

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Mid Sussex District Council FAO: Stuart Malcolm
FROM:	Stephen Gee WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	19 November 2025
LOCATION:	Land At Coombe Farm London Road Sayers Common West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DM/25/2661 Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for access) comprising a residential development of up to 210 dwellings (Use Class C3); with associated access; landscaping; amenity space; drainage and associated works.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	16/10/2025
RECOMMENDATION:	More Information

Background

The site is allocated in the draft Mid Sussex Local Plan under policy DPC5 for upto 210 dwellings. The transport related policy requirements from the allocation are listed below.

1. Demonstrate a coordinated approach and collaboration with other housing allocations in the Plan within Sayers Common to deliver high quality placemaking which supports the 20-minute neighbourhood principles, with direct enhanced active/sustainable travel connections, and includes enabling the viability of new public transport services.
2. Prioritise pedestrian and cycle access throughout the site linking to Significant site allocation DPSC3 and bus stops on the B2118 to the west and provide suitable access onto the B2118.
3. Integrate and enhance the existing PRow which cross the site.

The additional allocations within Sayers Common would bring the total of the proposed dwellings to 2,393 dwellings. The largest allocation is DPSC3 Land to the South of Reeds Lane, Sayers Common. The policy includes the provision of a primary and secondary school, retail and community buildings and employment space.

Pre application discussions were undertaken in January 2025.

Access

A simple priority junction is proposed with carriageway widths of 6m and radii of 10m. The Transport Assessment (TA) notes the access is subject to a number of constraints including surface water flooding, accident woodland, Category A trees, An existing Culvert, access into Wintergreen Way and the need to avoid prejudicing the access into DPSC3.

Visibility splays of 2.4m x 94.8m and 2.4m x 93.2m and have been informed by an ATC that recorded 85th% speeds of 37.9mh southbound and 37.5mph northbound, splays have been based and shown to be achievable.

Whilst it is assumed that footways/sustainable transport provision would be provided at the site access (as shown on the masterplan) no details have been provided on the site access drawings.

Vehicle tracking has been provided for a refuse vehicle and fire tender and acceptable. It is noted that the vehicles would cross the centre line however given the limited number of anticipated movements would not result in a highway safety concern.

No Road Safety Audit or Designers Response has been provided.

No information has been provided within the application to detail how the access would avoid prejudicing the access not DPSC3, whilst some information has been shared within the pre application process it is not apparent whether this has been discussed with the promoters of DPSC3 or modelling checks undertaken (sufficient length of RHTL into the application site)

PROW 86HU currently provides access to Stonecroft and Coombe Farm. It is assumed that vehicular access rights will be retained for these properties however it is not clear how future residents would be discouraged/restricted from utilising the route. Whilst it is acknowledged that some of the PROW falls within the red line boundary (and could be dealt with via condition or within the RM) as measures could be located external to the site information on the approach is requested at this stage.

As the PROW crosses over the A23 towards Langton Lane a farm gate is in place that would restrict access by motor vehicles. Currently users can pass to the side of the gate, it would be beneficial if the surface could be improved to support cyclist movements in all conditions. It is acknowledged this is outside the red line boundary and would need a financial contribution to be secured within the S106.

Sustainability

As part of the pre application discussions it was recommended that the Active Travel England Toolkit should be utilised as the site would be above the threshold for ATE consultation, no assessment has been provided.

Sayers Common

Facilities within Sayers Common are limited to a local store (with opening hours of 7.30-6 weekdays and 8-2 and 9-1 on weekend), Pub, Nursery and limited employment opportunities. As such most facilities that any future residents would require would be beyond a walkable distance. Whilst a Primary School is located within Albourne and can be accessed via the B2118 travelling by sustainable modes is unlikely to be an attractive option. There is a footpath alongside the B2118 and would take pedestrians approximately 20 minutes to walk the route from the site

access to the school (1.4km) and Cyclist would be required to cycle on carriageway and as such given the speed of vehicles it is not considered realistic that future residents would travel by sustainable modes to Albourne when considered against the convenience of travel by private motor vehicle (2 minute journey time).

As identified within the pre application comments it is generally accepted that options are limited based on the existing situation; inevitably there will be dependency on the private car for the majority of trips. Long term, there is the potential for a greater range of services within the village as further facilities come forward within other (presently draft) allocations. WSCC acknowledge the principle of development in this location is identified through the draft allocation. However, the development still needs to look realistically at how residents will access services and what proportionate and reasonable improvements may be required to deliver the scheme proposed.

Public Transport Links

The 100 service runs hourly to Horsham-Billingshurst-Pulborough-Storrington-Henfield-Burgess Hill and can be accessed at the Coombe Wood bus stop. The service takes approximately 18 minutes to reach Burgess Hill.

The 273 is a limited stopping service and provides an hourly service between Hassocks-Albourne – Sayers Common – Crawley. The nearest stop is the school bus stop to the north of the development site (approx. 700m from the site access (10 minute walk)). At pre application stage it was recommended that discussions take place with the bus operator (Metrobus) to discuss the possibility of stopping at the closest stop to the development.

Sustainable Transport Upgrades

Walking

The existing footway along the site frontage is to be cleared and would provide a 1.5m provision and tactile paving and dropped kerbs will be provided to upgrade the existing refuse island to facilitate pedestrian movements to the nearby bus stops.

Cycling

Bridleway 86Hu runs east – west through the site, the TA indicates that the PROW will be incorporated into the scheme and details provided in any future RM applications. No information is provided on upgrades external to the red line boundary.

The upgraded splitter island is detailed in the TA as supporting movements to the upgraded northbound bus stop, however, no cycleway connections are provided either side of the of the island, no details of cycle parking at the bus stops or details of the width of the island.

Public Transport

The Transport Assessment indicates the existing informal stops would be formally demarcated with road markings, flag poles and shelters. The plans indicate an indicative location of the stops subject to DPSC3 agreement. No correspondence has been provided with the parish council to confirm the acceptability of the parish taking on the maintenance requirements of the shelters.

Real Time Passenger Information Displays would be secured via S106 contributions.

It is noted on the access plans that the bus stop location is to be agreed with the DPSC3 site. No evidence of discussions/agreement with the DPSC3 site is included.

Proportionate offsite mitigation

No details have been provided to detail the levels of proportional mitigation identified within the work supporting the local plan and the signed statement of common ground between the allocations. - <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/ikepsoia/s1-sayers-common-socg.pdf>

Travel Plan

A travel plan has been provided with the application. The Travel Vouchers should be for £150 and a commitment to providing a second round of travel plan vouchers should the site not meet its targets should be included (not just to agree with WSCC in the future)

No consideration is provided of the impact of the wider allocation and provision of facilities, If the facilities are provided whilst the travel plan is still active it will have a positive impact on the ability of the site to meet its targets (e.g a stretch target to meet the vision based scenario should DPSC3 and its facilities/mobility strategy be provided)

The travel plan and an associated auditing fee would be secured via S106.

Collision Data

The TA identifies 2 serious collisions within the study and states they have been investigated further yet no additional details have been provided.

Trip Generation

Trip rates have been sourced from Scenario 6 of the MSDC Local Plan Transport Study for Private Houses and Flats and as such provides a robust assessment. A development of 210 dwellings would be anticipated to generate a total of 123 AM peak two way trips and 132 PM peak two way trips.

Vision

In order to test the vision-based approach a range of scenarios have been tested:

- 1- 0% reduction
- 2- 10% reduction based on travel plan modal shift and increased bus patronage following bus stop improvements (total 111 AM peak trips and 119 PM peak trips)
- 3- 25% reduction based on the wider allocation and facilities provided within DPSC3. (total 92 AM peak trips and 99 PM peak trips)

The scenarios identified above are considered appropriate, however, its noted that the development trips would still be private vehicle dominated in the most optimistic vision based scenario.

Development Impact

The site in combination with the other proposed allocations has been modelled as part of the MSDC local plan transport study. The TA notes that the Local Plan allocation determined that some of the A23 slips would require improving to accommodate the allocations within Sayers Common.

Approach taken in the TA

Trips have been distributed according to Census 2011 travel to work data and result in 46% of trips heading south from the site access and 54% north. Details of the Census data and distribution should be provided

Traffic surveys and queue length surveys were undertaken on 9/7/2024. The survey data should be provided to WSCC.

Tempo 7.2 has been utilised to generate growth factors from the 2024 surveys to a 2039 End of local plan scenario and are acceptable and present a robust scenario.

Trip rates from DPSC4, 6 and 7 have been taken from the MSDC local plan Transport Study and for DPSC3 utilising the base case of the mobility strategy. The approach is noted and the measures supporting the DPSC3 trip rates will need to be refined as that site progresses, however, for the purposes of this assessment, the inclusion of TEMPRO growth and the outputs of the modelling on the local highway the assessment is considered appropriate.

1- B2118/Site Access

In all scenarios, the site access would work well within capacity.

2- B2118 / B2116 Henfield Road

In all scenarios the junction would work well within capacity with a maximum delay of 25 seconds on the Henfield Road Arm in the AM peak in the scenario with no vision led reduction.

3- B2118 / B2116 Albourne Road

The signalised junction would work well within capacity with a maximum delay of 52 seconds (across all scenarios on the Albourne Road arm)

4- B2118 / Reeds Lane Roundabout

The junction would operate within capacity on all arms with maximum queues of 5 vehicles on the B2118 South in the AM peak and delays of 27 seconds.

5- B2118 / Mill Lane / Friday Media Group Roundabout

The junction would operate well within capacity with maximum delays of 8 seconds and queues of 2 vehicles on the Mill Lane arm in the AM peak period

Layout

Whilst it is acknowledged that the application is in outline form (except for access) The TA indicates that a new pedestrian connection will be provided at the north west of the site and connect to the existing footways alongside the B2118 with the internal pedestrian connections, this is not shown on the illustrative plans.

Parking

Parking and Cycle Parking are to be provided in line with WSCC guidance.

Conclusion

Further Information as identified above is requested upon:

Access –

- Provide sustainable transport linkages,
- Provide RSA and Designers Response,
- Provide details as to how the site would not prejudice access to DPSC3

PROW 86HU

- Identify measures to restrict future residents utilising the link by motor vehicle

Sustainability

- Provide ATE Toolkit assessment
- Undertake discussions with local bus operator
- Clarification / details of splitter island upgrade
- Undertake discussions with Parish over maintenance arrangements of bus shelters.
- Provide details of agreement/future arrangements of DPSC3 over bus stop provision.
- Provide details of offsite mitigation both as a standalone application to address concerns of the site being a car dominated development and as part of the wider allocations.
- Amendments to the travel plan

Analysis of Collision Data

Development Impact

- Details of Census JTW data and distribution.
- Provision of traffic surveys / queue lengths surveys.

Layout

- Clarification on the provision of a new pedestrian connection to the north west of the site (not shown on indicative masterplans)

Stephen Gee
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