

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Mid Sussex District Council FAO: Hamish Evans
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	17 September 2025
LOCATION:	Rock Lodge Lewes Road Scaynes Hill Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 7NG
SUBJECT:	DM/25/2073 Proposed creation of new site access.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	16/09/2025
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice

This application has been dealt with in accordance with the Development Control Scheme protocol for small scale proposals.

This application is for the creation of a new site access. The site is located on Lewes Road, an A-classified road subject to a speed limit of 50mph.

Pre-application advice was sought from the LHA prior to submission of the full application. No highways safety concerns were raised subject to the applicant providing sufficient supporting information with regards to visibility splays, location of proposed gates and a turn on site.

The application has been identified in the MSDC RAG (Red, Amber, and Green) Report as “Amber” with comments raised regarding forward visibility of vehicles travelling in the leading direction, particularly in regards to vehicle speeds travelling southbound and the crest of the hill located in proximity to the existing access. As such, a site visit was undertaken on 16th September 2025.

The proposed plans indicate that a bell-mouth access will be constructed, approximately 6m in width at the carriageway edge with 5m kerbed radii. As such the access works would be subject to a Section 278 agreement with the WSCC Implementation Team and must be constructed to a specification agreed with them. An informative is provided below.

The site is currently accessed from a shared private access road, with a steep driveway serving the site. Visibility at the existing access is very restricted in the trailing direction due to the presence of a large private sign. To the leading direction, visibility is restricted somewhat by the road geometry and estimated to provide approximately 100m visibility. This could likely be improved by some maintenance of vegetation within the splay.

Speeds observed during the site visit did not appear to exceed the posted speed limit of 50mph. Splays of 2.4 x 160m in both directions have been demonstrated on the proposed plans, in accordance with Design Manual for Roads and Bridges CD109 for a 50mph road. The demonstrated splays are wholly maintainable within the public highway.

It was observed on site that the proposed access will provide a significant improvement to visibility in both directions over the existing access. Concerns were raised with regards to the crest of the hill potentially obscuring visibility of the access for vehicles travelling south. On site it was observed that the crest of the hill in the leading direction does not obscure visibility for vehicles waiting at the proposed access point, with oncoming vehicles fully visible within the entire length of the splay. As such, it is considered that oncoming

vehicles have sufficient forward visibility of the proposed access and sufficient time to react if required.

Observed visibility in the trailing direction appears to be restricted marginally due to the road gradient - whilst the proposed plans indicate that 160m is achievable in this direction, it is estimated that splays of approximately 130-140m are achievable in reality. The LHA acknowledge this shortfall in the southern splay, however given the significant improvement over the existing arrangement, would not raise a highway safety concern to the proposal.

The applicant intends to close off the existing driveway to the private shared access. As such, it is acknowledged that the proposal would reduce the number of daily movements at the existing access, which is considered a benefit.

The proposed plans indicate that a gate will be provided within the site, this is set back sufficiently within the site to enable vehicles to wait clear of the carriageway whilst the gate is in operation. A turning head is also provided within the site, enabling vehicles to turn on site and exit onto the public highway in a forward gear.

Conclusion

The LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

If the LPA are minded to approve the application, the following conditions and informative should be applied:

Access

The use of the new driveway and turning space shall not commence until such time as the vehicular access serving the development has been constructed in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

Turning space

The use of the access shall not commence until such time as the vehicle turning space has been constructed within the site in accordance with the approved site plan. This space shall thereafter be retained at all times for the designated use.

Reason: In the interests of road safety

Informative

Works within the Highway – Implementation Team

The applicant is required to obtain all appropriate consents from West Sussex County Council, as Highway Authority, to cover the off-site highway works. The applicant is requested to contact The Implementation Team Leader (01243 642105) to commence this process. The applicant is advised that it is an offence to undertake any works within the highway prior to the agreement being in place.

Nicola Elliott

West Sussex County Council – Planning Services