WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Hannah Darley
FROM:	Highways, WSCC
DATE:	10/04/2024
LOCATION:	Enterprise House, Foundry Lane, Horsham, RH13 5PX
SUBJECT:	DC/24/0425 Prior Approval for change of use of existing office premises to accommodate 4No. apartments, 2x2 bed and 2x1 bed units.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	N/A
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice
S106 CONTRIBUTION TOTAL:	£N/A

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

This proposal seeks prior approval for the change of use of existing offices to residential to form four apartments. The site is located on Foundry Lane, a C-classified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph.

WSCC in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA) previously provided consultation advice for this site for similar application DC/23/2126, raising no highway safety concerns. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) refused the application on grounds unrelated to highways.

Under the current General Permitted Development Order (GPDO), it is permitted development to change use from offices to residential 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 GDPO is quite clear as to what highways matter can be considered, namely whether the proposal is likely to result in a material increase or material change in the character of traffic in the vicinity of the site.

The site is served by an existing vehicular access point on Foundry Lane. No traffic flow information has been provided with the current application; however, office uses tend to generate greater material movements than residential. Therefore, the LHA does not anticipate that material movements associated with the site will exceed that of the existing.

Existing car parking provision is to be retained for use for the proposed dwellings. The WSCC Car Parking Demand Calculator indicates that a development of this size and location would require five car parking spaces. From inspection of the plans, there is suitable space within the existing parking area for this demand to be accommodated.

No details of cycle parking provision have been provided. Cycling is a viable option in the area and the LHA would request that secure cycle parking provision be provided for this development in accordance with WSCC Parking Standards, if there is space within the site to do so.

The site is situated in a sustainable location within walking/cycle distance of local services, amenities, and public transport links.

In summary, the movements associated with the existing office use 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.

Kyran Schneider
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services