

West Sussex County Council - Planning Consultation Response



To: Horsham District Council

Date: 6 October 2026

FAO: Tamara Dale

From: WSCC - Highways Authority

LPA Reference: DC/26/1212

Location: Clockhouse Farmhouse

Stonehouse Lane

Horsham

RH13 8DL

Proposal: Demolition of 6no. existing agricultural buildings within the wider farm holding. Conversion of the existing brick stables into 5no. residential dwellings; erection of a new commercial building and erection of a new Sussex barn with landscaping and associated infrastructure works.

Date of Site Visit:

Recommendation: More Information

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has considered the submitted Transport Statement prepared by GTA Civils & Transport Ltd (July 2026), together with the submitted existing and proposed site plans.

Proposal

The proposal comprises the conversion of approximately 500sqm of existing stable and agricultural buildings to provide five residential units, comprising three 2-bedroom and two 3-bedroom units. The proposals also include the demolition of six existing agricultural buildings, totalling approximately 1,495sqm, and the construction of two commercial units providing approximately 573sqm of commercial floorspace. Vehicular access would continue to be obtained from Stonehouse Lane via the existing site access.

Access and Visibility

Stonehouse Lane is a rural road subject to the national speed limit. There are no footways or street lighting within the immediate vicinity of the site.

A seven-day Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) was undertaken on Stonehouse Lane close to the site access. This recorded 85th percentile vehicle speeds of 24mph southbound and 22mph northbound. The survey also recorded relatively low existing traffic flows of approximately 104–110 two-way vehicle movements per day.

The existing access road is approximately 4.2m wide and is proposed to be widened to 5.5m for the first 10m from the edge of the carriageway. The submitted information demonstrates visibility splays of 2.4m x 32m, which are considered appropriate having regard to the recorded vehicle speeds.

The proposed access arrangements are therefore considered acceptable in principle, subject to the access widening and visibility splays being provided and thereafter maintained.

Stonehouse Lane – Highway Width and Passing Opportunities

The LHA notes concern regarding the constrained width of Stonehouse Lane and the availability of opportunities for opposing vehicles to pass.

Whilst the Transport Statement provides information regarding traffic flows and vehicle speeds, it does not provide an assessment of the carriageway width of Stonehouse Lane or identify the locations at which opposing vehicles can safely pass.

This is particularly relevant when considering the forecast increase in vehicle movements associated with the proposed development. The Transport Statement explains that it has not been possible to quantify the existing trip generation associated with the approximately 1,995sqm of agricultural buildings. This is due to the absence of a sufficiently representative agricultural dataset within TRICS and the irregular and seasonal nature of agricultural vehicle movements.

Consequently, the assessment has taken no credit for existing agricultural movements and has treated all forecast development trips as additional movements. The Transport Statement does, however, acknowledge that Stonehouse Lane and the site access currently accommodate larger vehicles associated with the agricultural use, including tractors, horseboxes and trailers.

The proposed development is forecast to generate approximately 11 two-way vehicle movements during the AM peak and 14 two-way movements during the PM peak, with approximately 88 two-way movements during the assessed weekday period.

Although the level of traffic using Stonehouse Lane would remain relatively low, the forecast development movements represent a notable increase when considered against the approximately 104–110 daily movements recorded by the ATC survey.

As the existing agricultural vehicle generation has not been quantified, it is not possible from the submitted information to establish the net change in vehicle movements that would arise from the proposal.

The LHA therefore considers that further information should be provided to demonstrate that Stonehouse Lane is capable of accommodating the forecast development traffic. This should identify the available carriageway widths and existing passing opportunities along the route between the site access and the wider highway network, together with confirmation that opposing vehicles can pass at suitable intervals without giving rise to unacceptable highway safety or operational impacts.

Parking

The residential element proposes two allocated parking spaces per dwelling, providing 10 allocated spaces, together with five visitor spaces. The Transport Statement calculates a residential parking demand of approximately 9.5 spaces in accordance with the stated WSCC parking guidance. The proposed residential parking provision is therefore considered acceptable.

With regard to the commercial element, the Transport Statement identifies a parking requirement of 19 spaces based upon the proposed 573sqm of commercial floorspace. However, only eight formal commercial parking spaces are identified.

The Transport Statement advises that the wider site contains sufficient hardstanding to accommodate additional parking if required.

Given the rural location of the site and the limited opportunities to access the development by alternative modes, the LHA considers that the commercial parking arrangements should be clarified.

Any additional areas intended to accommodate commercial parking demand should be clearly identified on the site layout and demonstrated not to conflict with residential parking, turning/manoeuvring areas, pedestrian routes or areas required for servicing and emergency access.

Cycle Parking

The Transport Statement proposes cycle parking for the residential units within garden sheds. For the commercial element, the Transport Statement identifies a requirement for five cycle parking spaces. Secure and covered cycle parking should be provided prior to first occupation of the relevant development and retained thereafter.

Servicing and Emergency Access

The Transport Statement includes vehicle tracking for an 11.2m refuse vehicle and advises that this vehicle can be accommodated within the development. Fire appliance access has also been assessed, with the submitted information indicating that a fire appliance can access to within 45m of all points of the proposed dwellings. The internal layout therefore appears capable of accommodating the anticipated servicing and emergency vehicle requirements, provided the relevant access and turning areas are kept clear of parked vehicles.

Trip Generation and Highway Capacity

The submitted TRICS assessment forecasts approximately 11 two-way movements during the AM peak, 14 during the PM peak and approximately 88 two-way movements during the assessed weekday period.

As set out above, no allowance has been made for existing agricultural vehicle movements. This represents a conservative approach to the calculation of proposed development trips. Nevertheless, given the physical characteristics of Stonehouse Lane, the LHA considers that the ability of the lane to accommodate the forecast increase in movements and opposing vehicle interactions should be demonstrated before a final highway recommendation is provided.

Conclusion

The Local Highway Authority is not presently in a position to provide a final recommendation and requests the following further information:

1. **Stonehouse Lane width/passing opportunities:** Further information identifying the available carriageway widths and existing passing opportunities along the relevant section of Stonehouse Lane between the development and the wider highway network, demonstrating that the forecast development traffic can be accommodated without resulting in unacceptable highway safety or operational impacts.
1. **Commercial parking:** A revised/clarified parking layout identifying how the anticipated commercial parking demand would be accommodated. Any additional parking relied upon should be formally identified and demonstrated not to prejudice residential parking, pedestrian routes, vehicle turning/manoeuvring or servicing/emergency access.

Upon receipt of the above information, the LHA will be able to provide further comments and determine its final recommendation.

Emma Avis

West Sussex County Council – Planning Services (Highways)