

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Nicola Pettifer
FROM:	WSSC – Highways Authority
DATE:	15 September 2025
LOCATION:	Land North of Guildford Road Bucks Green Rudgwick West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DC/25/1269 Outline Planning Application for up to 90 no. residential dwellings (including 40% affordable) all matters to be reserved apart from access.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	15 th September 2025
RECOMMENDATION:	More Information

1. The planning application is noted as being submitted in outline with only matters of access being approved at this stage.
2. The following documents have been reviewed in the preparation of these comments,
 - Transport Assessment and associated appendices, dated 31st July 2025
 - Land Use Parameter Plan – 02, drawing LUPP-02, rev A
 - Site Layout – 03 Illustrative, drawing SL03, revision A
 - Design and Access Statement, August 2025
3. WSSC Highways has issued pre-application advice concerning these proposal. This advice was issued a number of years ago and is included within the Transport Assessment.
4. As matters of principle, no Travel Plan has been submitted. A Travel Plan will be required to support this proposal in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.
5. The NPPF also refers to developments adopting a 'vision led' approach to encourage the uptake of sustainable transport modes. There is some overlap between travel planning and a transport 'vision'. Other than quoting the paragraphs of the NPPF that specifically refer to a 'vision led approach', the development does not adopt a transport vision. WSSC accept that for a development of this scale and in this location, any travel planning or 'vision' will be somewhat limited in terms of scale and overall impact. WSSC have reviewed the proposals on the basis of the TA submitted.

Access

6. Vehicle access is proposed onto the A281 Guildford Road. The site access takes the form of a simple priority junction with 6 metre kerb radii and a carriageway width of 5.5 metres. The geometry is considered acceptable. The form of access is consistent with other junctions in the immediate local area.
7. The existing site frontage is heavily vegetated at present. Some of the vegetation will need to be cleared in order to provide the visibility splays. As and when details are submitted, WSSC will take an interest in the proposed on-site landscaping to ensure that any planting is set back behind the visibility splay to ensure any growth

does not encroach into this. It's recognised that this aspect was identified as a problem within the Stage One Road Safety Audit.

8. The speed limit on Guildford Road is 30mph. A speed survey has been undertaken by the Applicant with 85th percentile eastbound speeds of 32.4mph and westbound speeds of 34mph having been recorded. The recorded 85th percentile speeds have been used for the purposes of the access design and the stopping sight distances on the respective approaches rather than the posted speed limit. This is a commonly applied approach.
9. It is noted that the speed survey data within the TA is incomplete with only northbound speeds having been provided. All data should be provided along with the location of the speed survey being shown.
10. It's unclear also what the prevailing weather conditions were during the speed survey and as such whether an adjustment needs to be made to account for wet weather. Even if an adjustment is required, and speeds subsequently increased by 2mph, this would have no particular impact on the stopping sight distances with the guidance within Manual for Streets remaining applicable (based on the speeds as currently presented) and much greater distances being achievable at the site access.
11. The access arrangements and other off-site highway works have been the subject of a Stage One Road Safety Audit. The Audit raises a number of problems all of which have been positively addressed by the Designer. WSCC Highways will require the Designer to submit directly to WSCC Highways an editable version of the RSA Response. WSCC can then complete those sections relevant and enable agreed actions to be included.
12. The proposed vehicle access is considered acceptable although the Applicant should provide the additional information requested.
13. It's noted that there is an existing field gate access into the site from Lynwick Street. This access should be formally closed and the hedgerow reinstated as part of the current planning application.

Trip Generation and Highway Impact

14. Matters relating to trip generation have been agreed with WSCC during pre-application discussions. The trip rates within the TA are noted as being different from those within the pre app. Nevertheless the following comments are based upon the information within the TA.
 - Trip generation is based upon TRICS, which is a large database of traffic surveys undertaken for completed developments. The database can be refined so as to select those sites comparable to the development proposed.
 - A per dwelling person trip rate (i.e. trips by all modes per dwelling) has been derived from TRICS. Census data for the Rudgwick area has then been used to determine mode shares.
 - Based on the above, the site is anticipated to generate 79 two way vehicle trips in the AM network peak hour and 64 in the PM network peak hour.
 - Development trips have been distributed across the network using Census Journey to Work data from existing Rudgwick residents as a proxy for where future residents would travel to. This is a commonly used approach and is therefore acceptable.
 - The impact on the highway network has been assessed 5 years after the date of the submission of the planning application (i.e. for 2030).

15. Based on the approach above, the TA identifies and investigates the traffic impact on a number of junctions. The body of the TA presents only the model outputs with development rather than providing a comparison of the situation without the development traffic. The full model outputs nevertheless include all modelled scenarios. It's apparent from these that whilst the development will generate additional traffic, this will have a largely indiscernible impact on the operation of the local highway network.

Accessibility by Sustainable Modes (including bus)

16. WSCC acknowledge that there are limited services within the immediate area. Of those services and facilities identified in the TA, all are within reasonable walking distance (this is considered to be 1.6km or 1 mile (this being the distance identified in the National Travel Survey within which the majority of walking trips are undertaken)). It is duly acknowledged also that these are one way distances and as such, the distance and time, should be doubled for a round trip.
17. With regards to proposed infrastructure, the development includes various works to enable connections to existing footways. These works are shown on drawing 1810054-03 revision F, which is within the TA. The works consist of a length of footway leading eastwards to tie in with the existing footway where this terminates adjacent to 'Coopers Retreat' along with uncontrolled pedestrian crossing points at the site vehicular access and at a point further west. Given that the planning application seeks only outline approval, details of the on-site layout and how this ties in with the pedestrian crossing points, and most importantly how pedestrians will then be led to the respective crossing points, will need to be carefully considered during the detailed design. Relevant to this the 'Land Use Parameter Plan - 02' indicates that 'trim trails' are to provide connections into the eastern footway extension and western crossing point. The expectation is that the connections into the crossings will be formal with bound surfacing to accommodate all users at all times of the year. The Parameter Plan will need to be updated to reflect this.
18. The proposed footway extension appears to be achievable within the existing public highway and unlikely the majority of the site frontage, there don't appear to be any significant trees or other such restrictions. The developer should consequently maximise the footway width as may be possible within the extents of the existing highway. The plan should be updated to reflect the maximum achievable width.
19. The uncontrolled crossing point adjacent to the access will be used to access those services to the immediate south. It's noted that the only other formal crossing of the A281 in Bucks Green is a controlled crossing to the east. In light of traffic speeds and flows, the Developer should reassess the suitability of the proposed uncontrolled crossing. From this, a higher form of crossing provision may be required.
20. Further information would be required to support the proposed westerly crossing point. For pedestrians crossing from the northern side of the A281, visibility could be restricted to the east by vehicles parked within the adjacent lay-by and to the west the vertical alignment of the carriageway obscures an oncoming vehicle. The first of these issues is identified within the Stage One RSA with the Designers response suggesting that this issue can be resolved at the detailed design. Given the access forms part of the current outline application, the issue needs to be resolved now. The Applicant should undertake a further assessment of this crossing point and demonstrate that adequate visibility can be achieved for those trying to cross. Ultimately, if this crossing point is anticipated to have very little usage or cannot be safely provided, the Developer may wish to consider whether it's needed at all.
21. There is a lack of cycle infrastructure within the existing area notwithstanding the Downs Link to the east. Cyclists will have to share the carriageway with general traffic. Given the nature of the A281 this is unlikely to appeal to any number of

users especially beyond the built up area of Bucks Green/Rudgwick. The Downs Link is available to the east. This can be reached via Lynwick Street. The Downs Link could be used for some journeys although realistically this is likely to be used only for leisure purposes. The development itself will generate very few cycling trips and as such under the planning tests, the development could not be expected to provide any significant improvements.

22. The development benefits from an hourly bus service running between Horsham and Guildford. The relative infrequency is a disbenefit but the service timing and the journey times are such that the bus service could be used for journey purposes. Improvements are proposed to the bus stop on the southern side of the A281 but there would be scope to further improve both this and the existing eastbound stops with real time information screens.

23. The Applicant should review and respond to the points made above.

Layout (including car parking)

24. Matters relating to the layout are not being approved at this stage. As noted above, a Land Use Parameter Plan is included and this shows connections within the site. It's understood that details on this will be approved. Changes have been requested to the Parameter Plan in point 16 above.

25. The Land Use Parameter Plan does also include a field access on the northern boundary of the site. Vehicles using this field access will need to pass through the development. It's not clear what vehicles are expected to use this. As part of the detailed design, consideration will need to be given to ensure that the proposed layout accommodates those vehicles that may be expected to use this access.

26. There are otherwise no particular concerns with the arrangements on the Site Layout - 03 Illustrative plan.

Other Matters

27. Details are included showing works to the A281/Lynwick Street junction. These are shown on drawing 1810054-05 revision F. The works show the removal of the existing 'Stop' line with this replaced with 'give way' markings instead. From the plan, it's not clear exactly what works are being proposed. The plan submitted shows only the potential clearing of vegetation within the existing highway; no works are proposed beyond this. In-principle, nothing is being proposed here that cannot already be undertaken by WSCC. Visibility to the west remains as it is presently. Visibility to the west is restricted as a consequence of the vertical and horizontal alignment of the carriageway. WSCC Highways do not consider that the proposals are making any meaningful change to this junctions that would justify the removal of the 'Stop' lines. WSCC would recommend that the potential improvements to this junction are omitted from this application.

Conclusion

28. There are a number of detailed matters as outlined above that should be resolved ahead of this planning application being approved.

Ian Gledhill
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