

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Mid Sussex District Council - FAO: Joanne Fisher
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	25 July 2025
LOCATION:	Horncastle Care Centre Plawhatch Lane East Grinstead RH19 4JH
SUBJECT:	DM/25/1650 Demolition of the remaining parts of the redundant buildings in the western and southern part of the site; the development of a new specialist dementia care home (Use Class C2); the retention of an existing acquired brain injury (ABI) unit in the northern part of the site (Use Class C2), a retained access from Plawhatch Lane and associated car and cycle parking and landscaping.
RECOMMENDATION:	No Objection

West Sussex County Council, in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on proposals for redevelopment of redundant site to provide new dementia care home (80-bedrooms, incorporating existing acute brain injury unit (10 bed), 8 residential staff units) with retained access from Plawhatch Lane and associated works. The application is supported by technical plans and documents including Transport Statement (TS) and Travel Plan (TP).

Whilst the site buildings and internal layout are wholly within West Sussex, the access is within East Sussex County Council and thus their comments should be sought in terms of suitability of retained access, visibility and capacity of local road network. The LHA have commented on any impact to nearby public road network within West Sussex, which is the junction of Plawhatch Lane with Tyes Cross/Chilling Street to the west (approx. 870m from site access).

Site is in rural location thus no footways in proximity. TS states that road is national speed limit though this will be for East Sussex County Council to comment on. TS states that distance from NCR 21 means walking and cycling not feasible, as there is also no footway or bus stops within 3km and Crawley train station is 13km away. It is likely a reliance on private car/taxi/car sharing will occur.

Access, Visibility, Road Traffic Incident records – consult East Sussex County Council.

Servicing – turning area within the site shows refuse vehicle turning on site – consult East Sussex County Council where this is with access with public highway. Loading bay for both units.

Trip Generation – TRICs estimates additional 3 x vehicle movements in traditional AM and PM peak hours, respectively. The existing care home is 43 residents and 20 resident acute brain injury unit – thus number of residents for care home increasing by 37 and brain unit reduction in capacity by 10. It is not considered that increase in vehicle movements would be at a level that would have 'severe' impact on operational capacity of road network within West Sussex (i.e. junction of Plawhatch Lane with Tyes Cross/Chilling Street to the west). However, East Sussex County Council should comment in respect to impact on site access and immediate road network within East Sussex County.

Parking - 44 x car parking spaces including 4 x disabled, EV bays and ambulance bay. Under WSCC Guidance, car parking for C2 residential institution is assessed in a site-specific way, with no set figures. A car parking accumulation assessment based on arrival and departure times from TRICs has been undertaken and found potential 15 vehicles parked overnight (8 vehicles for residential staff and 7 other staff) and maximum number of spaces required in daytime at one time is 29 - thus 44 x spaces sufficient. Whilst electric vehicle (EV) charging spaces are secured under building regulations, LHA acknowledges that 9 x EV spaces will be provided.

A minimum 5% spaces should be marked with additional hatching and lining as accessible spaces – the 4 x spaces shown equates to approx. 10% thus this is acceptable and anticipated to meet demand of the specific care home use proposed.

Sheffield stand will be provided with capacity for 6 x cycle spaces plus additional covered/lit store for further 6 x cycles – this considered acceptable and can be secured via condition.

Travel Plan (TP)

The following within the TP is noted:

- Employ 60 staff over full/part time roles with shifts split over three time periods of day. Up to 30 staff on site at any one time and up to 8 staff on site overnight period.
- Changing room for and shower facilities for staff.
- Role of Travel Plan Co-ordinator (TPC) set out.
- Travel noticeboards, route information, cycle journey planner info etc. TPC to investigate whether staff discounts for bus services. Poster campaigns, promotional walk/cycle to work days etc.
- Travel Information Pack for each employee containing walking, cycling and public transport info.
- Car sharing scheme on site (with benefits/allocated parking spaces considered) as well as local liftshare & West Sussex Car Share site advertised.
- Travel information for visitors on website and leaflets.
- Will investigate loans for staff to move to sustainable transport modes.
- Additional cycle stands provided if demand and discounts at cycle retailers.

The following within TP needs updating/addressing:

- Para. 4.2 – presumed typo where it is stated that existing care home is for 20 residents – understood existing facility is for 43 residents (and current Acute Brain Injury Unit is for 20).
- Para 5.16 states the TP will be monitored in accordance with the TRICS SAM. Para. 6.2 states the target for private car travel reduction will be 15% yet para. 7.4 states this as 10%. 10% would be more appropriate considering rural location. We require that the 12-hour weekday vehicle trip rate should be set out in the TP along with the number of trips expected between 7am-7pm as set out in the TS, minus 10%, which will give the headline target number of trips at end of TP life.
- Para. 5.27 states 2 x EV spaces yet TS states 9.
- Cycle to work scheme set out but not clear if employer (care home) proposes to register/be part of.
- Information about adult cycle training courses that can be provided by the County Council's Road Safety team. Further details and course costs are available at www.westsussex.gov.uk/cycletraining. The employer should consider funding, or part-funding cycle training for employees that wish to cycle to work.
- The Travel Plan should include provision for enforcement action that would be taken in the event that the 5-year target is not met.
- As site is in Mid Sussex, employer should consider registering with easitNETWORK, a business-led network which provides sustainable travel solutions to local employers. Member employers can access a number of incentives including 15% on Southern rail services, discounted bus travel, and a car sharing scheme.

These updates to TP can be provided now, or secured along with the monitoring fee of £3,950, via s106 agreement.

The Travel Plan auditing fees reflect the amount of local authority officer time required to evaluate the initial plan, assess the monitoring data and participate in on-going review and agreement to any amended plans in the future, including post planning once the development is built out and occupied. The costs have been benchmarked against fees charged by other Local Authorities and are considered to proportionate and reflective of the costs incurred.

CONCLUSION

LHA consider East Sussex County Council should be consulted on impacts of development on road network in their county, however from highway safety and capacity view on West Sussex county road network, there are no reasons to object. The Local Highway Authority does not consider that the 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 115), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

The LPA may wish to ask for the TP updates now and re-consult, or they can secure these updates along with the monitoring fee of £3950 via s106 agreement.

Conditions –

Cycle parking

No part of the development shall be first occupied until covered and secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with plans and details submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with current sustainable transport policies.

Construction Management Plan

No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the approved Plan shall be implemented and adhered to throughout the entire construction period. The Plan shall provide details as appropriate but not necessarily be restricted to the following matters,

- the anticipated number, frequency and types of vehicles used during construction,
- the method of access and routing of vehicles during construction,
- the parking of vehicles by site operatives and visitors,
- the loading and unloading of plant, materials and waste,
- the storage of plant and materials used in construction of the development,
- the erection and maintenance of security hoarding,
- the provision of wheel washing facilities and other works required to mitigate the impact of construction upon the public highway (including the provision of temporary Traffic Regulation Orders),
- details of public engagement both prior to and during construction works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the amenities of the area.

Vehicle parking and turning

No part of the development shall be first occupied until the vehicle parking and turning spaces have been constructed in accordance with the approved plan. These spaces shall thereafter be retained for their designated use.

Reason: To provide adequate on-site car parking and turning space for the development.

Katie Kurek

West Sussex County Council – Planning Services