WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Meg Bayliss
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	29 April 2025
LOCATION:	36 Chessall Avenue Southwater West Sussex RH13 9FB
SUBJECT:	DC/25/0489 Conversion of garage into habitable living space.
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.

History
The Local Highways Authority (LHA) has previously been consulted on matters at this location under planning application ref DC/24/1885 which also sought for the conversion of the existing garage to habitable living space. The LHA raised no severe highways safety concerns to the proposal however the application was refused by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on grounds related to parking capacity and safety.

Access
The proposed is accessed from Chesall Avenue, which at the point of access to the site is currently not maintained by WSCC. Consequently, these comments are for your advice only.

Parking
The existing garage measures 3m x 6m which is sufficient in size to accommodate an average sized vehicle. Although the applicant has demonstrated that this is not currently in use for parking, this proposal will see a reduction in overall *potential* parking provision tied to the dwelling for the current and potential future occupiers. The property is served with a driveway sufficient for a single vehicle, this is to remain to serve the dwelling. The dwelling accommodates 3 bedrooms, therefore from consulting the WSCC Parking Demand Calculator for this location, the parking demand for this property would be for 3 parking spaces. Any overspill parking would therefore likely occur within Chessall Avenue as is anticipated to be the current arrangement, within the designated parking bays.

Chessall Avenue appears to be enforced by parking conditions as signposted along the route. This would be anticipated to deter parking in locations deemed unsafe or unsuitable within the development.
The nearest available publicly maintained highway is Worthing Road, it is not anticipated that overspill parking would be to such extent that it would impact upon this portion of the publicly maintained highway.

Parking Capacity
The additional habitable space provided by the proposed conversion would not be anticipated to give rise to a change in vehicular movements over that already generated by the dwelling.

The applicant has submitted a Parking Stress Assessment for the existing parking bays on Chessall Avenue. The Survey is in the form of three sets of image snapshots at each parking bay stated as being taken on Wednesday March 5th, Tuesday March 11th and Thursday March 13th 2025. The dates within the submitted imagery however appear incorrect/inconsistent to the dates given by the applicant. This data has therefore not been considered when assessing the proposal.

Should the applicant wish to provide a robust Parking Stress Survey, this should be carried out using the recognised Lambeth Methodology. The Lambeth Methodology can outline parking demand for a distance extending to 200m from the dwelling and shows where these spaces surveyed are in relation to the property, the survey will also be performed within residential peak parking times for a full view of likely demand. This establishes occupancy Rates, measuring the percentage of occupied spaces. Duration of Stay, analysing how long vehicles remain parked and Turnover Rates, evaluating how frequently spaces are used. Thus, providing a clear picture of parking demand.

Sustainability
Sustainable alternatives to the use of a domestic vehicles are available for residents in the form of Bus Routes along Worthing Road, these offer direct links with Crawley Bus Station, Rusper Road and Worthing Pier. The property is linked to this service via tactile paved, linked and lit pedestrian footways

The applicant has demonstrated that the garage is currently utilised for cycle parking as well as general storage. The LHA are unaware if an alternative cycle parking provision exists, however the LPA may wish to consider whether it would be acceptable to include a condition ensuring that an alternative cycle parking provision is provided. This may allow opportunity for further sustainable transport options to be favoured by the current and future residents of the dwelling.

Southwater adjoins the Downs Link Route to the south, making cycling in the area a viable alternative for transportation. The Downs Link connects Southwater with Christs Hospital to the north. Christs Hospital is the nearest railway station to the site taking 13 minutes to travel to by bicycle, this allows opportunity for cyclists to use sustainable travel options for journeys further afield.

Conclusion
The LHA does not consider that the proposal would have a 'severe' impact on the operation of the highway network. Therefore, is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (para 116), and there are no known transport grounds to resist the proposal.

Jodie Wilkes
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services