

# Is Empshott Grange a *safe* school location?

*An evidence-based review of traffic, carriageway geometry and network resilience on the B3006, Mill Lane and Church Lane.*



**EMPSHOTT GRANGE · SOUTH DOWNS  
NATIONAL PARK**

**SUBJECT**

Proposed school development at Empshott Grange

**SCOPE**

Highway safety & network resilience

**MATERIAL**

Photographic evidence, Nov 2025 – May 2026

## Why this *matters*.

This document sets out evidence on road safety and the effect of traffic on the community in connection with the proposed school development at Empshott Grange. It relates to planning applications SDNP/24/03736/FUL and the subsequent SDNP/25/03084/FUL. Our central concern is the safety of the lanes that would have to serve the site — roads which are not suitable for the volume and pattern of traffic a school would generate.

The B3006 is an over-used cut-through between Alton and the A3, while Mill Lane and Church Lane are narrow rural tracks, with blind bends, limited visibility and few usable passing places. There is no pavement. They are shared every day by horse riders, walkers and cyclists, with nothing to separate them from vehicles. The photographic material that follows documents these conditions as they stand today. It shows a network that is already congested at peak times, and where a single incident — a breakdown, a collision, or simply two large vehicles meeting — is enough to bring it to a complete standstill. Adding concentrated, time-pressured school traffic would make that congestion, and the total blockages that follow, a regular event rather than an occasional one — intensifying the risks to residents and road users alike, within the village and on the B3006.

## What the lanes *already* show.

Each exhibit below was recorded on routes that would directly serve the proposed school. None involved school traffic. They illustrate the network in its present, current condition.

## A range of *safety* concerns.

This document provides visual evidence, supported by video footage, demonstrating a range of highway safety concerns associated with increased traffic on Mill Lane, Church Lane and the B3006. These concerns include insufficient carriageway width, limited passing opportunities, poor visibility, queueing risks at junctions, high traffic speeds, and the particular danger posed to vulnerable road users such as horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians.

## MILL LANE · INSUFFICIENT CARRIAGEWAY WIDTH

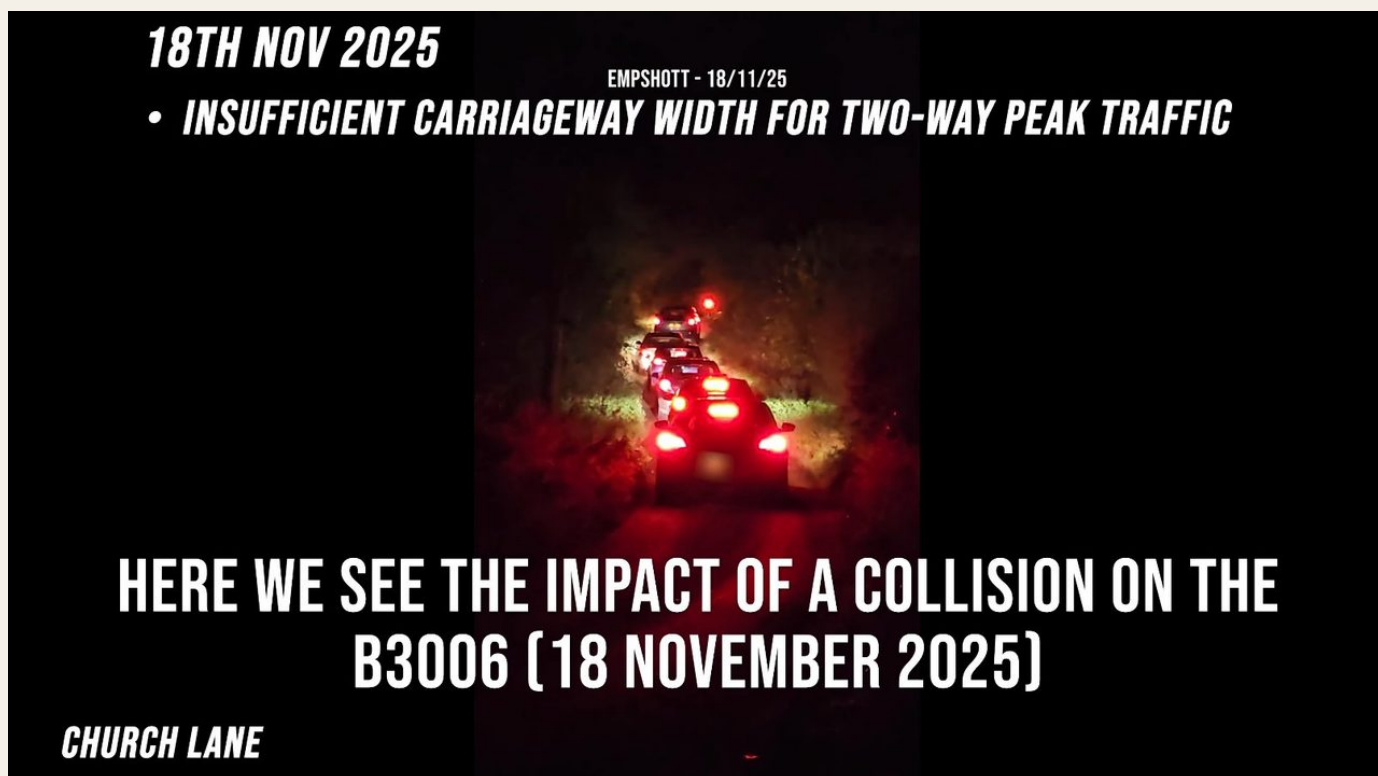
The access route cannot carry two-way traffic



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video2](https://empshott.org/video2)**

Mill Lane — the principal access route to the site — does not support two-lane traffic. A single-track lane, it has insufficient width for two vehicles to pass; where vehicles meet, one must yield to the verge or reverse to a wider point. The footage shows that even minor increases in traffic cause immediate congestion, and that multiple vehicles arriving simultaneously cause obstruction. Concentrated school-hour movements would force this repeatedly, at the busiest times of day.

## A collision on the B3006 closes the network



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video3](https://empshott.org/video3)**

On the evening of 18 November 2025, a collision on the B3006 caused queues to back up into the adjoining lanes, and traffic across Empshott — including Mill Lane and Church Lane — ground to a halt. With no viable alternative route, a single incident on the main road can render the surrounding network impassable.

In those conditions, access for emergency vehicles would be extremely difficult, if not impossible. During a similar incident, parents could be unable to reach the school, and children could be left effectively stranded until the road network clears.

## Refuse vehicle forced off the carriageway



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video4](https://empshott.org/video4)**

On Mill Lane, about 200 metres south of Empshott Grange, a Veolia refuse vehicle — a routine, scheduled service movement — was forced to leave the carriageway entirely to give way to oncoming traffic. It is a plain illustration of how unsuitable these lanes are for two-way traffic: when a larger vehicle meets oncoming traffic there is nowhere to pass, and one of them must mount the verge or reverse before either can move.

A single obstruction can block the lane entirely



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video5](https://empshott.org/video5)**

This is the junction that would serve the proposed school entrance. The lane here is bounded by hedgerows and verges, leaving little usable margin on either side and very limited space for a vehicle to pull clear.

In the event of a breakdown, obstruction or recovery operation, access past this point would be extremely difficult. The refuse vehicle shown in the previous exhibit took over 24 hours to recover, during which police traffic management was required at this very junction.

This demonstrates that incidents at this location are not easily absorbed by the road network. A stranded or recovering vehicle can effectively block the lane for as long as it remains in place.

**MILL LANE · 24 FEBRUARY 2026**

A further vehicle leaves the carriageway at the same point

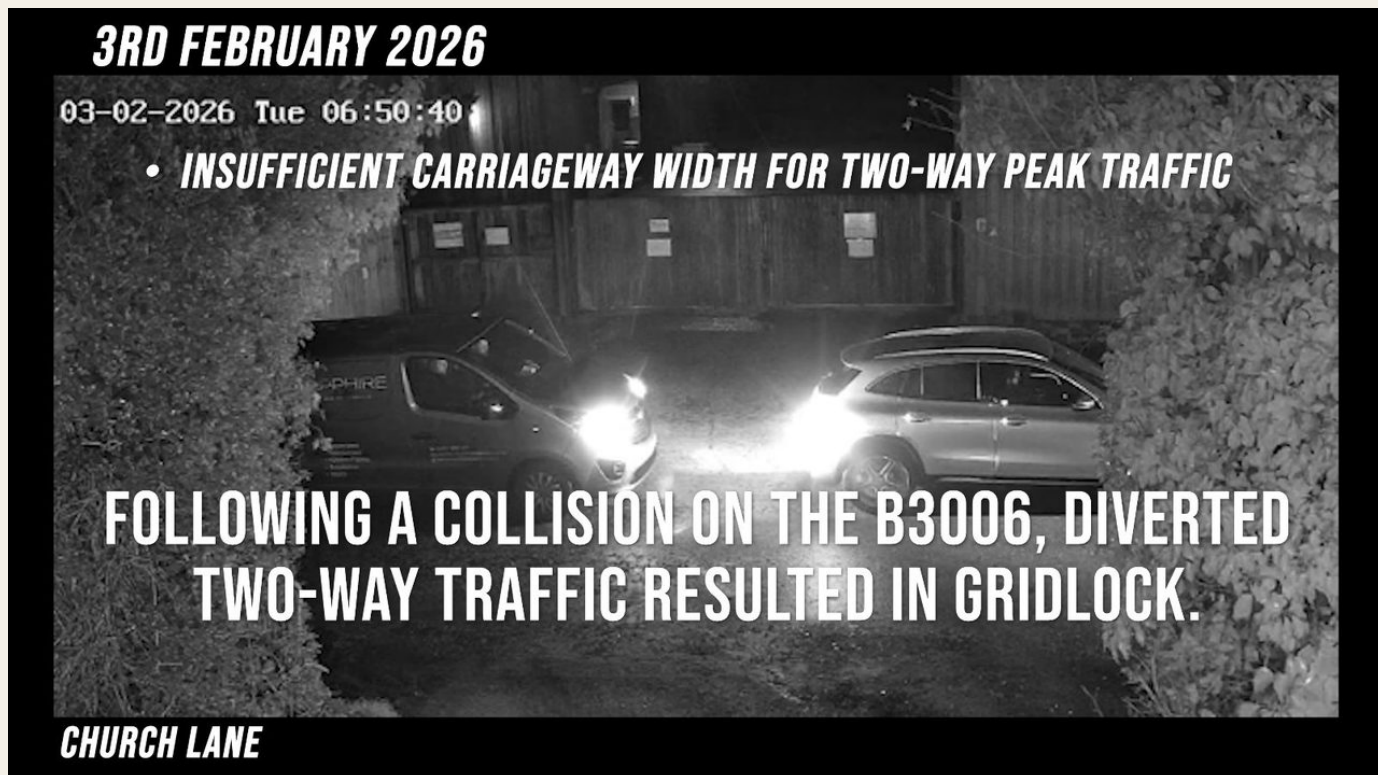


**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video6](https://empshott.org/video6)**

On 24 February 2026 another vehicle left the carriageway at the same constrained point on Mill Lane, again requiring recovery (the recovery vehicle is visible behind). A spot where ordinary vehicles repeatedly run off the carriageway is a measure of how little room these single-track lanes leave, even under today's traffic.

**CHURCH LANE · 3 FEBRUARY 2026**

## Diverted traffic gridlocks Church Lane



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video7](https://empshott.org/video7)**

Following a collision on the B3006, traffic was diverted onto Church Lane — a lane that cannot accommodate two-way flow. Diverted traffic met head-on with nowhere to pass, resulting in gridlock, recorded here at 06:50.

When the main road fails, the village lanes inherit its traffic — traffic they were never designed to carry. In these conditions, access in and out of the village becomes extremely difficult, leaving residents, parents and emergency vehicles with no reliable route through.

## MILL LANE · STOPPING SIGHT DISTANCE

Is there enough time to stop?



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video8](https://empshott.org/video8)**

This is Mill Lane heading north towards the Church Lane junction. The tree canopy, bends and gradient sharply restrict forward visibility, reducing the time available for an approaching driver to see, react and stop.

The key issue is that every vehicle leaving the proposed school via Church Lane would have to pull out at this junction — yet an approaching driver cannot see the junction until they are within approximately 15 metres of it.

On a narrow lane shared with walkers, horse riders and cyclists, this is not a marginal concern. It is the difference between a near-miss and a collision, and it would be tested repeatedly at every school drop-off and collection period.

## Long waits to turn onto the B3006



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video9](https://empshott.org/video9)**

The B3006 traffic shown here is real footage; the waiting vehicle and the line of Mill Lane have been superimposed onto it to show clearly where the junction meets the main road.

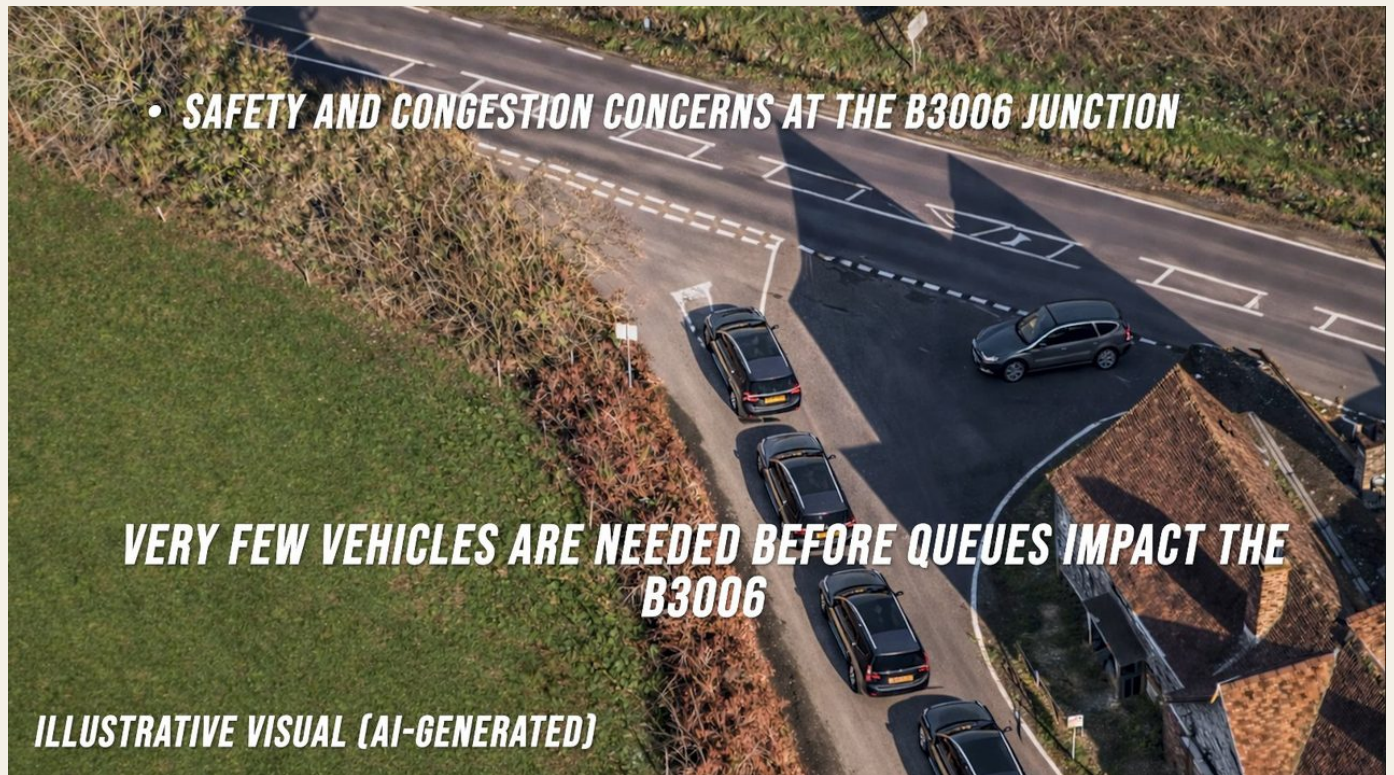
Turning right out of Mill Lane onto the B3006 means waiting for a gap in fast-moving traffic. Using the real B3006 traffic footage, the overlay shows that a vehicle attempting to make this turn would have had to wait around two minutes before a safe opportunity arose — the on-screen timer reaching just over two minutes as one gap after another proves too short to pull out safely. At peak periods such delays are common, and with added school traffic, vehicles would be likely to queue back along Mill Lane. A vehicle trying to turn in from the B3006 could then be unable to enter — left waiting on the main road and obstructing traffic.

As delays build, drivers may be pressured into risky manoeuvres. A single vehicle waiting around two minutes for a safe gap can quickly create a compounding queue behind it, particularly during concentrated school drop-off and collection periods.

Hampshire County Council, as the highway authority, has recommended refusal of this application on highway-safety grounds — its substantive response of 11 February 2025, ref. SDNP/24/03736/FUL, maintained on 29 April 2025, identifies this Mill Lane/B3006 junction specifically, warning that the additional vehicle movements could cause unsafe queueing back onto the B3006 and shunt-type collisions that could not be adequately mitigated. Concentrated school-hour demand would only intensify that risk.

**ILLUSTRATION · AI-GENERATED**

## Very few vehicles before queues reach the B3006



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video10](https://empshott.org/video10)**

This image is an AI-generated illustration, not documentary footage. It is included only to show schematically how a short queue would reach the main road — the underlying point is evidenced by the real footage above.

It would take only a few vehicles trying to turn out of Mill Lane onto the B3006, and two trying to turn in, for the junction to lock up — pushing the queue back out onto the B3006 and blocking the main road. With school drop-off and collection concentrated into short peaks, that could happen daily.

## Overtaking and excess speed at the junction



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video11](https://empshott.org/video11)**

On the B3006 approach to the Mill Lane junction, vehicles frequently overtake and regularly exceed the speed limit. Traffic is often accelerating hard in anticipation of the 60mph national speed limit beyond the junction, meaning vehicles are gathering speed at exactly the point where traffic from Mill Lane must turn out.

This is already a demonstrably hazardous location. There have been two accidents at or near this junction in recent years, including one serious incident. Introducing regular school-related turning movements — including parents unfamiliar with the road and slow-moving minibuses — would create repeated points of conflict with fast-moving through-traffic.

Given the existing accident history, observed overtaking, excess speed and limited safe gaps, the risk is not theoretical.

Additional peak-time turning movements would materially increase the likelihood of a serious collision at a junction that is already unsafe.

## CHURCH LANE

# Three vehicles bring Church Lane to a standstill

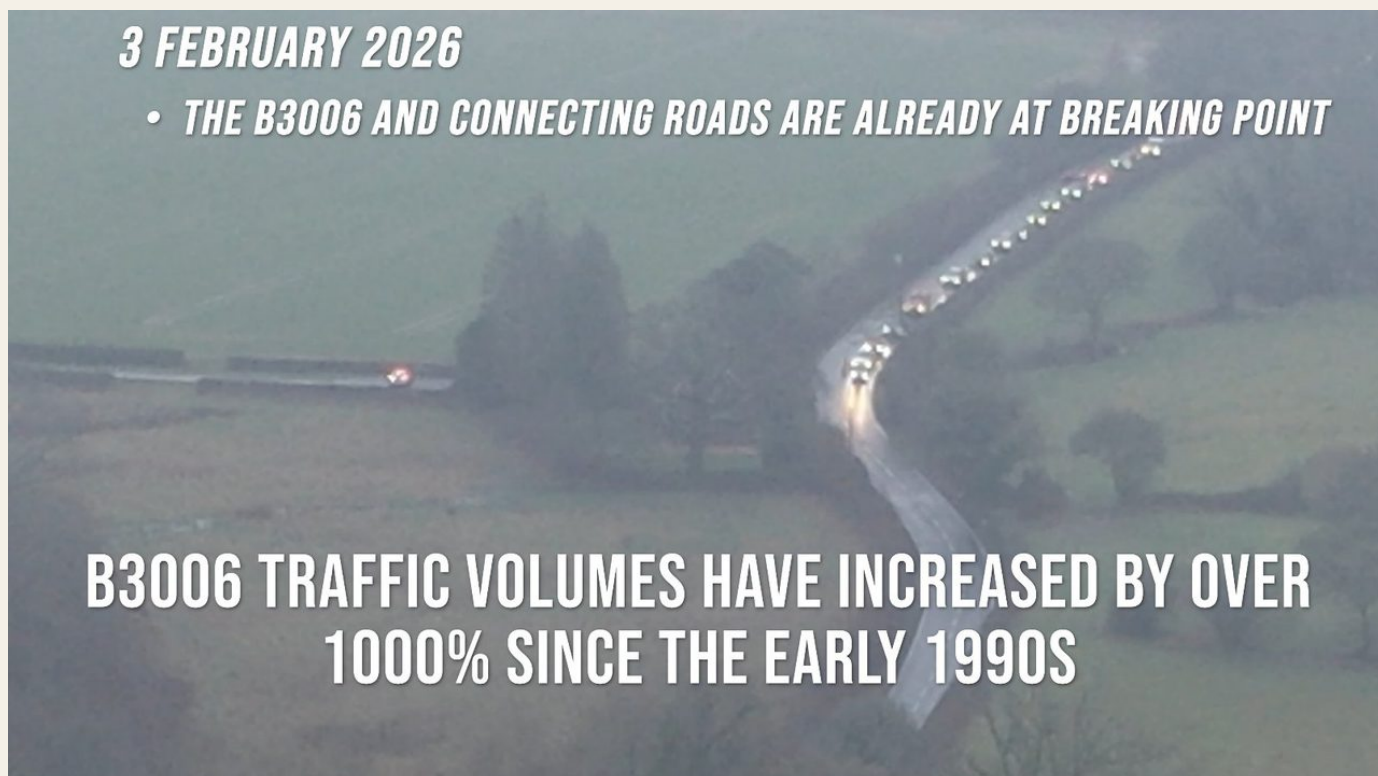


**Watch footage** · [empshott.org/video12](https://empshott.org/video12)

Church Lane is narrower still. Although its use is discouraged, nothing physically prevents drivers from taking it — and satnavs routinely direct traffic down this route. It takes only three vehicles meeting to bring the lane to a complete standstill, with reversing the only way out.

School traffic seeking to avoid delays at the main Mill Lane/B3006 junction would inevitably find its way onto Church Lane, increasing the risk of blockages on a lane that is already unsuitable for two-way traffic.

## A road already carrying far more than it was built for

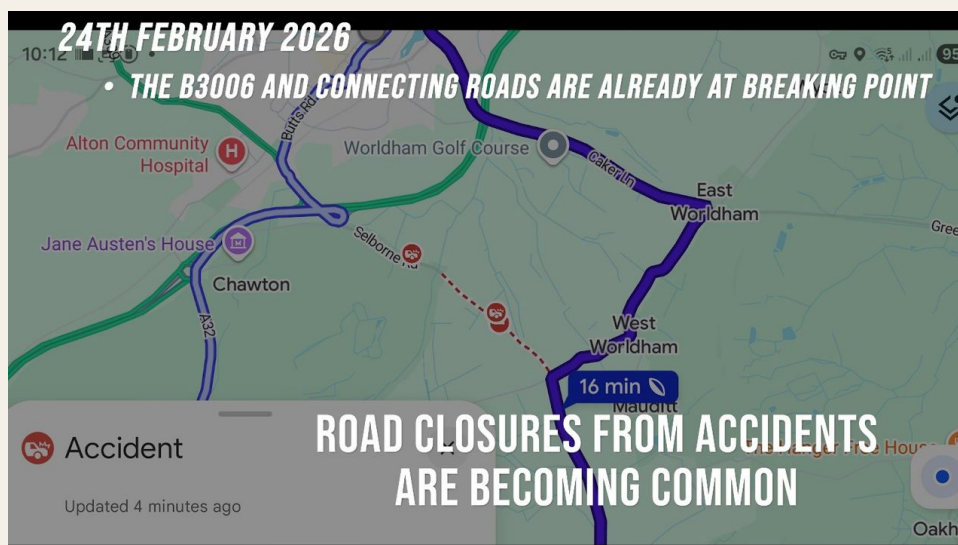


### **Watch footage · [empshott.org/video13](https://empshott.org/video13)**

The B3006 is a rural B-road now carrying heavy commuter flows. Traffic has risen by more than 1,000% since the early 1990s, taking it far beyond the level it was designed to accommodate.

With significant housing growth being promoted across East Hampshire and the wider A31 corridor, and with no planned bypass or meaningful alternative route, these pressures are likely to worsen over time. Queues, delays, accidents and road blockages will place increasing strain on both the B3006 and the surrounding village lanes that are forced to absorb its traffic when it fails.

## A network already at breaking point

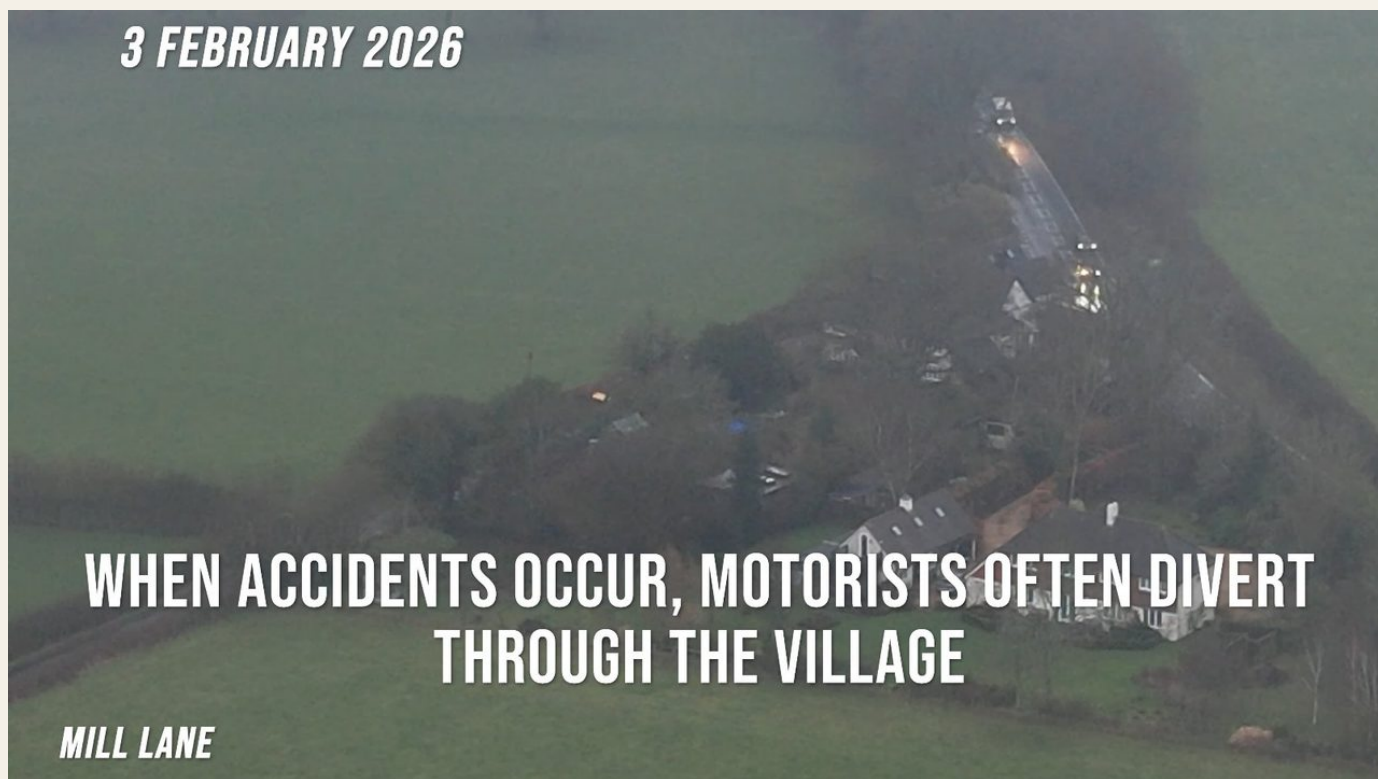


Road closures caused by collisions on the B3006 and its connecting roads are becoming a common occurrence. The accident on 24 February 2026 closed the route completely. Traffic was obliged to crawl through the surrounding villages in an attempt to escape. The school would add little to the B3006's own volumes; the concern is the reverse — that it would place pupils, staff and parents on this already-dangerous road every single day.

The danger is not theoretical. The very next day, 25 February 2026, a vehicle left the carriageway on the B3006 Selborne Road and collided with a tree, leaving the driver seriously

injured; East Hants Police issued a public appeal for witnesses and dashcam footage. This is the road as it already is — and the road that every pupil, parent and member of staff would have to travel, every day.

## Incidents push diverted traffic through the village



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video14](https://empshott.org/video14)**

When accidents occur on the B3006, motorists often divert through the village along Mill Lane and the connecting lanes — routes with no pavements, shared with residents, walkers, horse riders and cyclists. Past incidents already show how quickly that extra traffic overwhelms the village network. The concern is that a school would make the exceptional routine: more traffic, and the incidents that come with it, would mean more frequent diversions — until the congestion seen today only during an incident becomes a daily, peak-time condition, with vulnerable road users exposed each time.

## MILL LANE

Limited passing bays, unsuitable for peak flow



**Watch footage · [empshott.org/video15](https://empshott.org/video15)**

Mill Lane does have some passing bays, but they are limited in number and small in size. They may be sufficient for occasional vehicle meetings, but they are not suitable for the repeated two-way movements that would occur during school drop-off and collection periods.

Their usefulness also depends on them being kept clear. Where passing bays are used for parking, even temporarily, they cease to function as passing places altogether.

During concentrated school traffic, several vehicles could meet in quick succession on a narrow section of lane, causing traffic to stop, reverse, or wait until the obstruction clears. Rather than supporting steady two-way flow, the existing passing bays demonstrate how limited the lane's capacity really is.

## No room when a car meets a horse



Mill Lane and Church Lane are established routes for horse riders, walkers and cyclists. When a car meets a horse on these lanes, there is no room to pass at a safe distance. The driver must stop and wait, while the rider has little or no refuge beyond the verge or hedge.

The footage records exactly this type of encounter, at the entrance to Empshott Grange. Under the school proposal, this would become the single access point for all arriving traffic — every minibus, taxi and car turning in from the lane during concentrated drop-off and collection periods.

Horses are large, sensitive and sometimes unpredictable animals. Even a careful driver cannot control how a horse may react to a vehicle approaching too closely, stopping suddenly, engine noise, reversing traffic, or a build-up of vehicles behind it.

This risk is not theoretical. Several years ago, in the same local network of narrow lanes, a collision involving a van and a horse resulted in the horse suffering catastrophic injuries and being put down at the roadside. That incident illustrates the severity of the consequences when vehicles and horses are forced into conflict on lanes with no safe passing space.

Adding regular, time-pressured school traffic to lanes already shared by horse riders, walkers and cyclists would multiply these encounters. On lanes with no dedicated provision for vulnerable users, each meeting would rely on every driver slowing, stopping and judging the situation correctly. That is a serious and avoidable safety risk.

# Ten structural *limitations* of the local road network.

The photographic and video evidence identifies ten operational constraints on the existing road network. None depends on a single isolated hazard; taken together, they describe a network already operating at or beyond its practical limit.

- i. Restricted carriageway width.** Mill Lane and Church Lane are narrow, single-track lanes, without sufficient width for two vehicles to pass safely.
- ii. Limited passing provision.** Passing opportunities are few, small and inconsistent. In practice, vehicles often have to rely on verges, informal pull-ins, driveways and entrances to pass.
- iii. Limited space for service vehicles.** Routine service movements already demonstrate the limited margin available for larger vehicles on Mill Lane and Church Lane. Refuse lorries, delivery vehicles and other service traffic have little room to pass, turn or recover without obstructing the lane.
- iv. Restricted stopping sight distance.** On the approach to Church Lane from the south, bends, gradient and tree cover restrict forward visibility towards the junction. This limits the time and distance available for drivers to see, react and stop when vehicles are emerging from, or turning into, Church Lane.
- v. Junction delay and queue accumulation.** The B3006 junctions already experience recurring delay and queue formation, even without exceptional incidents.

- vi. Hazardous Mill Lane/B3006 junction.** The junction meets a fast-moving section of the B3006 where vehicles are frequently observed accelerating and overtaking close to the turning. Vehicles turning out of Mill Lane must find safe gaps in fast-moving traffic, creating a serious conflict point that would be intensified by concentrated school traffic.
- vii. Network vulnerability during incidents.** A single disruption, obstruction or collision on the B3006 can cause traffic to divert into the surrounding lanes, rendering them effectively impassable. In those conditions, access to and from the proposed school could be severely impeded, including for parents, staff, pupils and emergency vehicles.
- viii. Limited capacity for additional peak traffic.** The network has no meaningful spare capacity to absorb concentrated school-generated movements safely.
- ix. Conflict with vulnerable road users.** The lanes are shared with horse riders, walkers and cyclists, with no dedicated provision or safe separation.
- x. Constrained emergency access.** In the event of obstruction, congestion or recovery operations, access for fire, ambulance and other emergency vehicles would be severely constrained.

## A question of *cumulative* impact.

*A school at Empshott Grange would not introduce these conditions — it would intensify them.*

The evidence does not depend on a single hazard. It depends on the cumulative effect of restricted geometry, limited resilience and a network that already exhibits operational stress under normal conditions.

The peak-hour movements associated with a school operation — drop-off, collection, staff arrival, deliveries and minibus access — would coincide precisely with the periods at which the existing network is least able to absorb additional demand.

The fundamental question is not whether mitigation is possible at the entrance itself, but whether the surrounding network — Mill Lane, Church Lane and the B3006 — can safely carry school-generated traffic on top of its existing load. The documented evidence indicates that it cannot.

*Evidence published in good faith for public-interest planning discussion. To report a factual error or privacy concern, please contact [empshott.org@gmail.com](mailto:empshott.org@gmail.com).*