

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council - FAO: Daniel Holmes
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	18 March 2026
LOCATION:	Hollinger Marthas Barn Warehouse Wheatsheaf Road Henfield BN5 9AX
SUBJECT:	DC/26/0143 Erection of 3 buildings (D, E & F), reposition PD Building C, provision of a formal parking and turning layout to serve all units along with dedicated internal access to land to the rear, the use of Buildings C, D & E for variable B2 and E(g) use, Building F for variable B2, E(d), and E(g) use and for all Buildings (A, B, C, D, E & F) and all units to be capable of being used independently of each other
RECOMMENDATION:	More Information

West Sussex County Council, in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on proposals for erection of 3 x buildings (D, E, F), reposition of building C, formal parking and turning layout and internal access road to land to rear, use of buildings C, D, E for variable B2 and E(g) use, building F for variable B2 and E(d)/E(g) use and all buildings on site to be used independently.

The application is supported by a Transport Statement (TS) and various plans and documents.

Site Context & Planning History

Wheatsheaf Road is B2116 subject to national speed limit (60mph) in this location and rural with no footways. PROW HEN/2538/1 lies east of site but does not abut the site. Site currently has established hardstanding access crossover with radii to accommodate swept path, and site currently accommodates 2 x commercial buildings (A and B).

Planning permission was granted under DC/10/0650 for building A barn (525sqm) to be used for B1/B8 use. Planning permission was granted under DC/17/2254 for storage barn building B (275sqm). Improvements to vehicle access with Wheatsheaf Road were delivered under DC/17/2254 including widening to 5.5m and increasing junction radii. Certificate of lawful use for B8 storage building in position of building C was granted under DC/25/0887 but not implemented.

It is also noted that DC/22/1790 applied for lorry turning area on land to rear which was refused and appeal dismissed though it is understood no highway or safety capacity concerns were raised and the reason related to lawful boundary of site. DC/23/2311 for detailing/distribution of premium vehicles was also refused and appeal dismissed but LHA raised no concerns.

LHA has reviewed data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of the last five years. There has been a recorded injury incident approx. 240m east of site access. However, from an inspection of incident data this was not due to any defect with the access or nearby road layout.

Accessibility

No footway on Wheatsheaf Road which is rural – trips due to rural location and use types are likely to be predominantly by vehicle. However, some staff may live locally and choose to cycle or use PROW in vicinity. LHA consider that links to nearby PROWs should be explored to facilitate this. For example. new footway from existing site access extending eastwards to PROW HEN/2538/1 or footway extending westwards to link to prowl HEN/2542/1. Both PROWs link to Henfield but a link to PROW HEN/2538/1 would be more direct.

The nearest bus stops are on A281 in Henfield approx. 1.3 mile distant and nearest Train Station at Hassocks 5.7 miles east of site. Distances and unsuitability of walking routes mean these are unlikely to be attractive transport modes. However, Henfield village centre is 8–10-minute cycle distance.

Considering additional floorspace proposed a Travel Plan Statement may not be required but applicant should clarify this – or whether a travel information pack condition could be used.

Proposal and Access Arrangements

Construction of 4 x new commercial buildings (C, D, E and F) with combined floor area of 1319sqm with each unit operating following uses:

BUILDING C – 396SQM - B8 (storage/distribution) and E(g) (business/office).

BUILDING D – 396SQM - B8 (storage/distribution) and E(g) (business/office).

BUILDING E – 324SQM - B8 (storage/distribution) and E(g) (business/office).

BUILDING F – 203SQM - B8 (storage/distribution) and E(g) (business/office) and E(d) (sport/recreation).

Buildings A (525sqm - B1/B8) and B (275sqm - storage barn) to continue under existing lawful use.

Existing site access to be used with no changes proposed. Para. 4.1.6 of TS states that total uses on site accommodate maximum 341 vehicle movements per day. These additional movements applied to Wheatsheaf Road ATC traffic volume date would not result in exceed of DMRB threshold of 13,000 vehicles on a major road as would be required for a right hand turn lane. It is acknowledged that maximum 341 movements per day on the minor arm is above DMRB parameters but is considered that the contrasting flows on the major arm mean it is unlikely that not having a right hand turn lane would cause any operational issue in terms of capacity and highway safety.

ATC reveals 85th percentile speeds of 50.7mph westbound and 51.8mph eastbound showing speeds are below the posted 60mph limit. These would require visibility splays of 152m east and 158m west (not 150m east and 156m west as stated in para. 4.1.14).

Please update drawing MBH-RGP-XX-XX-DR-T-002 Rev P 'Visibility Splays' to show correct visibility splays at vehicle access and forward visibility.

Para. 4.1.17 acknowledges presence of oak tree west of site access that may impact on visibility. Whilst it is noted that previous applications raised no concerns in terms of visibility, each new application must be assessed on its own merits and in context to the increase in vehicular trips at the access that are now proposed. Considering an extended splay is required as above LHA advise position of any trees and other obstacles in visibility splays are also plotted on the drawing. It should also be noted that 2m 'X' distance is not considered appropriate as Wheatsheaf Road is not low-speed/ low-traffic environment.

Trip Generation

Traffic volumes on Wheatsheaf Road from ATC are approx. 450 movements in peak hours.

TRICs has been used to estimate potential total person trip rates then Census Travel to Work data applied to determine vehicle movements. Different scenarios have been assessed as set out in Figure 9 to determine potential vehicular trip generation as a result of mixed B8/ E(g) uses across site showing potential minimum and maximum occupancy rates for each land use type within each building. During AM peak hour vehicle movements could be between 7-31 and PM peak hour between 4-36.

As the development could see between 72-298 vehicle movements over the day this is over 100 vehicle movements required for an RSA. However, the TS does not set out the existing vehicle movements from buildings A and B and thus what the anticipated increase in vehicle movements in both peak hours and over the day would be.

Please clarify above then LHA will be able to advise on highway capacity impacts of scheme and whether an RSA is required.

Internal Layout and Car Parking

Swept path tracking has been provided showing HGV and articulated vehicles can turn on site to exit in a forward gear.

The rear access road (adjacent parallel parking bays) is not sufficient width for 2 x cars to pass but a passing bay has been provided. No highway safety concern is raised though LPA may wish to consider suitability of this in terms of operational ability. Manual for Streets advises 4.1m minimum width for 2 x cars to pass and 4.8m for car and lorry to pass.

WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments advises for B8 storage use 1 x car parking space per 100sqm and for E(g) office/light industrial 1 x space per 30sqm and for E class gym 1 x space per 22sqm. Various scenarios have been tested for floor space across these use classes and found a

maximum 46 x spaces could be required. In addition, the parking requirement for existing Building A & B is stated to be up to 12 x spaces which would result in total 58 x car parking spaces as shown. However, LHA consider that if Building A were in wholly office use, then a maximum parking demand for approx. 17 x spaces for building A would be required (along with approx. 3 x spaces for Building B). Thus, total maximum demand would be 66 x spaces across the site. LHA are mindful that no parking requirement was set originally for Building A, but further justification is required for the parking provision as set out considering above.

2 x accessible/disabled car parking bays are shown. WSCC Guidance requires disabled parking bays at 5% of total spaces provided (2.9) thus 1 x additional accessible bay could be provided. The applicant could also consider providing a small level of motorcycle parking.

Bicycle parking has been provided on basis of maximum demand (if site was wholly in use as office) would require approx. 12 x spaces. 16 x spaces are proposed. However, it is not clear whether bicycle parking is provided for existing Building A and B on site – further information required.

Conclusion

Further information is required prior to the LHA fully assessing the highway safety and capacity aspects of the scheme:

- Considering the increase in floorspace at the site and thus staff and some visitors may choose to use PROW networks nearby to travel to and from site – applicant should explore provision of linking footway on Wheatsheaf Road to these PROW.
- Clarify whether formal Travel Plan Statement will be provided.
- Vehicular visibility splays from site access to Wheatsheaf Road and forward visibility splay on Wheatsheaf Road require updating along with plotting of trees in splays.
- Existing vehicle movements for Building A and B should be set out (peak hours and over day) and clearly set out anticipated increase from existing to proposed.
- Further justification on car parking and bicycle parking provision, consideration of additional accessible bay and motorcycle parking.

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