

Highway Department,
West Sussex County Council,
County Hall,
West Street,
Chichester,
PO19 1RQ

Date: 11th July 2024
Your ref.: DM/23/2493
Our ref.: 24123

Dear Ms Farrell,

Unit 3A Acacia Grove, Copthorne Road, Copthorne, West Sussex RH10 3PD

This rebuttal letter has been prepared to address the objections raised in response to your advice (26th June 2024) by the adjacent owner of Heathy Ridge dated 3rd July 2024 with respect to the application at Unit 3A Acacia Grove (reference DM/23/2493).

Firstly, it must be questioned why the owner of Heathy Ridge will want to object to the visibility splays if they miss their land and still allow drivers to see 130m (and well beyond) in the leading direction? It is understood from my client that the owner of Heathy Ridge is looking to gain a right of access over land owned by my client (Acacia Grove) and visibility is potentially being used as leverage. In my nearly 30 years of experience in this field I have not encountered an objection of this manner.

The 1937 hand-drawn mapping presented by the owner of Heathy Ridge and WSCC Highway Boundary mapping obtained by YES Engineering suggests that WSCC highway land might extend further into Heathy Ridge frontage, and there is a possibility that the land is now being claimed as private, potentially to create a ransom strip (as set out above), although the exact motives remain unknown. However, given the factors discussed in previous correspondence, it is important to note that the objection may be unnecessary, as drivers using the existing access can see well beyond 130m.

Again, I would like to point out in the first instance that YES Engineering as independent engineers (un-associated with any previous work/application at the Site) prepared the Transport Technical Note in March 2024 and have assessed the application accurately in transport terms. It was clear that the visibility splays at the junction with Copthorne Road needed to be assessed in greater detail (using best practice).

I note the objector is still relying on a very simple desktop evidence/exercise from 2015. Clearly since then we have undertaken topographical surveys, speed surveys, volume surveys to assess the visibility splays using the best possible practice.

Each of the comments raised by the adjacent owner are addressed below:

1. It is suggested that the visibility splay is not drawn correctly in accordance with Design Manual for Roads and Bridge (DMRB). However, this is not a National Highways Road and falls under the jurisdiction of WSCC. DMRB is guidance rather than policy, along with our guidance such as Manual for Streets 1&2 where visibility is considered by Highway Engineers using several factors. Whilst I appreciate that the objector is relying entirely on the point of

the tangent in the leading direction, it is extremely difficult to ascertain the exact point due to the lack of defined carriageway/vegetation etc... However, as shown on our Figure 3.1 (and picture below) the required visibility (and beyond) can easily be achieved. On a separate application (details can be provided confidentially WSCC) site in West Sussex that an off-set of 1m from kerb was deemed perfectly acceptable to the highway authority, this gives an idea on flexibility when all factors are considered.



2. It is noted that the objector has provided a hand drawn map from 1937 and we have also obtained the Highway Boundary mapping from WSCC. Clearly the accuracy is incomparable to a site-specific Topographical Survey, but it does confirm that highway land runs along the entire frontage of the objector land, this information also suggests there is potentially more land available than we have considered. The scale of this drawing is at 1:2500 and lines are around 1m wide.

Conclusions

We welcome your comments of 26th June which are entirely reasonable and have considered the information we have put forward.

YES Engineering as independent consulting engineers have undertaken a visibility assessment of the existing site access using best practice. The visibility assessment is based on a site-specific

11th July 2024

Rebuttal letter - Acacia Grove, Copthorne Road, Copthorne, Sussex, RH10 3PD_5

Page 3 of 3

Topographical Survey (most accurate method available) and a 7-day speed survey to obtain the 85% speed along Copthorne Road. The results confirm that visibility can be achieved within land owned by the applicant or by the highway authority. Consequently, the conclusion of our Transport Technical (March 2024) can be relied upon.

It should be noted that the previous visibility assessment carried out by Heathy Ridge was undertaken using significantly less accurate methods (desktop study with 1937 hand drawn mapping) and should be superseded by this latest assessment.

I would also like to reiterate, it must be questioned why the owner of Heathy Ridge will want to object to the visibility splays if they miss their land and still allow drivers to see 130m (and well beyond) in the leading direction.

Additionally, this is an existing access point that has been in operation for many years, confirming that visibility has not been an issue to the operation of the site/access. Consequently, use of the access is permissible regardless of the objection being made.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'P. Willis'.

Paul Willis
Transport Director

on behalf of

YES Engineering Group Limited