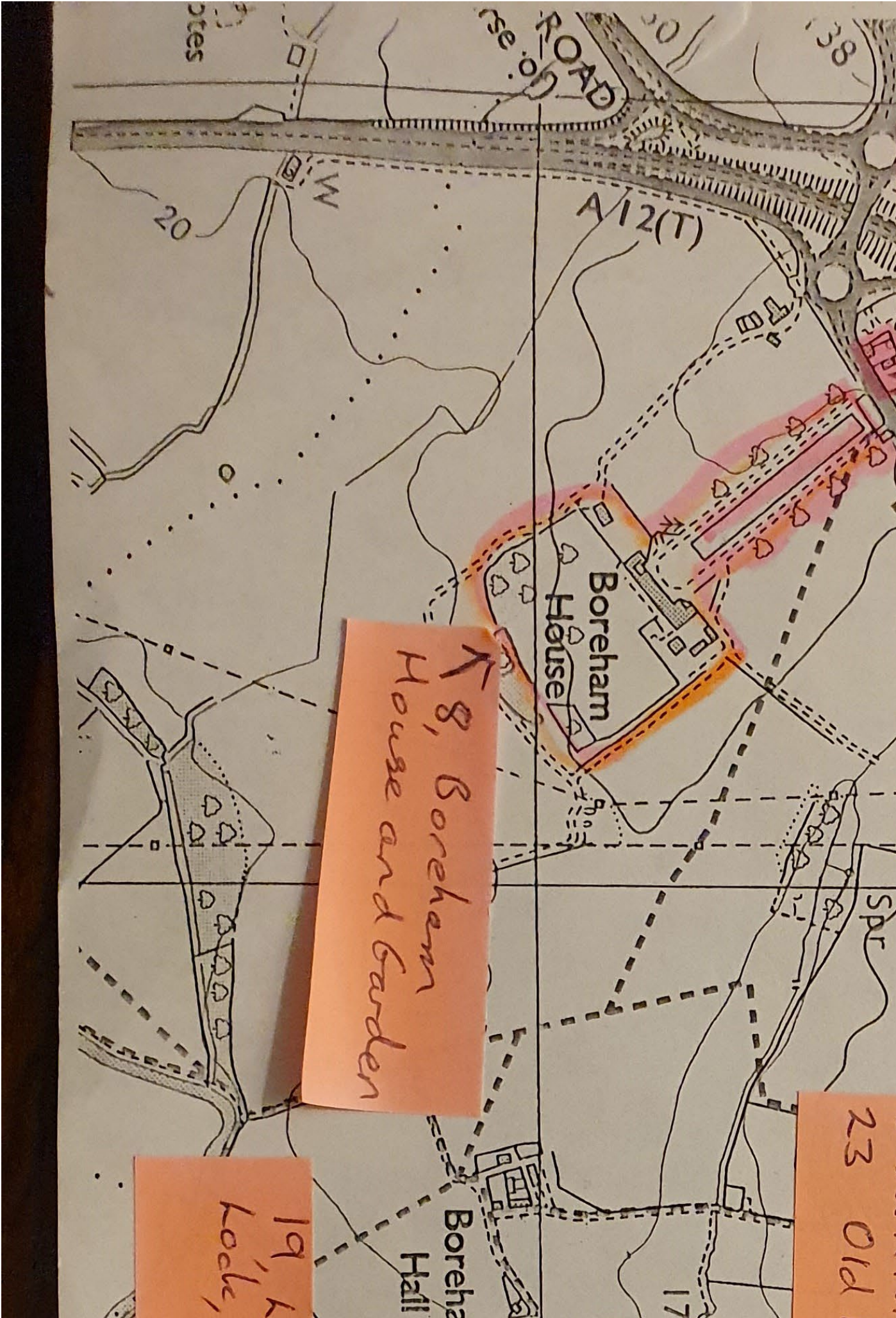
23, Old Hall Farm, set well back from the Little Baddow Road but visible from it. VDS p37. MOB p76, 81

19, Little Baddow Lock set well back from the road but visible from it.

6.7 Church Road/Little Baddow Road is, because of its historic interest, designated from Shottesbrook to the river Chelmer Bridge, as a Protected Lane Chelmsford City Council/Essex County Council; Policy DC15 refers. Most extra traffic on Plantation Road will have come from/gone to Church Road, Little Baddow Road and Hammonds Road, over the river Chelmer Bridge to get to/from Junction 18, avoiding the congestion at Junction 19.

BCS February 2023

Attachment: Boreham Listed Buildings (please reduce size to view in full)



18, Boreham House and Garden

19, K Loch,

23 Old

A12(T)

Boreham House

Boreham Hall

SPR

W

20

20

38

17