WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Jacques Burrowes
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	15 May 2025
LOCATION:	Westlands Farm Billingshurst Road Ashington West Sussex RH20 3BB
SUBJECT:	DC/25/0747 Prior Notification for Change of Use of Agricultural Building to 2no. dwellinghouses.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	n/a
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice

This application has been dealt with in accordance with the Development Control Scheme protocol for small scale proposals.

Under the current General Permitted Development Order (GPDO), it is permitted development to change use from agricultural to residential (Class C3) subject first to prior approval being granted. As part of the prior approval process, there are a number of matters to be considered. This includes matters relating to highways and transport. However, the GPDO is quite clear as to what highway matters can be considered, namely whether the proposal is likely to result in a material increase or a material change in the character of traffic in the vicinity of the site.

This proposal seeks prior approval for the change of use from agricultural building to residential to form two 2-bed dwellings. The site is located off Billingshurst Road, a B-classified road subject to the National Speed Limit in this location.

Generally, the change of use from agricultural to residential would generate a reduction in material use at the site. The existing use would create a certain number of movements throughout the day, whereas the movements associated with residential use would be anticipated within network peaks. Therefore, although the nature of trips would change, the frequency would likely not exceed that of current use.

An inspection of collision data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period the past five years reveals there have been no recorded collisions attributed to road layout within the vicinity of the existing access point on Billingshurst Road. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest the existing access is operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern.

The WSCC Car Parking Demand Calculator indicated that a development of this size in this location would require four car parking spaces. From inspection of the plans, there appears to be space within the site for this demand to be accommodated, but the LPA may to secure parking via condition. The site also exhibits suitable space for cars to turn and exit in a forward gear. The LPA are also advised that they may wish to secure cycle parking provision, to promote sustainable travel.

In summary, the movements associated with agriculture have done so safely with no known safety highways concerns, and C3 residential uses are considered less intensive. West Sussex County Council in its role as LHA has therefore considered the proposal on that basis. The prior approval is therefore considered acceptable in highway terms.

Nicola Elliott
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services