

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Nicola Pettifer
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	18 May 2026
LOCATION:	Land at Hornbrook Farm Brighton Road West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DC/26/0530 Outline planning application for up to 180 dwellings, open space and associated works and infrastructure with all matters reserved apart from access.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	15 th May 2026
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice

1. Comments are made in respects of,
 - Transport Assessment, dated January 2026
 - Parameter Plan, drawing number CSA/7416/102 revision M
 - Interim Residential Travel Plan, dated January 2026
2. WSCC has issued pre-application advice in respects of this proposal. These are included within the submitted Transport Assessment.

Access

3. Vehicular access is proposed from the A281 Brighton Road, which in this location is subject to a 40mph speed limit. Access details are shown on drawing 62726/RJL/XX/XX/DR/C/SK001 revision H. The access is shown as a simple priority junction. This arrangement reflects the majority of junctions in the immediate area (it's acknowledged that a right turning lane is provided at the garden centre access to the west). The proposed access has been the subject of a Stage One Road Safety Audit and detailed capacity assessments. Neither raises any concerns in terms of highway safety or capacity with the arrangement presented. The principle of the arrangement is therefore accepted.
4. Visibility splays of 2.4 by 120 metres are shown at the proposed access. The splays are compliant with the 40mph speed limit and the design standards within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. WSCC note a speed survey was undertaken in the vicinity of the proposed access. Both the east and west 7-day average recorded 85th percentile speeds are greater than the posted limit by 4mph and 2mph respectively. In this instance, the recorded speeds should have been used to derive the visibility requirements. Nevertheless, it's apparent that actual achievable visibility distances at the access are greater than demonstrated. As such, it's considered unnecessary for the details to be revised.

1. For clarity, WSCC would ask the Applicant to confirm the access width and kerb radii proposed and for these to be marked on the access plan. These are assumed as 6 metres and 10 metres respectively but aren't noted anywhere.
2. As acknowledged above, the access has been the subject of a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. The Audit raises several problems both of which are addressed by the Applicant. There are several actions arising from the RSA. Firstly, the RSA should be updated in light of the inclusion of the signalised crossing now shown to the west of the proposed access. The inclusion of this crossing and the bus stop adjacent to the proposed access are considered to be a material change and should therefore be the subject of further consideration by the Audit team.
3. The proposed emergency access also doesn't appear to have been included in the RSA. WSCC would ask that this access is also included in the RSA if it hasn't already.
4. WSCC would also require an editable version of the RSA decision log to be provided to WSCC. Entries can then be made by WSCC against the Overseeing Organisations Response and Agreed Actions. This should be provided to WSCC directly and once the Audit team have commented further on the updated scheme.
5. WSCC note that Applicants intention to seek a lower speed limit on the A281 in light of the development. This hasn't been taken into account in this review by WSCC given a lower speed limit would require an amendment to the existing Traffic Regulation Order, which will be subject to its own statutory consultation process, the outcome of which cannot be guaranteed. Suitable obligations should be included in the s106 agreement to require the Applicant to firstly fund the TRO process, and secondly if successful to then implement the TRO with a scheme of signing and lining.
6. In summary, there are no in-principle concerns with the access arrangements. There are though a number of matters that would need to be considered.

Accessibility by Walking, Cycling, and Passenger Transport

7. The Transport Assessment considers the accessibility of the site by walking and cycling towards those day to day services that residents would require. A list of local amenities is included in table 3.2 within the TA. From this, it's apparent that there are relatively few amenities within what WSCC would consider a reasonable walking distance; this distance would be based on the National Travel Survey, the results of which indicate the significant majority of walking based trips occur under 1.6 km or 1 mile.
8. For cycling, it's accepted that there are a wide range of services within a 5km distance; this being accepted as a reasonable distance for cycling.

9. For both walking and cycling, it's accepted that the reasonable distances quoted are not ultimate thresholds. Trips will occur beyond this depending on the journey purpose and the individual. It's recognised that the edge of town location will influence and affect the overall accessibility of the site.
10. The TA provides a very limited assessment of actual walking and cycling routes. For walking, there is a continuous footway on the southern side of the A281. Residents would have to cross the A281 to access this footway. The Applicant is proposing a new signalised crossing to provide a means of accessing the A281. The WSCC Traffic Signals team have reviewed the proposed crossing arrangement and provided the following comments,
- The crossing width should be a minimum of 2.4m, not the 2m as shown.
 - The bus stop should be relocated further east allowing the full 16m of exit zig-zags. The current position could encourage drivers to try and overtake a stationary bus, crossing the existing zig-zags.
 - Appropriate forward visibility should be demonstrated to the signal heads based on the recorded 85th percentile vehicle speeds.
 - The Stage One RSA will need to be updated to include the proposed signalised crossing.
11. The existing southern footway is of varying width but generally exceeds 1.5 metres. There is limited scope to widen where this is narrow. The existing footway is considered suitable to accommodate the anticipated increase in pedestrian activity.
12. There are no dedicated facilities in the local area for cycling. Any cyclist would have to share the carriageway alongside vehicular traffic. For trips using the A281, this is likely to be an option only for the most experienced and confident of cyclists.
13. The development also has an emergency access onto Doomsday Lane. This will enable access for residents onto Doomsday Lane, which in turn accesses Hammerpond Road, and thereafter St Leonards Road. The availability of this route allows for much easier access into Horsham via roads less trafficked than the A281. This is very much considered a more appropriate route for cyclists although may still not appeal to all. There is however a lack of a footway on the initial section of Doomsday Lane to Hammerpond Road. As part of pre-application discussions, WSCC did request that the Applicant investigates such a route. This investigation is included in the TA (section 5.5 to 5.7) with it apparent that a footway could not be achieved from the emergency access. WSCC would not challenge this assessment with the constraints on a potential route very apparent.
14. Despite the inability to provide for pedestrians, the provision of an emergency access would be supported primarily to enable an alternate access for cyclists. The use of the emergency access by pedestrians could not be prohibited although residents would very much be aware of the lack of a footway on Doomsday Lane in making a decision on using this route.

15. Plans and details of the emergency access should be secured by planning condition.
16. The proposals benefit from a regular bus service operating on the A281. The nearest bus stops are a very short distance away with the eastbound stop proposed to be relocated to the immediate site frontage. The bus service, with particular reference to the journey time towards Horsham, offers a realistic alternative to driving.
17. As highlighted elsewhere, WSCC would require the relocated bus stop to be the subject of a Stage One RSA. Notwithstanding the WSCC Traffic Signals views above, it is WSCC general view that the proposed signalised crossing and bus stop are too close together. There is evidently room to increase the spacing, which could include moving the signalised crossing a short distance further west.
18. It would be helpful also if the Applicant could continue to press the bus operator to ensure there is support to the relocation of the bus stop. If support cannot be sought, the Applicant may still provide the bus stop albeit it won't be used and the existing stop would have to be retained.
19. In summary, the edge of town location results in fairly significant walking distances to the majority of services. An existing continuous walking route will be available along with a new controlled crossing on the A281, the positioning of which needs to be reviewed. Cycling is considered to be a realistic possibility using Doomsday Lane (for the majority of users at least) although no specific facilities are proposed or available. The use of the bus is considered a realistic option.

Travel Plan

20. The Applicant has submitted an Interim Travel Plan at this stage. A full Travel Plan would need to be secured as part of the s106 agreement with full details to be approved prior to any dwelling being occupied. A Travel Plan auditing fee (currently £4,110) should also be secured in the s106. The Auditing Fee is required to cover the costs of WSCC's on-going involvement in the monitoring of the TP should planning consent be granted.
21. Whilst appreciating that the contents of the TP is likely to change, that Interim TP provided is broadly acceptable. WSCC would highlight that the proposed targets whilst being achievable, are not overly ambitious; the final targets should be determined once initial travel surveys have been undertaken.

Trip Generation and Highway Impact

22. In summary, the following aspects of the assessment are agreed,
 - Vehicle trip generation has been derived by TRICS; a database of traffic surveys of completed developments that can be refined to select sites that are comparable with the development site and that in turn can be used to estimate traffic generation;

- Based on the TRICS sites selected, the development is estimated to generate 93 two-way movements in the AM network peak hour and 90 two-way movements in the PM network peak hour;
- The development impact has been assessed for the network peak hours, with these being the most sensitive to change;
- Trips generated by the site have been distributed using Census Journey to Work data from existing residents as a proxy for where future residents may be travelling to;
- The traffic impact has been considered for a future year of 2031 at which point the development is expected to be complete and fully occupied;
- The future year traffic flows have been generated using suitable traffic growth rates from TEMPRo.

23. Using the above assumptions, the Applicant has assessed using industry accepted modelling software, the junctions of,

- A281 Site Access junction
- A281 Brighton Road/Doomsday Lane/Sedgwick Lane,
- A281 Brighton Road/Kerves Lane/Hernbrook Drive

24. In all modelled scenarios with the development included, it is apparent that all junctions are forecast to operate well within capacity with minimal difference to the scenario without development. Beyond the development, the development traffic is expected to disperse quickly.

25. In summary, the development is anticipated to result in a negligible impact upon the local highway network.

Site Layout (including parking)

26. The planning application seeks outline planning approval with only matters of access being approved at this stage. The Illustrative Master Plan is noted with there being no particular concerns with the details shown. Likewise, the Parameter Plan proposes a suitable framework. The on-site layout, including parking, would be considered in detail as part of any future reserved matters application.

Conclusion

27. The proposals have been reviewed. Whilst there are several elements that require further review and adjustment as set out above, the broad principle of the development is accepted.

Ian Gledhill

West Sussex County Council – Planning Services