WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Steve Astles
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	1 October 2026
LOCATION:	Land at 512000 114372 Rock Road Washington West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DC/26/1316 Construction of field access and entrance drive, erection of post and rail fencing and planting of hedge to field frontage.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	28/05/2026
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice

I refer to your consultation in respect of the above planning application and would provide the following comments.

Summary and History
The proposal is for construction of field access and entrance drive. Erection of post and rail fencing and planting of hedge at Rock Road Washington.

This application follows the withdrawal of DC/26/0112, which sought the same access arrangement as is now proposed. The application was withdrawn by the applicant to satisfy other planning requirements, regarding Biodiversity Net Gain regulations and was for reasons unrelated to Highways.
Alongside the previous submission, the Local Highway Authority (LHA) conducted a site visit to establish the existing visibility and road speeds, and to view the proposed location of the new field access point.

The Local Highway Authority attended a site visit at this location on 28/05/2026 to further assess vehicle behaviour and view the existing and proposed access points. It was noted that vehicle speeds varied between that of the posted limit and those travelling at a lower speed. It was noted that northbound vehicles progressed at a lower speed due to the presence of the humpback bridge further south.

The comments within this report, echo the comments made by the LHA alongside the previous submission.

Visibility and Access
The applicant has demonstrated that the access will remain central to the western property boundary. Visibility splays have been demonstrated from a 2.4m set-back distance from the carriageway edge and span to 71m to the north and 113m to the south. The existing access arrangement has been shown as providing 8.6m northbound and 71m southbound. The submitted plans show visibility is achievable within land under the applicants' ownership and within the maintained highway boundary.

It would have been beneficial for a speed survey to have been carried out at this location, to ascertain the 85th percentile speeds at the proposed new access point, The Local Highway Authority has however conducted a site visit to further investigate this proposal.

The LHA notes that the submitted splays do not meet the standard for a road of this speed, however, do overall represent an improvement over the existing arrangement. Although splays in the southern direction do appear to intersect the two trees adjacent to the existing access, it is considered that the improvement to the northern splay takes precedent over this. Vehicles travelling southbound are in the nearside carriageway to the access and therefore would pose most risk to an emerging vehicle. An improved visibility to the north assists vehicles in adjoining the carriageway from this location and as a vehicle edges forward with this lane clear, visibility to the south would become further improved.

Furthermore, visibility works on a "see and be seen arrangement", While it is important for a static vehicle at the access to be able to view oncoming traffic, it is also important for oncoming vehicles to be able to view an emerging vehicle. Given the straighter nature of this portion of Rock Road, road users are awarded a good envelope of forward visibility, which enables time and opportunity to see a vehicle waiting to join the carriageway and to adjust their speed/path accordingly. The presence of the two trees does not obscure an entire vehicle from view of road users travelling northbound at this point.

It has been outlined that the existing highway access would not be closed off to replace this access, this is due to the dual nature of the access also serving a residential property on Rock Road. The LHA would suggest if possible that the 5-bar gate used to gain access to the field be closed off to ensure only use of the new access to gain entry to this location.

License
The access is to be built in accordance with a specification as agreed with WSCC Highways. Any new vehicular access onto publicly maintained highway is subject to a license obtainable from WSCC Highways Authority. No works can be commenced on the highway prior to the license being obtained. The applicant is advised that in addition to obtaining planning permission that they must also obtain formal approval from the highway authority to carry out the site access works on the public highway. The granting of planning permission does not guarantee that a vehicle crossover licence shall be granted because the highway license process considers wider factors than are considered by the Highway Authority at planning stage.

The applicant is encouraged to ensure that their access proposals align with the WSCC guidance, WSCC Vehicular Cross Over: Application Criteria guidance, which can be found at the following link:
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/20290/vco_guidance_notes.pdf

Capacity
The LHA considers too, the infrequent nature of the proposed use of the access, whereby intermittent maintenance will be carried out. Additional movements are not being generated by the overall site and therefore there would be no concern raised in terms of capacity.

Summary
The LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (in line with TR6 paragraph 4) and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

Visibility (details approved)
No part of the development shall be first occupied until visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 17 metres northbound and 2.4 metres by 113 metres southbound have been provided at

the proposed site vehicular access onto Rock Road in accordance with the approved planning drawings. 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.

Informative
Vehicle Crossover – Minor Highway Works
The applicant is advised that in addition to obtaining planning permission that they must also obtain formal approval from the highway authority to carry out the site access works on the public highway. The granting of planning permission does not guarantee that a vehicle crossover licence shall be granted. Additional information about the licence application process can be found at the following web page:

https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-licences/dropped-kerbs-or-crossovers-for-driveways-licence/

Online applications can be made at the link below, alternatively please call 01243 642105.

https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-licences/dropped-kerbs-or-crossovers-for-driveways-licence/vehicle-crossover-dropped-kerb-construction-application-form/

Jodie Wilkes
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services