WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council FAO:
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	22 January 2025
LOCATION:	Laura House, Units 9 And 10 Jengers Mead, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9NZ
SUBJECT:	DC/25/0019 Prior notification for the change of use from offices (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) to form 2 no. self contained flats
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	n/a
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice

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 offices (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) to form 2 no. self-contained flats. The site is located on Jengers Mead, a private road, consequently these comments are for your advice only. Jengers Mead adjoins the public highway at High Street, a C-classified road subject to a speed restriction of 20 mph in this location.

The LHA previously provided consultation advice for this site for application DC/24/1756, raising no highway safety concerns. This Local Planning Authority (LPA) refused the application on grounds unrelated to highways.

Under the current General Permitted Development Order (GPDO), it is permitted development to change use from offices (Class B1) 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 office 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 the potential of the current use.

No parking is associated with this site. The WSCC Car Parking Demand Calculator indicates that a development of this size in this location would require at least two car parking spaces. Consequently, parking would have to be accommodated on-street. Comprehensive parking restrictions are in place on the nearby roads, prohibiting parking in places that would be detriment to highway safety. The LPA may wish to consider the potential impacts on on-street parking from an amenity point of view.

The applicant has not provided details of cycle parking provision. Cycling is a viable option in the area, and the LHA requests that secure and covered cycle parking provision be provided, if there is space within the site to do so.

In summary, the movements associated with office use 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.

Liz Corcoran
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services