WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO: Kate Turner
FROM:	Highways, WSCC
DATE:	03/06/2025
LOCATION:	Jessups Farm, Honeybridge Lane, Ashurst, BN44 3AW
SUBJECT:	DC/25/0823 Prior Notification for the change of use of an agricultural building to 3No. residential dwellings with associated operational development.
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.

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.

The current proposal seeks prior approval for the change of use from agricultural building to three residential dwellings. Access onto the publicly maintained highway is at the junction with Honeybridge Lane, a C-classified road subject to national speed limit in this location. Private access tracks link the maintained highway to the application site.

From inspection of WSCC mapping, there are no apparent visibility issues at the junction onto Honeybridge Lane. 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 within the vicinity of the junction. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest the junction at Honeybridge Lane is operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern.

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.

The WSCC Car Parking Demand Calculator indicated that a development of this size in this location would require six car parking spaces. From inspection of the plans, there appears to be sufficient space within the site curtilage for this parking demand to be accommodated. There also appears to be suitable space for on-site turning to be achievable, allowing vehicles to exit the site in a forward gear.

The applicant should consider including details of secure and covered cycle storage to make travelling around the local area more viable and sustainable. However, the roads connecting to larger urban areas tend to be relatively narrow and unlit, appealing more to experienced and confident cyclists.

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. Consequently, no highway concerns would be raised.

Kyran Schneider
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services