

**Bowers Gifford &
North Benfleet
Residents' Association 2013**

**SUMMARY OF
OBSERVATIONS REGARDING
THE DEVELOPER'S REPORT
ON OUR LOCAL HERITAGE**

**RE: PLANNING APPLICATION
REFERENCE 13/00140/OUT**

BG&NB's Residents' Association observations on outline planning documents (13/00140/OUT)

Heritage

We refer Basildon Council to the Residents' Association's submission to the Landscape Partnership's Character Assessment which sets out much of Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet's heritage.

Section 1 Introduction		
	A desk based assessment has been provided by Meridian Strategic Land (MSL)	<p>The report is shallow and lacks local knowledge. It is probably a standard report overwritten for different clients. The writer may not have even visited our village.</p> <p>Attention to detail is poor e.g. incorrect spelling of local roads/places Saddlers Farm should be Sadlers Farm, Osbourne Road should be Osborne Road.</p> <p>This report may not be important to the writer but it is of significant importance to the people who live here.</p>
Page 7/23	Geology	<p>Older local residents talk about a lake in the fields behind Westlake Avenue where they used to swim when they were children. At some point in time the water from this lake was diverted. Where was the water from this lake diverted? Will the diversion be affected by any future development?</p>
		<p>Local people talk about a plane being shot down, and crashing in the fields between Ilfracombe Avenue and Westlake Avenue, during World War 2. This is not mentioned in MSL's report. Is it of significance?</p>
Page 9/23 4.3	States that Roman activity has been found on the A13/A130 "Saddlers" Farm junction. No further evidence of Roman activity has been recorded within the site or its immediate vicinity.	<p>Roman red hills and artefacts were found on the Bowers Marshes in approx 2010 and is one of the reasons why the opening of the site, by the RSPB, has been delayed.</p> <p>What is thought to be a Roman road was discovered in Bowers Marshes. This is in a straight line with Church Road which adjoins London Road.</p> <p>A short way from Church Road is Pound Lane</p>

		<p>(the old cattle pound road) which is also believed to have been a Roman Road to Wickford. Prior to the building of the A127 this road was in regular use.</p> <p>Roman red hills and artefacts have also been found at Pitsea Mount. Prior to the building of the A13 there were informal paths between Bowers Gifford and Pitsea Mount linking the two small villages.</p>
Page 9/23 4.4	This section is about Anglo Saxon and Medieval	<p>There is no mention of the Battle of Baemfloet (Benfleet) which took place between Sadlers Farm and Hadleigh Ray.</p> <p>Prince Edward's (later Edward the Confessor) army marched from London but not along the London Road for fear of being seen by the Viking scouts. The army would have found it difficult marching along the marshes and may well have passed along the higher ground at Bures (Bowers Gifford) before first encountering the Vikings at South Benfleet.</p>
Page 13/23 4.7.3	Designated Heritage Assets in a 1km radius of the Study Site	<p>The report mentions several larger dwellings as being of historic interest but makes no mention of the 17th century cottage in London Road (Walnut Cottage) or the 16th and 17th century cottages in Harrow Road. There is also at least one 18th century cottage in Osborne Road. These dwellings have no foundations. How would these dwellings cope with additional traffic particularly heavy lorries bringing building materials?</p> <p>Some of the older dwellings in Westlake Avenue have no foundations. How would these and similar dwellings in Osborne Road cope with heavy building going on behind them?</p>
		<p>At our meeting with MSL, Mr. Newberry talked about widening the junction of Burnt Mills Road with Pound Lane. However, there is a well in the hedgerow of the small plantation at the junction. This well is referred to in several local documents and local people, on request, have been allowed access to see the well. The house opposite the well (at the junction) was previously known as Pump Cottage. This is where most</p>

		<p>local people in North Benfleet collected their water before water was provided by pipes. Is this well listed? Should it be listed?</p>
5.0	Site Conditions.	<p>In the 1950s Bowers Gifford was referred to as “The Village on the Marshes”. The BBC made a programme about it showing some of the houses raised from the ground on stilts.</p> <p>The Anglo Saxon word for Benfleet is Baemfloet which literally means “floating wood”. In other words Benfleet was a swamp.</p> <p>The Residents Association believes that MSL has not taken account of Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet’s history of marshes, swamps and floods and any development could result in more floods.</p>