WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Hannah Darley
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	29 November 2024
LOCATION:	Swains Farm Brighton Road Henfield West Sussex BN5 9RP
SUBJECT:	DC/24/1764 Prior Notification for demolition of existing rear lean-to extension and change of use of an agricultural building to 1no dwellinghouse (C3 Use Class).
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.

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

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 one residential dwelling. The site is located off Brighton Road, an A-classified road subject to 50mph Speed restrictions in this location.

Generally, the change of use from agricultural to residential dwelling 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 of the past five years reveals that there has been a single collision within the vicinity of the existing access point on Brighton Road, this was however not attributed to any existing defects with the publicly maintained highway at this point. 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 three car parking spaces. From inspection of the plans, there appears to be suitable space within the site for this parking demand to be accommodated, on-site turning arrangements also appear achievable within the site to allow egress in a forward gear.

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. In principle, the current GPDO gives limited ability to consider wider highway and transport impacts beyond those set out. The prior approval is therefore considered acceptable in highway terms.

Jodie Wilkes
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services