

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council - FAO: Alice Johnson
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	22 January 2026
LOCATION:	Old House Manor Estate Cowfold Road Coolham
SUBJECT:	DC/25/2121 Conversion of existing manor house into 14no. residential units. (Retrospective).
RECOMMENDATION:	More Information

West Sussex County Council, in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on proposals to convert manor house (previously used as religious retreat) to 14 x residential units. Each unit has previously been in use as bedsit (kitchen facilities added in each room) to allow residents to occupy and thus the permission sought is for retrospective use.

Site Context/Accessibility

No changes are proposed to existing vehicle accesses with Cowfold Road. Site appears to have 2 x access points – a driveway adjoining A272 (just within the 20mph) and an additional point approx. 75m west. From inspection of the plans, WSCC and local mapping there appears to be no visibility issue at the point of accesses onto Cowfold Road. I have also checked the most recently available verified road traffic incident records, which reveals there have been no traffic incidents in the vicinity of the existing point of access within the past 5 years.

There is footway abutting the western most access that provides a facility for pedestrians to reach limited amenities in Coolham (school/pub) and bus stops that provide services to Horsham and Storrington are within 5-minute walk. There are also rural public right of ways in vicinity and the Downslink Cycle Route.

LHA note that WSCC Fire & Rescue service have queried whether a fire appliance can reach within 45 m of all parts of building. LHA consider that previous use must have been servicing by refuse collection and fire appliance however it is not clear whether the parking area prohibits these turning movements and the entirety of hardstanding does not appear to be within the red edge. Applicant should clarify whether bin lorry and fire appliance can access and turn on site. Applicant states there is also space for the suitable storage of bins/recycling facilities at the property but not clear where this is.

Parking

Existing parking area north of the property is retained. Following on from above, the parking hardstanding area referred to appears to be cut off by the red edge line of the site and thus actual parking provision availability appears reduced.

Under WSCC Guidance, 14 x 1-bed units in this location would require 1.4 space per unit – approx. 19.6 spaces + 0.2 visitor space per unit (2.8) thus 22.4 spaces total. Ideally 5% of total spaces should be provided with additional hatching/lining to provide formalised accessible bay.

The Design and Access Statement does not make clear how many parking spaces are available, and whether these are formalised. Further information is required showing parking layout, within applicant land, and ensure turning space also.

Trip Generation

14 x 1-bed units (single occupancy) already in place on first and second floors with ground floor remaining unaltered but it is not clear what the ground floor use is.

Whilst the applicant states vehicle movements have decreased over the previous use due to units previously being double occupancy and a commercial kitchen being on site – no figures have been given in this regard. LHA acknowledge previous use as a religious retreat could have created vehicle movements akin to a hotel use.

LHA have undertaken in-house assessment using TRICs and found 14 x 1-bed units (flats) could create up to 4 x vehicle movements in AM and PM peak hours. In comparison a hotel use of 14 x bedrooms could see between 5 to 6 movements in both AM and PM peak hours. However, it is not clear what the ground floor use is and what vehicle movements are in place historically and currently from that use. Applicant should clarify.

LHA mindful that use has already been occurring without evidence of highway safety or capacity issue and on this basis, it is unlikely there would be a concern raised in terms of impact to the operational capacity of the nearby road network, however points above still require clarification.

CONCLUSION

In summary further information is required:

- Clarify bin collection area, where refuse collection and fire appliance vehicles can turn on site?
- Clarify parking area – why does the red edge line cut through this area – is parking formalised, how many spaces available and consideration to disabled bay etc.
- Trip generation clarification including what the ground floor use is.

Please ask applicant for this additional information and re-consult.

Katie Kurek
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services