

Planning Department,
Mid Sussex District Council,
Oaklands,
Oaklands Road,
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex,
RH16 1SS

Date: 16th May 2024
Your ref.: DM/23/2493
Our ref.: 24123

Dear Mr Evans,

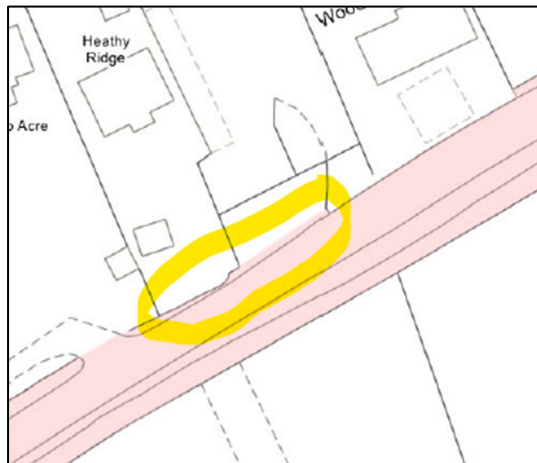
Unit 3A Acacia Grove, Copthorne Road, Copthorne, West Sussex RH10 3PD

This rebuttal letter has been prepared to address the objections raised by the adjacent owner of Heathy Ridge dated 19th and 25th April 2024 with respect to the application at Unit 3A Acacia Grove (reference DM/23/2493).

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) as there is an area of land that could potentially be outside the control of the applicant.

Each of the comments raised by the adjacent owner are discussed below commencing with the 19th April correspondence.

1. The highway boundary information provided by West Sussex County Council is based on OS Mapping at 1:1250 scale. While Ordnance Survey data is extremely valuable for large-scale mapping and navigation, it has restrictions due to its nature and is not precise enough for development needs in these situations. The width of a line at this scale is approximately 1m wide for example. As shown below even at this scale highway land clearly extends along land fronting Heathy Ridge.



Although OS Maps are excellent to use for a planning application and initial site analysis even though they cannot be as accurate as a measured survey of an area in the UK. As set out below the accuracy of OS mapping can vary in accuracy quite significantly at best 0.5m-0.9m discrepancy.

Original Survey Scale	99% confidence level	95% confidence level	RMSE*
1:1250			
Absolute accuracy*	0.9 m	0.8 m	0.5 m
Relative accuracy*	+/- 1.1 m (up to 60 m)	+/- 0.9 m (up to 60 m)	+/- 0.5 m (up to 60 m)
1:1250			
Absolute accuracy	2.4 m	1.9 m	1.1 m
Relative accuracy	+/- 2.5 m (up to 100m)	+/- 1.9 m (up to 100 m)	+/- 1.0 (up to 100 m)
1:10000			
Absolute accuracy	8.8m	7.1m	4.1m
Relative accuracy	+/- 10.1 m (up to 500 m)	+/- 7.7 m (up to 500 m)	+/- 4.0 m (up to 500 m)

***Absolute accuracy**: how closely the coordinates of a point in the dataset agree with the coordinates of the same point on the ground (in the British National Grid reference system).

***Relative accuracy**: positional consistency of a data point or feature in relation to other local data points or features within the same or another reference dataset.

***RMSE (root mean squared error)** is the square root of the mean of the squares of the errors between the observations.

Source: <https://www.mapserve.co.uk/blog/how-accurate-is-os-mastermap>

A topographical survey was therefore commissioned to ensure the information used for the visibility splay is the most accurate possible, this is considered best practice in assessing visibility splays. Figure 2.1 is based on the OS map provided by West Sussex County Council and Figure 3.1 is based on the digital topographical survey with the highway boundary information overlaid. This explains the differences between the two drawings, but Figure 3.1 has to be considered as accurate.

The letter from Heathy Ridge seems to indicate that Figure 2.1 (supplied by WSCC) is inaccurate "Highways ownership appear to cross a line and be undefined in the section between Acacia and Heathy Ridge". We cannot comment on accuracy of 3rd party drawings, but as it stands WBCC records confirm there is highway land adjacent to the carriageway (as shown below) which is not owned by either Acacia or Heathy Ridge (it would be highly unusual to have a running carriageway lane immediately against a private frontage).



It is acknowledged that a previous visibility assessment was undertaken almost 10 years ago (2015) which assessed visibility using OS mapping (desktop method). However, as set out above OS mapping has a relatively high degree on inaccuracy when compared to a measured topographical survey, so it was somewhat surprising best practice methods were not used to assess the visibility accurately.

2. The diagram, Figure 3.1, as mentioned for comment 1 above, is an accurate reflection of the layout of the carriageway of Copthorne Road as it currently exists and includes the land extending to the boundary lines either side of Copthorne Road. The carriageway surfacing and repairs were carried out by the highway authority where it was considered appropriate for the movement of traffic, and it is some 6.8m in width at this point.

-

As shown in the picture below (and Figure 3.1) the site access is clearly visible from 130m (and beyond) south of the access, clearly there is no opportunity/possibility for motorcycle not to be visible.

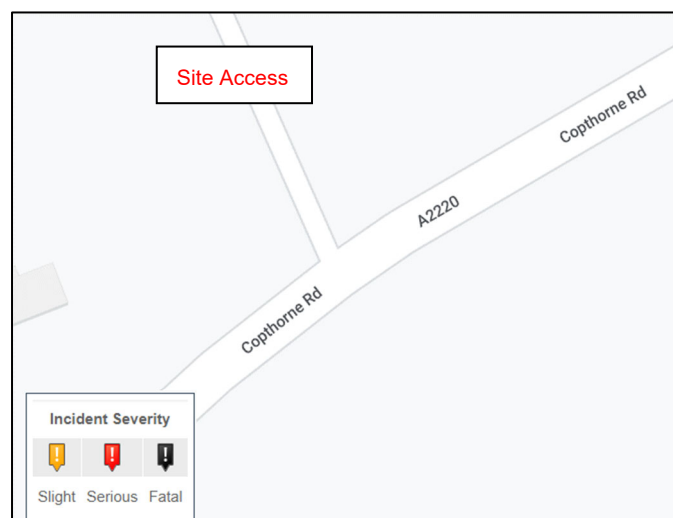
16th May 2024

Rebuttal letter - Acacia Grove, Copthorne Road, Copthorne, Sussex, RH10 3PD_1.docx

Page 4 of 5



It must also be noted that that this is an existing access which has clearly been operating for many years. As shown in the figure below there have been no recorded accidents at the Site access, which would suggest that there are no visibility issues.



4. The assertion that YES Engineering Group Limited is deliberately trying to present false facts to justify the access to Acacia Grove is entirely misguided. At no point would an employee of

YES Engineering be prepared to present inaccurate document to the local authority for consideration or compromise our reputation. The Transport Technical Note has been prepared with additional information (for example the topographical survey and the traffic survey, which were carried out by independent companies and is very much considered best practice) and these facts have been used to establish whether the access is safe for the development proposed. In our professional opinion the access visibility is safe and can accommodate the development proposed.

Peak hours on roads are between 8am and 9am, and from 5pm to 6pm. These are time periods where traffic on public roads would be at their highest so it is standard practice to assess such time periods as the level of conflict between a development site and the adjacent running carriageway would be at the highest. In this instance, due to the nature of the use, the traffic flows into and out of the site are very low and therefore the Transport Technical Note is not misleading in any way.

The further comments provided by the owner of Heathy Ridge of 25th April contests the number of traffic movements between 10pm and 3.30am. The applicant has not alleged that no movements would occur during that period, but the number of movements would be much lower. The 29 vehicular movements over 5 and a half hours are much lower in activity than during the working day.

Conclusions

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 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) and should be superseded by this latest assessment.

Additionally, as set out above 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.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Willis
Transport Director

on behalf of

YES Engineering Group Limited