WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Hannah Darley
FROM:	Highways, WSCC
DATE:	17/03/2025
LOCATION:	Barn To The East of Coolham Road, Coolham, RH13 8QD
SUBJECT:	DC/25/0113 Prior Notification for Change of Use of Agricultural Building to 2no. dwellinghouses.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	04/07/2023 (For Application DC/23/1151)
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.

This proposal seeks prior approval for the change of use from agricultural building to form two residential dwellings. The site is located off Thakeham Road, a B-classified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph in this location.

This application site has some relevant planning history. WSCC in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA) most recently provided consultation advice for this site for applications DC/24/1801 and DC/23/1151, of which no highway safety concerns were raised, but these applications were ultimately refused on other policy grounds by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The preceding permitted application, DC/22/0024, sought similar proposals to that of the current submission, and WSCC raised no highway safety concerns also.

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.

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.

Visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m have been demonstrated at the existing point of access on Thakeham Road, in accordance with Manual for Streets (MfS) parameters for a 30 mph speed restriction.

The WSCC Car Parking Demand Calculator indicated that a development of this size and location would require five car parking spaces. From inspection of the plans, there appears to be space within the site curtilage for suitable car parking provision to be accommodated, with space for turning. The LPA may wish to secure car and cycle parking by condition.

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. In principle, the current GPDO gives limited ability to consider wider highway and transport impacts beyond those set out. The prior approval is therefore considered acceptable in highway terms.

Kyran Schneider
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services