

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Matthew Porter
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	24 September 2025
LOCATION:	Land To The North and South of Mercer Road Warnham West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DC/25/0151 Redevelopment of the site to provide 304 residential units, parking, a retail unit, public car park, public open space, attenuation basins and landscaping. Additional information received on 9th September 2025.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	Previously visited
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice

WSCC Highways have commented previously on this application. A number of points were raised that required the Applicant's further attention.

In response to WSCC comments, the Applicant has provided,

- Accessibility Audit, dated August 2025
- Design Audit, dated 8th September 2025

Taking these two documents, the following comments would be offered.

Design Audit

The Design Audit covers specifically the design of the proposed signalised junction onto the A264. In reviewing the design, it is apparent that this is reliant on the reduction of the speed limit on the A264 to 50mph. It is noted that there is no review within the Design Audit of the proposed 50mph speed limit against the WSCC Speed Limit Policy, and therefore no indication provided as to whether this in-principle may be achieved. The means of lowering the speed limit will be via a Traffic Regulation Order, which is subject to a separate statutory process that cannot be guaranteed should planning permission be granted for the proposed units. Given this situation, there will need to be planning conditions/legal obligations to ensure certainty over the speed limit alteration and delivery of the traffic signals ahead of any part of the development commencing. The wording and nature of these is to be agreed.

The Applicant would be reminded that an editable version of the Road Safety response should be provided to WSCC in order to complete the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.

Accessibility Audit

As requested by WSCC Highways, the Applicant has undertaken a more detailed review of walking routes from the development to those existing facilities and services within reasonable walking distance. This is based upon a 2km walking distance. At the outset, WSCC previously recommended that reasonable walking distance would be considered as 1.6km; this being the distance quoted within the National Travel Survey within which the significant majority of walking trips are made. WSCC do not consider this as an ultimate threshold and acknowledge that there is the potential for some trips to take place beyond this. There must be some recognition however that certain trip purposes as well as any physical impairment will restrict the distance people may be willing to walk.

Based on table 4.1 within the Accessibility Audit, it's apparent that walking distances to the majority of services are at or beyond the recommended 1.6km. Bohunt Horsham is detailed as being within 2km but this is seemingly contradicted by figure 4.1. Distances aside, WSCC acknowledge that there are safe and suitable walking routes available once residents have crossed the A264. There are still a number of identified locations where tactile paving at crossing points is absent. A scheme of works can be secured as part of the planning application to implement appropriate improvements at locations identified in the Audit.

A greater range of services can be reached by cycling, although this is not exclusively reviewed or considered within the Audit. There is limited dedicated cycle infrastructure once residents have crossed the A264 and cyclists will have to share the carriageway with other vehicular traffic. Whilst potential routes southwards towards Horsham are subject to a 30mph speed limit, for the most part these are not lightly trafficked as suggested within the Audit with there being steady or high flow of vehicle traffic as identified in the Horsham Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. These routes can be used by some users by not all. It's accepted that the development will not generate such demands to warrant the delivery of holistic cycle infrastructure and will also be subject to CIL, which could then be used to fund certain cycle schemes should they be developed.

For the purposes of the Accessibility Audit, WSCC Highways fully acknowledge that walking distances to existing services are significant and that cycling infrastructure is lacking once residents have crossed the A264. Looking at walking and cycling journeys as a whole, there remain a number of points made previously by WSCC that remain unaddressed. This includes the suitability of a 1.5 metre wide footway along Langhurstwood Road, design of walking routes within the site, and the uncertainty as to how walking and cycling routes will be achieved into the adjoining Phase 3 Mowbray development to ensure a comprehensive development, as well as the changes required to the approved Mowbray A264 Western Roundabout highway works. Issues were also raised with the submitted travel plan in terms of the limited range of measures being proposed, and therefore the ability to achieve the targets being promoted.

In summary, these are aspects that need to be addressed ahead of this planning application being determined to ensure that safe and suitable access can be achieved.

Ian Gledhill
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services

