

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Amanda Wilkes
FROM:	WSCC – Highway Authority
DATE:	21 August 2025
LOCATION:	Stonehouse Farm Handcross Road Horsham RH13 6NZ
SUBJECT:	<p>DC/25/0403</p> <p>Full Planning Application to form a comprehensive masterplan including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rationalisation and enhancement of existing commercial facilities (Use Classes E(g) B2 and B8 at Stonehouse Business Park including demolition of two buildings and their replacement with new Class E(g), B2 and B8 facilities. Extension of existing building to form a new office and wardens' accommodation. Existing mobile home removed. 2. Decommissioning of the Anaerobic Digester and re-use of the existing 2no buildings for storage and office uses (Class E (g) and B8) and the diversion of a public footpath. 3. Residential redevelopment of the Jacksons Farm site including the demolition of existing barns to provide 3no. dwellings with access, parking, and landscaping. <p>More information received from Dominic Smith's email on 29 July 2025 and email from Ollie Thompson dated 20 August 2025.</p>
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	25 April 2025
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice

This is the third WSCC Highways response to the above planning application seeking full Planning Application to form a comprehensive masterplan including:

1. (Component part 1) - Rationalisation and enhancement of existing commercial facilities (Use Classes E(g)) B2 and B8 at Stonehouse Business Park including demolition of two buildings and their replacement with new Class E(g), B2 and B8 facilities. Extension of existing building to form a new office and wardens' accommodation. Existing mobile home removed.

2. (Component Part 2) - Decommissioning of the Anaerobic Digester and re-use of the existing 2-no buildings for storage and office uses (Class E (g) and B8) and the diversion of a public footpath.

3. (Component Part 3) - Residential redevelopment of the Jacksons Farm site including the demolition of existing barns to provide 3-no. dwellings with access, parking, and landscaping.

Comments below respond to further information produced by i-Transport transportation consultants (Document Reference. ITS19302-012 dated: 23 July 2025) and contents of email dated 20 August 2025 from Ollie Thompson of i-Transport and should be read alongside previous WSCC Highways responses dated 28 April 2025 and 10 July 2025.

Response.

In its response dated 10 July 2025, the Highway Authority requested that additional information be sought from the applicant. The two outstanding matters requiring reply are shown below (previous consultant's comments in **red** text, previous WSCC Highways comments in **green** and latest WSCC Highways comments in **blue** text) :

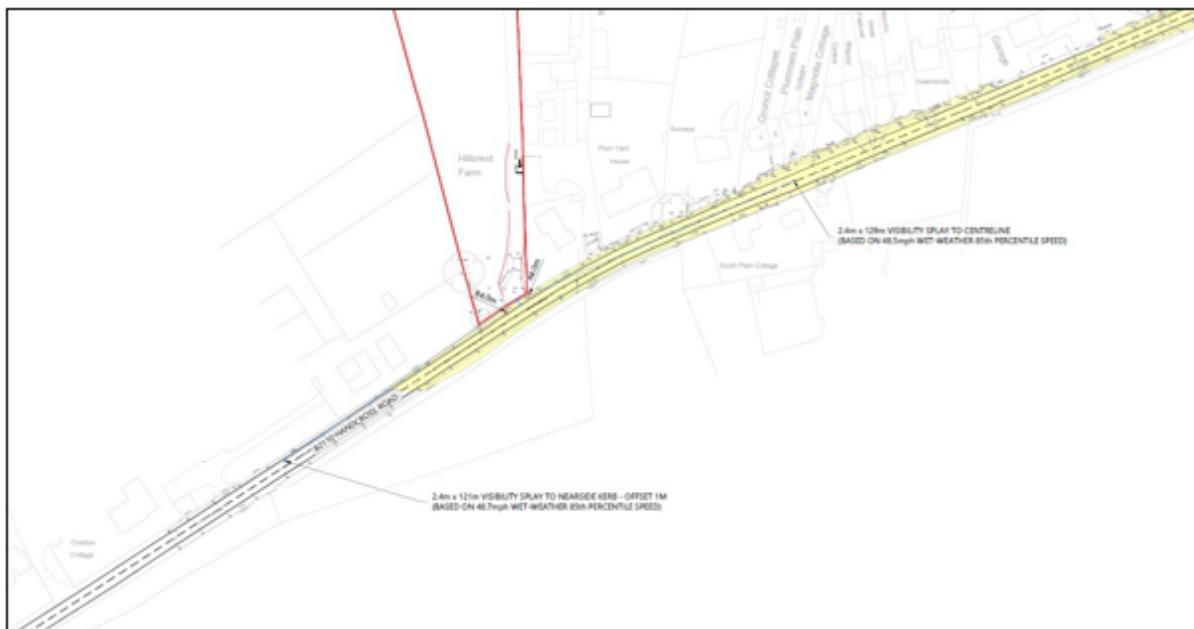
For component part 2 of the development:

1. With regard to the visibility splays offered, these are less than those recommended in DMRB for a road with a 50mph speed limit. Applicant to provide further explanation and justification about this, please, particularly given that trips to and from the site are shown to increase if this proposal is approved.

Handcross Road is subject to a 50mph speed limit – however, ATC data has been obtained that identifies mean and 85th percentile speeds. The data is provided at Appendix E and the speeds and resultant visibility splays using DMRB parameters are summarised in Table 3.1 (below):

Access	Design Speed		Visibility Splay	
	Eastbound	Westbound	Eastbound	Westbound
Proposed Driveway Access	44.2mph	46.2mph	121m	129m

Visibility splays at the access have been reviewed in this context. The updated access drawing ITS19302-GA-009 demonstrates the splay to a 1m offset from the nearside kerb line. The splays are achievable within land under control of the Applicant / within the highway boundary, with some maintenance of vegetation that has overgrown into the highway. This maintenance will be undertaken as part of the works required to implement the access improvements under license from WSCC. An extract of the drawing is provided in Image 3.1 (below):



Having reviewed this, the text above conflicts with what's shown on the plan. Although the plan shows a visibility splay of 2.4m x 121m in the leading traffic direction (looking west from the access) taken to a point 1.0m offset from the kerb line which is acceptable to the Highway Authority, the visibility splay of 2.4m x 129m in the trailing traffic direction (looking east from the access), is shown to the *centreline* of the road, which is generally not acceptable to the Highway Authority as it does not meet DMRB requirements. If the splay is taken to the centreline, the full extent of the play is not available meaning that vehicles travelling west-bounds that might be overtaking other vehicles travelling in the same direction, could be 'lost' in the area on the nearside of the carriageway and, therefore, not visible to vehicles emerging from the access, which could result in conflicts. And although there is a fixed white line on this part of Handcross Road that instructs drivers not to overtake, extending approximately 45m in the leading traffic direction and 125m in the trailing traffic direction from the proposed point of access, there is no physical measure in the carriageway to stop indiscriminate overtaking. Therefore, the applicant should re-visit this and provide visibility splays to an offset of 1.0m from the nearside kerb line in both directions.

The correct details, plus pedestrian visibility splays, are now shown on i-Transport Drawing ITS19302-GA-009 Revision 'A'.

For component part 3 of the development:

1. Very little information is provided about this part of the development. As far as can be determined from the documents submitted as part of the application, access to these properties appears to be via the access arrangements for 'component 1' of this development, as detailed above. As such, there is no bespoke provision for access to these properties by non-car modes nor to facilities and services in the wider community, resulting in a reliance on car-based trips only. Applicant to provide a response to this and to show how travel by non-car modes has been considered for this part of the development.

The redevelopment of the redundant buildings has been developed in consultation with local residents and Lower Beeding Parish Council, who have expressed their support for the scheme.

The proposal for 3 residential units should be considered in the context of the fallback position associated with the conversion of the existing agricultural buildings to residential under the provisions of Class Q, which is set out in greater detail in Section 9 of the Planning Statement (ref: P2197) that accompanies the planning application.

The existing buildings can be converted to 10 residential units under Class Q, which definitively does not assess the sustainability of the location, and this must be factored into the consideration of the new dwellings. The only matters for consideration through Class Q is in relation to the acceptability of the accesses onto Hammerpond Road, which retain the existing points of access and egress, whilst significantly reducing the level of use associated with the lawful agricultural and commercial uses (with the eastern barn previously used by a scaffold company).

Notwithstanding, the proposal includes the provision of 3 new houses, a scale of development in keeping with the local area, assisting in maintaining the vitality of the local area. These dwellings will be provided with electric vehicle charging, consistent with Building Regulation requirements, to encourage the use of low/no emission vehicles as well as cycle parking in accordance with Council parking standards.

The above comments are noted. With regard to the conversion potential until Use Class Q, the case officer is invited to respond to that. With regard to access to the dwellings, no clear plan appears to be available showing this. While mention is made of access or accesses) to Hammerpond Road, the applicant still needs to provide a clear plan showing proposed access arrangements, including, amongst other matters, suitable visibility splays in both directions along the edge of the carriageway plus details of parking and turning for occupiers of the dwellings.

In i-Transport's email response to the Highway Authority dated 20 August 2025, the consultant says that with regards to the residential development off Hammerpond Road, no new accesses are proposed. As such, the existing accesses are to be used, and no modification of the accesses are proposed. The email continues by saying that the proposed use of the site in a residential capacity would be a less-intensive use than the historic use of the site, and therefore they consider that no modification of the access is necessary. The consultant estimates that in its redeveloped form, it is likely that the proposed use would result in a daily reduction of nine vehicle movements compared to the existing use on site. They also say that the proposal also has the benefit of reducing large vehicle movements along Hammerpond Road, albeit recognising that refuse vehicles will still be required to attend the site. However, these vehicles would already be attending other neighbouring properties along the road.

The consultant has also reviewed CrashMap data for the latest available 25-year period (the full extent of records) for Hammerpond Road, saying that this has identified that no accidents have been recorded along Hammerpond Road within proximity of the existing access points during the time examined.

While the Highway Authority accept that traffic movements (and traffic types) would likely reduce with the residential dwellings replacing the agricultural buildings, it still considers that the site frontage (specifically visibility across the frontage for users of the site) should be improved as vegetation across the frontage is, in places, overgrown. From observation of available mapping information, the land across the frontage of the site alongside the carriageway of

Hammerpond Road, is a combination of both highway land and land in the control of the applicant. As such, the Highway Authority recommend that a pre-commencement condition be attached to any planning permission to secure a plan (post-planning) showing the maximum achievable visibility splays using the available land, taken from each access point and running along the carriageway of Hammerpond Road in both directions.

Conclusion.

Should the LPA be minded to approve the development, the Highway Authority recommends that it should be subject to the following:

S106 Agreement (to secure) –

1. Travel Plan Statement for the commercial components of the proposal + associated monitoring fee

And, the following highways-related planning conditions:

1. Access (Accesses to be provided prior to first occupation)

No part of the development shall be first occupied until such time as the vehicular accesses serving Component Part's 1 and 2 (the commercial parts of the scheme) have been constructed in accordance with the details shown on the approved planning drawings.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

2. Visibility (details required)

No part of Component Part 3 (the residential development served off Hammerpond Road) shall be first occupied until visibility splays of 2.4 metres by the maximum achievable visibility splays using land forming part of the public highway and land in the applicant's control have been provided at the proposed site vehicular access onto Hammerpond Road in accordance with plans and details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Once provided the splays shall thereafter be maintained and kept free of all obstructions over a height of 0.6 metre above adjoining carriageway level or as otherwise agreed.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

3. Car parking and turning spaces (details approved)

No part of the development shall be first occupied until the car parking and turning spaces have been constructed in accordance with the approved site plans. These spaces shall thereafter be retained at all times for their designated purpose.

Reason: To provide car-parking and turning spaces for the use

4. EVC Parking Spaces*

No part of the development shall be first occupied until Electric Vehicle Charging spaces have been provided in accordance with plans and details submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To provide EVC charging points to support the use of electric vehicles in accordance with national sustainable transport policies

*(*If this is a matter to be considered through the Buildings Regulations approval process, then this condition can fall away).*

5. Cycle parking

No part of the development shall be first occupied until covered and secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with plans and details submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with current sustainable transport policies.

6. Construction Management Plan (Horsham Only)

The development hereby approved shall not commence until the following construction details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the following measures:

- i. Details of site management contact details and responsibilities;
- ii. A plan detailing the site logistics arrangements on a phase-by-phase basis (as applicable), including:
 - a. location of site compound,
 - b. location for the loading, unloading and storage of plant and materials (including any stripped topsoil),
 - c. site offices (including location, height, size and appearance),
 - d. location of site access points for construction vehicles,
 - e. location of on-site parking,
 - f. locations and details for the provision of wheel washing facilities and dust suppression facilities
- iii. The arrangements for public consultation and liaison prior to and during the demolition and construction works – newsletters, fliers etc, to include site management contact details for residents;
- iv. Details of any floodlighting, including location, height, type and direction of light sources, hours of operation and intensity of illumination

The construction shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the details and measures approved.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental in order to consider the potential impacts on the amenity of nearby occupiers and highway safety during construction and in accordance with Policies 33 and 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

INFORMATIVES

1. Works within the Highway – Implementation Team

The applicant is required to obtain all appropriate consents from West Sussex County Council, as Highway Authority, to cover the off-site highway works. The applicant is requested to contact The Implementation Team Leader (01243 642105) to commence this process. The applicant is advised that it is an offence to undertake any works within the highway prior to the agreement being in place.

2. Temporary Works Required During Construction

The applicant is advised of the requirement to enter into early discussions with and obtain the necessary licenses from the Highway Authority to cover any temporary construction related works that will obstruct or affect the normal operation of the public highway prior to any works commencing. These temporary works may include, the placing of skips or other materials within the highway, the temporary closure of on-street parking bays, the imposition of temporary parking restrictions requiring a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order, the erection of hoarding or scaffolding within the limits of the highway, the provision of cranes over-sailing the highway.

Report ends.

Tim Townsend
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services