WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Halima Chowdhury
FROM:	Highways, WSCC
DATE:	04/06/2025
LOCATION:	Clayfield Farm, Valewood Lane, Barns Green, RH13 0QJ
SUBJECT:	DC/25/0822 Prior Notification for Change of Use of Agricultural Building to 2no. dwellinghouses.
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.

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 residential to form two dwellings. The site is located off Valewood Lane, an unclassified road subject to national speed limit.

WSCC in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA) was previously consulted regarding highway matters for this site for application DC/21/1998, raising no highway safety or capacity concerns. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) permitted the application. The current application appears to be a resubmission of the previous consent.

Generally, the change of use from agricultural to residential 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 the past five years reveals there have been no recorded injury accidents attributed to the use of the existing access point on Valewood Lane. 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 the proposals would require three car parking spaces per dwelling. From inspection of the plans, there appears to be space within the site for this demand to be accommodated, but the LPA may wish to secure parking via condition. The site also exhibits suitable space for cars to turn and exit in a forward gear.

The LPA are also advised that they may wish to secure cycle parking provision, to promote sustainable travel.

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. The prior approval is therefore considered acceptable in highway terms.

Kyran Schneider
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services