

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Bethan Tinning
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	13 June 2026
LOCATION:	Land at 512000 114372 Rock Road Washington West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DC/26/0112 Construction of field access and entrance drive. Erection of post and rail fencing and planting of mixed deciduous hedging. More information received.
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

The proposal is for construction of field access and entrance drive. Erection of post and rail fencing and planting of mixed deciduous hedging at Rock Road Washington.

The Local Highway Authority attended a site visit at this location 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.

Visibility and Access

The applicant has demonstrated a revised location for the field access, 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 newly 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 does note that the newly 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 Local Highway Authority does not consider that the 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 (paragraph 116), 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