

# WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

<b>TO:</b>	Horsham District Council - FAO: Stephanie Bryant
<b>FROM:</b>	WSCC – Highways Authority
<b>DATE:</b>	30 October 2024
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Land To The South of Furners Lane Henfield West Sussex
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	DC/24/1538 Erection of 29 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space, parking and creation of new vehicular access
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	More Information

West Sussex County Council, in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on proposals for 29 x dwellings on land south of Furners Lane, with access and associated works from Furners Lane. The application is supported by Transport Statement (TS), Travel Plan Statement (TPS), Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) and Designers Response (DR) and associated plans. Pre-app advice was given in 2022, under reference PRE-47-22.

## **Site Context and Sustainable/Active Transport**

The site is south of Furners Lane with Furners Mead bordering the west and Backsettow bordering east of the site. Residential properties and Henfield village centre are to the west of the site. Furners Lane is 'D' classified and subject to 30mph where the access is proposed. Immediately east of the proposed access Furners Lane becomes privately maintained road and Public Right of Way (PROW) footpath no. 2540. Footpath no. 2548 also runs along western boundary of site and WSCC PROW team will provide comments on any proposed changes/upgrades to this.

Furners Lane joins with the A281 London Road to the west. Further afield this provides a link to Cowfold and the A272 to the north and the A283 Steyning and Shoreham to the south.

The LHA has reviewed data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of the last five years. There have been no recorded injury incidents on Furners Lane or at the junction with London Road. There have been some recorded incidents along London Road (High Street) in the village centre. From an inspection of incident data, these were not related to any defect with the road layout.

The site is semi-rural and Furners Lane has no segregated footway (shared surface arrangement). Nevertheless, Henfield village centre with a range of amenities is a short walk and could be reached via the PROW network if pedestrians wished to stay off road or join at Furners Mead via the PROW, where there are street-lit footways. The village centre features dropped kerb/tactile paved crossings on side streets and pelican crossings of the High Street, allowing pedestrians to cross safely. The nearest bus stops are on High Street within 5-minute walk and serve regular routes to Burgess Hill, Pulborough, Horsham and Brighton. The main High Street bus stop has a shelter and Realtime information boards.

The nearest train station is Hassocks, whilst this is over the recommended maximum cycle distance, car parking is available on site and thus could make up part of a longer journey. Alternatively, bus could be used to reach Horsham, Burgess Hill or Brighton where there are further train services.

National Cycle Network Route 223 (Downs Link) is 1.25km west of site and provides a traffic free route to Southwater (north) and Shoreham (south). The local roads are considered low speed and thus suitable for cycling on-carriageway with a number of amenities within suitable cycling distance (under 5km).

## **Access Arrangements**

A new priority bellmouth access is proposed for vehicles to directly access the site from Furners Lane. The existing access track which serves Backsettow house/farm is to be reduced in width to prohibit vehicle traffic and retain solely as a PROW (no. 2548). Pedestrians will be able to join the PROW from within the site, to link to Furners Mead as per existing arrangement. WSCC PROW team will comment on the alterations/ improvements proposed to the PROW network.

Para. 5.6 of the TS states that the existing property and farm will be served from the new access point. However, it does appear that the farm has an existing access further east on Furners Lane. The LHA raise some concern with the potential for farm traffic to be using the new access and residential roads.

As per pre-app comments it is noted that the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan allocated site policy 2.3 for 30 dwellings. Policy 2.3.1 i) requires that access is from Furners Mead but the proposal proposes this from Furners Lane. The LHA have assessed proposals as set out but should be noted that the access proposals do not meet with the policy.

A seven-day speed survey at the proposed access point revealed 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds of 22mph eastbound and 20mph westbound. This would require visibility splays of 2.4m x 28m west and 25m east in accordance with Manual for Streets. Drawing 12027\_100 Rev. P6 demonstrates that these splays are achievable with trimming back of vegetation. The drawing also shows the swept path tracking of a refuse collection vehicle turning right in/ left out of the site access.

In previous pre-app comment the LHA acknowledged the shared surface arrangement of Furners Lane and the site but considered that it would still be beneficial if some suitably surfaced area could be provided for pedestrians at the junction of Furners Lane and the site access, to avoid potential conflict at this point.

### **Wider Improvements**

In previous pre-app comments, the LHA requested that improvements on the footpath/ footway network should be proposed and proportionate to the development proposed. The detailed improvements proposed to the PROW should be set out for WSCC PROW team to comment and could include improved width and surfacing. In terms of wider pedestrian infrastructure improvements, the designer should identify locations along the pedestrian desire line into the village where dropped kerbs/tactile paving could be provided. Could the link to the village through PROW 2549 also be improved/ made clearer?



### **Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA)**

The access arrangements have been subject to an RSA and accompanying Designers Response (DR). The two issues are summarised below, along with the DR.

4.1 – Risk of large vehicle collisions relating to reversing manoeuvres at access. The audit states that refuse collection vehicles will not be able to turn right out of the access, on to Furners Lane due to the access design. The audit recommends that the design is modified to allow this manoeuvre. The DR disagrees, stating that the lane to the east only serves farms and some private dwellings and that it would be unlikely that cars exiting the development would need to turn right on Furners Lane. The LHA agrees with the DR. The access has been designed to discourage large vehicles turning right out of the development on to what is unadopted highway.

4.1.2 – Vehicles parked on-street opposite the proposed access are likely to restrict turning movements for vehicles accessing site and could restrict free-flow of traffic, increasing risk of collision. Auditor recommends measures are introduced to manage on-street parking such as double yellow lines. The DR disagrees, stating that on-street parking on Furners Lane is intermittent and irregular and that this could be further considered at detailed design stage. The LHA do not agree with the DR. Streetview mapping appears to show regular on-street parking in this location. A solution would need to be arrived at which would either allow parking to occur within the access design whilst not impacting access manoeuvres or to remove on-street parking. The designer should explore options for this and present them to the LHA for review. It is unlikely that double yellow lines would be enforceable in this

location and would appear to be out of context with the surrounding area. It is also not clear if the crazy paved area on which vehicles are parked is within the adopted highway.

## **Trip Generation**

TRICs has been used to estimate the potential vehicular trip generation as a result of the development. This found that 15 additional two-way trips in the AM and 13 in the PM peak hours could result.

In previous pre-app comments, the LHA advised it may be useful to undertake traffic counts on Furners Lane to determine existing traffic flows and speeds to support any justification for the proposed alternate access arrangement (i.e. not accessing through Furners Mead). Whilst not explicitly stated within the TS, the ATC outputs in Appendix C suggest that the lane sees an average maximum of 230 two-way movements, past the access point, per day. This averages at less than 10 vehicles per hour. The LHA consider the additional movements on Furners Lane contrasted against the existing would not give rise to a material impact to the operational capacity of the nearby road network.

## **Car & Bicycle Parking**

The car parking provision has been assessed against WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments. The site is in PBZ2 and the resulting demand based on 2 x 1-bed, 7 x 2-bed, 11 x 3-bed and 9 x 4-bed dwellings would be 62 x allocated spaces and 6 visitor spaces. Garages have not been included within the parking provision. WSCC guidance advises these can count toward 0.5 of a space. However, because some of the garages meet the required 3m x 6m and some do not, they have not been counted in the demonstrated allocated parking provision. A total of 59 x allocated spaces have been shown which includes 5 x car port spaces within the south of the site. Whilst the allocated provision is below the required 62 spaces it is noted that some of the garages provided do meet required dimensions. Furthermore, a total of 13 x visitor spaces are dispersed throughout the site including along the spine road. It is therefore considered that parking provision broadly meets the demand and could be accommodated within the site, without anticipated overspill to the public highway.

It would be useful for some of the visitor spaces to be marked up with additional hatching to make them suitable for use as disabled parking bays. As per para. 4.16 of WSCC Guidance, a minimum of one space should be provided with access aisle hatching widths and marking to be in accordance with DfT *Inclusive Mobility*.

All dwellings will have provision for 2 x cycle storage spaces which is line with the WSCC guidance. Where a plot does not have a garage, a separate cycle storage shed will be provided. It is noted that the location of these within each plot has not been provided and thus the LHA advise that details should be secured by condition.

## **Internal Layout**

Swept path tracking within the site has not been provided, this should demonstrate that a refuse collection and fire appliance vehicles can manoeuvre within all parts of the site and utilise the turning head south of the site to turn and enable an exit in forward gear.

Whilst the looped estate road and link to PROW 2548 provides some interconnectivity for pedestrians, there could be further links that would improve active travel connectivity for all parts of the site. For example, a pedestrian link between plot 1 and 6 and additional pedestrian links to PROW 2548 within the northern/middle of the site side, for example:



## **Travel Plan Statement (TPS)**

The framework TPS has been provided with an aim of reducing single occupancy car use and promoting sustainable/ active travel modes. The background information of the site has been provided, including details of walking routes to amenities and public transport.

Residents will be encouraged to use car sharing and information on relevant schemes will be provided via the resident's welcome travel packs. The welcome pack will also include maps of facilities, Cycle route planning websites, bus stops, public transport timetables, cost comparisons, home grocery deliveries, health benefits etc. National awareness events such as bike week will be promoted and journey planning websites will also be included. Stagecoach will be contacted to explore supply of free taster tickets as well as commitment to promoting bicycle shop discounts.

A baseline travel survey will be undertaken within 3 months of full occupation of site to establish baseline travel patterns for the site. The travel plan co-ordinator will be responsible for implementing and promoting the TPS.

The TPS should also include a travel voucher for initial occupants (worth at least £150 per dwelling) which could be exchanged for; season ticket for the local bus service, a rail season ticket or network card, a contribution towards the purchase of a new bicycle and/or equipment, Bikeability training up to 4 members of the household (further details and course costs are available at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/roadsafety](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roadsafety)) or 12 months free membership to any local Car Club (including joining fee).

The TPS should be secured through s106/ unilateral undertaking legal agreement. The monitoring fee secured should be £1,635. The Travel Plan auditing fees reflect the amount of local authority officer time required to evaluate the initial plan, assess the monitoring data and participate in on-going review and agreement to any amended plans in the future, including post planning once the development is built out and occupied. The costs have been benchmarked against fees charged by other Local Authorities and are considered to proportionate and reflective of the costs incurred.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the LHA require further information before the proposals can be fully assessed from the highway safety point of view. These are summarised below:

- LHA raise concern on Backsettton farm being accessed through the site. Why is this required if access to farm already exists east on Furners Lane? There could be conflict between large agricultural vehicles and resident vehicles.
- As per previous pre-app comments some suitably surfaced area could be provided for pedestrians at the junction of Furners Lane and the site access, to avoid potential conflict at this point (segregated footway).
- Specifics of PROW improvements (WSCC PROW team to comment).
- What wider pedestrian infrastructure improvements are proposed along the desire line to the village centre (dropped kerb/tactile paved crossings).
- LHA do not agree with DR on 4.1.2 of RSA – please address issue/ provide solutions for review.
- Some visitor car parking spaces could be marked up with additional access aisle hatching for disabled parking bays.
- Swept path tracking within site for all anticipated vehicle manoeuvres.
- Additional pedestrian connections to the PROW from within site to improve interconnectivity.
- Update TPS to include travel voucher.

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

