

West Sussex County Council - Planning Consultation Response



To: Horsham District Council

Date: 6 October 2026

FAO: Nicola Pettifer

From: WSCC - Highways Authority

LPA Reference: DC/26/1318

Location: Land North of Shermanbury Road

Partridge Green

West Sussex

RH13 8EU

Proposal: Outline Application for the demolition of existing buildings and structures and the erection of up to 75 dwellings with public open space and vehicular access point from Shermanbury Road with all matters reserved except access.

Date of Site Visit: The location has been visited in conjunction with the adjacent development

Recommendation: Advice

Comments are made in respects of,

- Development Framework, drawing 13658-FPCR—ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-0002 revision P09
- Transport Assessment, dated June 2026
- Framework Travel Plan, dated June 2026

WSCC Highways have provided pre-application comments in regards of these proposals. These comments are included within the submitted Transport Assessment (TA).

With the TA, appendices 3 to 8 are not available for viewing on the Horsham District Council website. Comments are made based on the information available.

The TA makes reference to an earlier revision of the National Planning Policy Framework that has since been updated in August 2026. Whilst the underlying principles between the current and previous versions of the NPPF are substantially the same, it would still be appropriate for the Applicant to review the proposals against the current NPPF.

It's also acknowledged that this development site is included within the Main Modifications to the draft Horsham Local Plan 2023-2040. In-principle and whilst the Local Plan is not yet formally adopted, the site has nevertheless been identified as suitable for residential development. The site also immediately abuts a development of 120 residential dwellings (DC/24/0428) to the immediate west. This development is permitted but has not yet commenced.

Access

The site is to be accessed from the B2116 Shermanbury Road. The vehicular access is to take the form of a simple priority junction with 6 metre kerb radii as shown on

drawing 4912-F02 revision F. The form of access is considered appropriate and complies with current design guidance.

Footways are indicated on both sides of the proposed access road. Given that there is an existing footway to the west only, a footway potentially is needed on the west side of the proposed access road only. The Applicant may wish to revise the access design.

The access arrangements are understood to have been the subject of a Stage One Road Safety Audit. The RSA is contained within the missing appendices and therefore hasn't been reviewed. The RSA would need to be signed off prior to this application being determined.

The speed limit in the vicinity of the proposed vehicle access is 40mph with recorded average 85th percentile vehicle speeds being 38.7mph (eastbound) and 38mph (westbound). For design purposes, it would be acceptable and is common practice to use the 85th percentile speeds. Based on the recorded speeds and in light of the local context, WSCC would support the use of the design guidance within Manual for Streets.

The access design presented in the TA is based upon a potential 30mph speed limit with there being an expectation that this would be funded and provided as part of the adjoining permitted development. However, it was determined by the Local Planning Authority that a contribution to fund the speed limit reduction was not necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. A contribution was not secured as a result and this aspect does not form part of the approved development. Even if this contribution had been secured, there was never any certainty that this could be implemented given the processes that would be involved.

The current proposed development can still seek to fund and, if approved, thereafter implement a 30mph speed limit. However, the design should not be based upon an assumption that the 30mph will be implemented; any lowering of the existing speed limit would require a statutory consultation process, the outcome of which cannot be predetermined. As part of this application, the Applicant must demonstrate that the access can be designed to the recorded 85th percentile vehicle speeds.

Finally with respects to the proposed 30mph speed limit, this is potentially more pertinent to those residents walking alongside the B2116 rather than the vehicle access. The speed limit should therefore be viewed on a wider basis and not solely in relation to vehicular traffic.

In summary, further information is required in support of the proposed access arrangements.

Highway Impact

In summary,

- Vehicle trip generation is derived from TRICs. This is a database of developments that can be filtered by various parameters to use sites reflective of the development proposed.
- Using TRICS, the development is estimated to result in 40 two-way movements in the AM network peak and 41 two-way movements in the PM network peak.
- Trips have been distributed onto the highway network using Census travel to work data using existing village residents as a proxy for likely travel habits for

future residents and from this determine where trips are heading to and likely routes that would be used.

- The impact of the development is considered for a future year (2031) when the development is complete for the network peak hours given these are the most susceptible to change.
- The future year assessment includes those locally committed developments within the study area and as well as a traffic growth rate to account for wider traffic growth on the network.

Based on the above, furthermore detailed capacity assessments have been undertaken for several junctions in the locality. It's apparent from these assessments that the additional traffic from the development would have a minimal impact upon the operation of the network in terms of queues and delays. In traffic generation terms, the development is not expected to meet the severe impact thresholds referenced within the NPPF.

Active Travel (including bus)

The TA includes a review of distances to services. It's accepted that those services available within the village are within a reasonable walking distance. Footways are available linking to these services. It will be necessary for the development to provide a short length of footway to connect into the existing network. This is very much achievable within the existing highway. It's recommended that a minor scheme of maintenance also be undertaken by the Applicant to clear those nearby footways of overgrowing vegetation; this requirement has also been applied to the adjoining development.

As identified below, the potential for a walking connection into the adjoining development should also be considered.

For cycling, WSCC acknowledge that opportunities are limited other than within the existing village (where all cycling would be on-carriageway which may not be appropriate for all user groups) or using the nearby Downs Link (which is viewed much more as a leisure route although this still could be used to reach Henfield which is well within reasonable cycling distance). This aside, the development will generate limited demands and as such cannot be required to deliver holistic and significant cycling improvements.

The number 17 Stagecoach bus service between Horsham and Brighton stops within short walking distance of the development. The service operates on an approximately hourly basis. Journey times as well as the daily operating times are such that this could present a viable option for some residents.

The Applicant has also submitted a Framework Travel Plan. An FTP is a tool to encourage and promote the uptake of sustainable transport amongst future residents. The FTP should be viewed in light of the context of the local area and the scale of the development proposed that will dictate what measures are reasonable and proportionate. The FTP submitted is intended to set out those measures that could be included in a Full Travel Plan that will be worked up by the future developer of this site. Whilst accepted that the document presented is a framework, the measures included are fairly generic comprising works that are necessary to make the development acceptable (i.e. the footway extension) or that are freely and easily available on the internet. Beyond this, there is very little else within the measures promoted that would influence travel. The FTP also does not quantify or propose any targets. Likewise, the means of

monitoring is non-committal and based upon experience elsewhere, cannot solely rely upon questionnaire type surveys in light of poor response rates. There's also no indication as to what remedial actions may occur should targets not be met.

Ultimately, the FTP is too generic and lacking in detail to be a framework for a future full travel plan. On this basis, the FTP presented should not be secured by s106 obligation. Instead, a s106 obligation should require the submission and approval of a full travel plan prior to first occupation of any dwellings. This will then allow an entirely new travel plan to be submitted and agreed by a future developer.

As highlighted, the requirement for a travel plan must be included within any s106 agreement. WSCC would also identify that an auditing fee would be applicable for any travel plan. The auditing fee is to cover WSCC's future and post-planning involvement in reviewing and advising on the travel plan and related monitoring. The fee is currently £4,110.

Overall, viewed against the NPPF, in summary, TR3 1a advises that development proposals in the context of the area in which they are situated should be sustainable, which means that a location should limit the need to travel particularly by private car and offer a genuine choice of transport modes. Taking the locational context of this development (edge of village), there are opportunities for future residents to walk or potentially cycle to services in the village. There is also a reasonable bus service.

TR3 1e further advises that the opportunities to improve walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport and enhance the connectivity of an area should be taken where they exist and can be supported by the development proposed. Opportunities are limited but there remains the potential for a wider walking route through this development and those to the west as well as minor footway improvements.

Layout

The current planning application seeks outline planning permission with matters relating to the on-site layout being a reserved matter. A Illustrative Development Framework plan is included that sets the basis for future detailed design applications along with high level principles within the Design and Access Statement and TA. No comments are made at this stage given the limited amount of information available.

WSCC would highlight the potential opportunity that may exist to provide a walking and cycling connection from the development into that adjoining, and thereafter into the permitted residential development DC/22/0301. Assuming that all these developments come forward, this connection would then provide a direct route between the developments towards The Rise and Jolesfield Primary School.

The potential connection between DC/22/0301 and DC/24/0428 is already indicated on the Illustrative Development Framework for DC/24/0428. It is accepted that the link across the adjoining permitted developments involves land outside of the control of the current Applicant. However, there would still seem merit to a potential connection being shown indicatively on the Development Framework plan similar to that indicated for the permitted developments.

Summary

The general principle of residential development is considered appropriate. WSCC Highways duly acknowledge the edge of village location may limit active travel

opportunities but nevertheless there are reasonable and realistic opportunities available. WSCC are generally satisfied that appropriate access can be achieved and that any increase in vehicular traffic would not generate any severe impacts. There are however missing appendices containing information that would need to be reviewed and agreed prior to final recommendations and conditions being offered.

Ian Gledhill

West Sussex County Council – Planning Services (Highways)