

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Mid Sussex District Council FAO: Steve King
FROM:	WSSC – Highways Authority
DATE:	8 April 2025
LOCATION:	Land West Of Turners Hill Road And North Of Huntsland Turners Hill Road Crawley Down West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DM/25/0017 Outline planning application (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved) for the erection of up to 150 dwellings, a 65 bed care home (Use Class C2), and community facility, and associated infrastructure including new access points off of Wychwood with associated spine road and car and cycle parking, together with provision of open space, play facilities, utilities infrastructure, surface water drainage features, and associated works. 'Additional information received on 27/03/25 regarding Transport, Flood Risk, Landscapes, Heritage and an updated access and movement parameter plan, illustrative masterplan.'
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	13 th February 2025
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice

For ease, the following consultation covers all planning applications submitted under DM/25/0014, 15, 16 and 17. Comments are broken down to those that apply to the northern and southern phases only along with further comments that relate to both.

North – Planning Applications DM/25/0016 and DM/25/0017

WSSC Highways have previously issued comments dated 25th February 2025. A number of matters were raised to which the Applicant has provided further information. For the purposes of this response, WSSC has reviewed the following,

- Transport Assessment Addendum, reference DS/MS/LJ/ITB9155-072B, dated 26th March 2025
- Framework Travel Plan, reference MS/SG/ITB9155-056E, dated 26th March
- Illustrative Masterplan North 150 Units, drawing SK001-02 revision V16, dated 25th March 2025
- Offsite Pedestrian/Cyclist Improvements, drawing ITB9155-GA-056 revision C
- Access and Movement Parameter Plan, drawing 009-04 revision C

A number of aspects were raised by WSCC Highways. Taking these in turn.

Vehicular Access via Wychwood Place – As part of the initial consultation, WSCC requested further information supporting the intention to use Wychwood Place as the sole point of vehicular access for the northern phase of development (150 dwellings and the care home). WSCC acknowledged that discussions on this aspects had taken place with the Applicant as part of a pre-application enquiry. The submitted Transport Assessment Addendum (TAA) reference the discussions previously had. There is also reference to a Scoping Note in these respects, albeit this doesn't appear to be provided. This should be provided to demonstrate what consideration has been given to the use of Wychwood Place.

Reference is also made to Wychwood Place meeting the relevant geometric standards as set out within Manual for Streets to justify the more intensive use resulting from this proposal. WSCC acknowledge that the existing widths (of approximately 5 metres) would satisfy those within MfS but very much in terms of minimum criteria rather than desirable. Despite the Applicant's assertion that the potential for two opposing vehicles (i.e. two cars) to meet on the 90 degree bend within the initial length of Wychwood Place is 'vanishingly small', WSCC would dispute this with table 2.4 in the TAA indicating AM and PM peak two-way movements being 106 and 103 respectively. Clearly the potential for two opposing vehicle to meet at the bend is very much real although two cars are though expected to be able to pass but with care. A larger vehicle would occupy the whole carriageway although this will happen at present with refuse vehicles regularly visiting the existing dwellings. There is the potential for additional servicing trips associated with the care home. However these will likely be off-peak, and therefore away from the busiest times within the site, and represent a very small number of daily trips.

In reviewing vehicular access via Wychwood Place, WSCC Highways would conclude that the existing as-built carriageway width would meet the requirements within MfS and would therefore in principle be appropriate to serve the additional quantum of development. WSCC accept that the existing carriageway widths very much represent minimum standards given the development proposed and the anticipated number of vehicle movements, and WSCC would still ideally request widening on the bend.

Pedestrian Access along Wychwood Place – WSCC note that a length of footway is to be provided along the east side of Wychwood Place as per the approved reserved matters details approved under DM/15/1872 (point 2.26 within the TAA). This is to be provided separate to the current planning application by the original developer. Further to this an additional length of footway is to be provided on the westside of Wychwood Place that will extend northwards to a dropped crossing point opposite no. 36 Wychwood Place. From here, residents can then cross to the existing no through road (also part of Wychwood Place) that leads to the signalised crossing on the B2028. Drawing ITB9155-GA-056 revision C shows the length of connecting footway and dropped kerbs that runs through to no. 36. Continuous and suitable pedestrian facilities will then be achieved from the proposed development through the existing phases of development.

Road Safety Audit Response – WSCC has received the necessary information from the Applicant. This will be agreed directly between WSCC and the Applicant, and then provided to the Planning Authority for inclusion on the planning file.

Parameter Plan – This has been updated so as to show the north south cycle route that connects into the southern parcel. From the plan, it's noted that this includes connections into the neighbouring potential development parcel to the north as well as onto and across Huntsland to the south. WSCC Highways are satisfied with the amendments.

Framework Travel Plan – This has been updated. Two comments would be made in respects of the updated FTP. Firstly, WSCC previously raised issues with the use travel questionnaires given these generally receive very poor rates of return (even when incentivised) and offer little benefit. WSCC preference would be to focus on the formal monitoring in years 1, 3 and 5 rather than having further interim monitoring. Secondly, there is no commitment to remedial actions should targets not be met. This is a key aspects of the 'vision led' approach and travel planning generally, whereby additional proportionate actions and measures are triggered when it's identified that a travel plan is not performing as it should. WSCC acknowledge that a full travel plan will be required but as this will be based upon the framework, a commitment towards additional measures must be made within the framework even if the detailed is determined at a later stage.

As a general comment, should the opportunity present itself, a joint travel plan should be prepared incorporating both the northern and southern parcels.

South – Planning Applications DM/25/0014 and DM/25/0015

WSCC Highways have previously issued comments dated 25th February 2025. A number of matters were raised to which the Applicant has provided further information. For the purposes of this response, WSCC has reviewed the following,

- Transport Assessment Addendum, reference DS/MS/LJ/ITB9155-073B, dated 26th March 2025
- Framework Travel Plan, reference MS/SG/ITB9155-055E, dated 26th March
- Illustrative Masterplan South 200 Units, drawing SK001-01 revision V16, dated 25th March 2025
- Offsite Pedestrian/Cyclist Improvements, drawing ITB9155-GA-056 revision C
- Access and Movement Parameter Plan, drawing

A number of aspects were raised by WSCC Highways. Taking these in turn.

Speed Survey Data – The survey data has been provided. It's not entirely clear from this where exactly it was recorded however.

Updated Stage One Road Safety Audit – An updated RSA has been provided that reflects the design forming part of the planning application. The RSA raises a number of problems. WSCC is in the process of considering its responses to the various problems .

Road Safety Audit Responses - WSCC has received the necessary information from the Applicant. This will be agreed directly between WSCC and the Applicant, and then provided to the Planning Authority for inclusion on the planning file.

Proposed Signalised Crossing south of Vicarage Road – This is presently under review by the WSCC Traffic Signals team. An update will be provided when comments become available

Cycle Provision at the Site Accesses – The point was made by WSCC that at both proposed accesses, the shared use foot/cycle way shown within the development site ended abruptly at the B2028 with cyclists thereafter expected to use the carriageway. Given the well trafficked nature of the B2028, this wasn't considered appropriate. The Applicant has amended both accesses in response.

At the southern access serving fields 4 and 6 (150 units), the Applicant is proposing to provide a Toucan crossing along with a short length of shared use route on the east side of the B2028 that runs onto Vicarage Road where cyclists then have to join the carriageway. WSCC acknowledge that the ability to undertake significant improvements for cycling along Vicarage Road or beyond is hampered by the limited extent of public highway. It's also acknowledged that the plans include a narrow but short length of 2 metre wide shared use route. This isn't ideal but it enables the continuation of the shared use route. The level of use is not anticipated to result in any conflicts between users.

At the proposed access to field 5 (50 units), lengths of shared use are shown on the east and west sides of the B2028 with the existing signalised crossing south of 'Huntsland' being upgraded to a Toucan crossing. The length of shared use on the east side of the B2028 however terminates a short distance north and south of the upgraded crossing with cyclists then joining the carriageway. Ideally, the shared use route would continue southwards to the Sunny Avenue junction, which in turn leads to Vicarage Road and into the village. It is accepted that a length of shared use (approximately 200 metres) would be required and given the potential demands generated by this parcel, this may be disproportionate. It is though understood that the Applicant will be looking to undertake a scheme of improvements for pedestrians in terms of footway widening. This is indicated on drawing ITB9155-GA-056 revision C. As an alternative to the works shown on this drawing, it's suggested that the footway widening extends southwards from the signalised crossing at 'Huntsland' through to Sunny Avenue rather than all the way to Vicarage Road. It's suggested that this a minimum widening width (ideally 1.8 metres) is also referenced.

Parameter Plan – This has been updated to include the indicative alignment of the shared use foot/cycle way. An emergency access link is also shown between fields 5 and 6. The need for this link to serve as an emergency link is questionable. The deliverability may also need to be further considered given that it appears to pass through a wooded area that may have restricted headroom/width for an emergency vehicle. If the use of this for emergency access is deemed unnecessary, WSCC would still request the link is retained for pedestrians and cyclists.

Framework Travel Plan – This has been updated. Two comments would be made in respects of the updated FTP. Firstly, WSCC previously raised issues with the use travel questionnaires given these generally receive very poor rates of return (even when incentivised) and offer little benefit. WSCC preference would be to focus on the formal monitoring in years 1, 3 and 5 rather than having further interim monitoring. Secondly, there is no commitment to remedial actions should targets not be met. This is a key

aspects of the 'vision led' approach and travel planning generally, whereby additional proportionate actions and measures are triggered when it's identified that a travel plan is not performing as it should. WSCC acknowledge that a full travel plan will be required but as this will be based upon the framework, a commitment towards additional measures must be made within the framework even if the detail is determined at a later stage.

As a general comment, should the opportunity present itself, a joint travel plan should be prepared incorporating both the northern and southern parcels.

Both

The following matters relate primarily to accessibility improvements and relate to both development parcels.

Bus Frequency Enhancement – An approach has been agreed with the bus operator. An obligation should be included within the s106 agreements for both the planning applications covering the northern parcel (DM/25/0016 and 17) and another for the southern parcel (DM/25/0014 and 15) parcels that secures a requirement for the Applicant to fund the enhance of the frequency on Saturday and Sundays of the 272 bus service for a period of 2.5 years (i.e. 5 years in total).

Offsite Improvements – Comments relating to footway widening associated with these improvements are included in the comments above. Plan ITB9155-GA-056 revision C has otherwise been updated to address the matters raised by WSCC. For the purposes of securing the works, there will need to be two separate drawings; one showing those works relevant to the northern and southern parcels. It will otherwise be very difficult to define within any condition or legal obligation those works that are relevant to either of the parcels.

The only further comment WSCC Highways would wish to make regarding off-site improvements relates to those for cycling. WSCC acknowledges the limited opportunities that would be deliverable within the existing extents of the public highway. The development does at least provide for suitable connections across the B2028 and onto roads leading to the village that are generally suitable for the majority of users. It must also be recognised that the northern and southern development parcels will include a north/south pedestrian/cyclist route that leads to Worth Way to the south. Through any reserved matters applications, the north/south route must be designed to create a high quality route that is at least 3 metres in width with a bound surface so as to offer a realistic and direct alternative to using the B2028 for cyclists.

With regards to the split of highway works (appendix J), it's suggested that 'surface improvements on Turners Hill Road – footway and vegetation clearance' should be part of the southern site rather than the separate northern site.

Again with regards to appendix J, the car club should be an obligation upon the Applicant to arrange and fund directly with the car club operator. The s106 obligation should simply require the Applicant to use all reasonable endeavours to secure and provide a car club vehicles by an agreed time, for a specific duration, and in a location to be agreed. It's understood that the car club will comprise two vehicles and associated

spaces (7.3.2 of the Framework Travel Plans). On this basis, both the northern and southern planning application parcels will separately fund and provide a vehicle/space.

Improvements to bus stops are largely as previously presented, albeit the scheme of works on the western side of the B2028 and to the south of Grange Road have been updated so as to indicate the location of the existing vehicular access. It would be reiterated that although bus shelters are shown, WSCC will not be adopting or agreeing the detail of these; this will be a matter for the end adopting authority.

Whilst not a matter for WSCC Highways to agree, it's noted that the contribution to Worth Way is to be split between the northern and southern phases. This clearly shares the cost but could result in the situation whereby any improvements are underfunded should one of the development parcels not come forward.

Summary

The majority of points previously raised by WSCC Highways have been addressed. There remain a number of additional items that require clarification however. WSCC will provide further comments relating to the proposed traffic signals when available.

Ian Gledhill
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services