WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Bethan Tinning
FROM:	Highways, WSCC
DATE:	02/07/2024
LOCATION:	New Barn Farm, Bolney Road, Cowfold, RH13 8AZ
SUBJECT:	DC/24/0925 Prior Notification for Change of Use of Agricultural Building to a single dwellinghouse.
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.

This application seeks prior approval for the change of use from agricultural building to residential to form a one-bedroom dwelling (C3 Use). The site is located on Bolney Road, an A-classified road subject to national speed limit in this location.

WSCC in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA) previously provided consultation advice for this site for application DC/22/1750, raising no highway safety concerns. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) permitted the application.

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 dwelling 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 the potential of the current use.

From inspection of local mapping, there are no apparent visibility issues at the existing access point onto Bolney Road. 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 road layout within the vicinity of the site. 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 indicates that a dwelling of this size in this location would require at least two car parking spaces. From inspection of the plans, there appears to be sufficient space within the site for this parking demand to be accommodated. There is also space for on-site turning to be achievable, allowing vehicles to exit the site in a forward gear.

The applicant has not provided details of cycle parking provision. However, the LHA acknowledge the rural location whereby cycling may not always be a viable option. If the Planning Authority believes cycle parking is justifiable, the applicant should demonstrate this in the form of covered and lockable cycle storage.

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