

[REDACTED]

Sent: 23 June 2026 19:46
To: Planning
Subject: DC/25/2114

Categories: Comments Received

This statement DC/25/2114 has been resent from a different email address but is from [REDACTED] as there may have been an issue with sending it to you as it does not appear to be showing on the Portal.....We understand that the portal closed on Tuesday 23 rd June hence it is being resent today. Thank you for your understanding.

Dear Mr. Holmes

I wish to object to the above application and, in particular, raise concerns regarding the assessment of traffic generation, highway safety and pedestrian safety associated with the proposed development.

The Transport Statement relies upon a generic TRICS assessment for privately owned houses and concludes that the four proposed dwellings would generate only a very limited number of vehicle movements during peak hours. West Sussex County Council has accepted these figures. However, the assessment appears to consider only peak-hour commuter trips and fails to address the likely daily traffic associated with four substantial detached executive homes.

The applicant's own proposals provide extensive parking provision, with West Sussex County Council accepting that each four-bedroom dwelling requires approximately three parking spaces. This parking provision itself suggests an expectation of above-average vehicle ownership. Whilst the TRICS assessment may provide a useful baseline, it does not appear that any allowance has been made for the characteristics typically associated with large executive homes, including:

- Multiple adult occupants with separate vehicles;
- Households owning two or more vehicles per adult occupant;
- Cleaners, gardeners and domestic contractors;
- Grocery deliveries and online retail deliveries;
- Tradespeople and maintenance visits;
- Family visitors and social visitors.

The Transport Statement notes that the surrounding area already exhibits relatively high levels of car ownership. However, the proposed dwellings are not average dwellings. They are substantial detached executive homes with extensive parking provision and are therefore likely to generate vehicle ownership and usage levels above the local average.

It is therefore unclear whether the assessment accepted by West Sussex County Council properly reflects the real-world traffic likely to be generated by four executive homes. In my view, the likely

number of daily vehicle movements is materially greater than that implied by the narrow peak-hour analysis contained within the Transport Statement.

Further concerns arise from the description of Church Lane within the Transport Statement.

The document refers to the presence of grass verges alongside Church Lane. This description does not accurately reflect the reality of the lane. What exist in many places are not level grass verges capable of safely accommodating pedestrians stepping aside for passing vehicles, but steep grass banks which become slippery and hazardous in wet weather. Photographic evidence has been provided to demonstrate this.

Church Lane is effectively a single-vehicle-width rural lane with no footways or pavements. It serves a wide variety of vulnerable users throughout the day, many of whom are not acknowledged within the Transport Statement.

These users include:

- Groups of schoolchildren walking between the River Path and Steyning Grammar School;
- Walkers and dog owners accessing the well-used riverside footpaths;
- Local people walking to and from the Church Café;
- Parents and toddlers attending Church Mice activities at the Gladys Bevan Hall;
- Elderly residents, including users of mobility scooters and disability buggies;
- Nursery school groups walking to the churchyard for outdoor learning and nature study;
- Parishioners and visitors attending church services and community events, particularly on Sundays when substantial pedestrian activity coincides with the likely arrival and departure of residents and visitors to the proposed executive homes, creating increased potential for vehicle-pedestrian conflict on this narrow lane.

Church Lane is therefore not simply a lightly used rural access road. It functions as an important community route used daily by people of all ages, including many vulnerable road users.

Its importance as a pedestrian route has increased in recent years as improvements to the riverside path network, including the creation of new accessible walkways and the new pedestrian bridge, have encouraged greater use of the area by residents and visitors alike. Church Lane now serves as the principal pedestrian connection between these popular riverside routes St Peter's Church, Steyning Grammar School and other community facilities. As use of the riverside network continues to grow, the number of pedestrians relying on Church Lane can reasonably be expected to increase further. This makes the absence of footways and the prospect of additional vehicle movements associated with the proposed development a matter of particular concern.

I would also draw attention to Church Farm Walk, at the top of Church Lane, which provides access to the proposed development site. This route presents similar safety concerns. It has no pavement for pedestrians and includes a sharp bend that significantly restricts visibility for both drivers and pedestrians. Anyone walking along the route is required to share the carriageway with vehicles, often without a clear view of approaching traffic. Any increase in vehicle movements associated with the proposed development would therefore increase the risk of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians using this access road. The absence of dedicated pedestrian infrastructure and the restricted visibility created by the bend make Church Farm Walk an inherently hazardous route, particularly for children, elderly residents, mobility scooter users and other vulnerable pedestrians. Against this background, I am concerned that both the Transport Statement and the Highway Authority have significantly underestimated the practical impact of additional traffic associated with four large executive dwellings. Even if the applicant's own calculations are accepted, the proposal

would introduce a material increase in vehicle movements along Church Lane and Church Farm Walk, both of which are routes where pedestrians currently have no dedicated place of safety other than stepping into private driveways which more often than not are occupied by residents vehiclescertainly not possible for children on bicycles ...mobility scooters, mothers pushing buggies and the many dog walkers some with two dogs on leads.

The position during construction is of even greater concern. Construction traffic, delivery vehicles, contractors' vans and heavy goods vehicles would be required to use roads that have no pavements and very limited opportunities for pedestrians to avoid passing vehicles safely. The suggestion that this can be accommodated without significant impact on pedestrian safety is difficult to reconcile with the physical characteristics of Church Lane and Church Farm Walk and their current pattern of use.

The issue is not simply the number of vehicle movements. It is the interaction between additional traffic and narrow roads heavily used by pedestrians, children, elderly residents, mobility scooter users, families and dog walkers. The Transport Statement appears to assess these routes primarily as traffic corridors, whereas local residents experience them as shared community spaces.

Further concern arises from the impact of the proposal on the character and heritage setting of the area. The Upper Beeding Neighbourhood Plan places significant emphasis on protecting village character, landscape setting and the historic environment.

Church Lane forms part of the historic approach to St Peter's Church and the surrounding village core especially now with our well attended new Church Hub Cafe . Its narrow, rural character and its role as a pedestrian route contribute positively to the setting of both the church and the wider historic environment. The introduction of additional traffic associated with four substantial executive dwellings, together with the inevitable construction traffic required during the build period, would erode the tranquillity, safety and rural character that currently define this part of the village.

In my view, the proposal conflicts with the objectives of the Upper Beeding Neighbourhood Plan which seek to protect village identity, landscape character, heritage setting, local amenity and environmental quality. The cumulative impact of increased vehicle movements on Church Lane and Church Farm Walk has not, in my opinion, been adequately considered in the application and would result in harm to the character of this sensitive and historically important part of Upper Beeding.

I am therefore concerned that the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the development can be accommodated safely without harm to pedestrians and other vulnerable users.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that planning permission be refused.

Please see attached photos below

Yours faithfully

Group of school children walking from River heading down to Church Lane













