

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Mid Sussex District Council FAO: Joanne Fisher
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	2 May 2025
LOCATION:	Land At Colwell Farm Lewes Road Haywards Heath West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DM/25/0445 Outline application with all matters reserved except for access, for up to 80 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space, infrastructure and vehicular and pedestrian accesses.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	n/a
	Response to Local Resident

FAO Case Officer : Joanne Fisher, Mid Sussex District Council

Further to WSCC last correspondence where we requested a lay-by plan, more information has been submitted by a local resident regarding the traffic data used to determine the proposed access and pedestrian crossing points. WSCC has provided a response to the LPA, reviewed the lay-by plan drawing; and the information submitted by the local resident.

Traffic Speeds

WSCC has considered the alternative speed data provided by the local resident and have the following comments to make:

1. WSCC use manual from streets guidance in 30mph streets and DMRB guidance in 40mph streets.
2. However where speed surveys are provided these are useful to understand if speed limits are a true reflection of the posted speed limits and help to guide the design of new access locations.
3. WSCC speed data used is not directly comparable as this data is taken from a different location, this being east of Birch Close, and not the site access. This data was also collected in 2022, rather than 2024.
4. However whilst they are not a direct comparison, we acknowledge some differences in the speeds are noticed.
5. The resident has highlighted 1.5mph difference in the WSCC speed data in the Westbound direction, and fractional increases in the other speeds recorded.

WSCC has considered the table below provided by the resident and we have compared our data to the MH data table below :

Table 2: Comparison of Millers Homes' and WSCC data on 85th Percentile Speeds (in mph)

Time	85 th Percentile Eastbound Speeds (MH data)	85 th Percentile Eastbound Speeds (WSCC data)	85 th Percentile Westbound Speeds (MH data)	85 th Percentile Westbound Speeds (WSCC data)
08:00 – 09:00	41.3	41.8	42.5	44.0
17:00 – 18:00	40.1	40.7	41.2	42.7
10:00 – 12:00 & 14:00 – 16:00	41.1	41.3	42.5	43.3
00:00 – 24:00	N/A	42.5	N/A	44.4

Table 2 uses data from Table 4.2 in Millers Homes' Transport Assessment, and WSCC data on traffic monitoring from spreadsheet: 00001604_A272 Lewes Road_east of Birch Close-2022_11_08-2022_11_15.xls. Data from Tue 8/11/2022, Wed 9/11/2022, Thu 10/11/2022, Fri 11/11/2022 and Mon 14/11/2022 was averaged to provide weekday averages (see A272 Lewes Road-Weekday-Speed-Calculations&Volume-Graph.xls for calculations). Millers Homes and WSCC monitored speeds in a similar location East of Birch Close where there is a speed limit of 40mph.

6. WSCC notice there is a slight increase in speeds in the eastbound data set, however as these increases are fractional as they are under 1mph difference.
7. The 85th percentile Westbound speeds are noticeably higher by 1.5mph in both the AM and PM peak hours. This would make sense as vehicles travelling in this direction will be entering the town from a direction which has a 50mph, before reducing to 40mph, and then 30mph.
8. However, this is still relatively low, but it would command a slightly higher visibility splay in both directions.
9. These are all offset 0.3m from the carriageway edge which is accepted as this is the likely position for a vehicle to be in the carriageway.
10. **The table below shows what these amended visibility splays would be and we would ask the developer to confirm they are able to amend their junction design to incorporate these updated splays.**

Data	85 th percentile speeds Eastbound	Visibility Splay (off set 0.3m from kerb edge)	85 th percentile speeds Westbound	Visibility Splay (off set 0.3m from kerb edge)
Miller Homes	42.5mph	2.4m x 112m	41.1mph	2.4m x 108m
WSCC	44.0mph	2.4 x 118m	41.8mph	2.4m x 109m

Pedestrian Crossings

11. Pedestrian visibility splays should also be show in accordance with these new speeds. WSCC will ask the developer to update plans and send these to the LPA for approval. As the roa is straight with good visibility it is not thought to change anything materially.
12. The location of the informal crossing points are considered to be in the best possible locations for both crossing points, these are based on desire lines.
13. The Stage 1 RSA did not raise any safety concerns with the location of the crossing.
14. A formal pedestrian crossing was considered at pre-application planning stage however investigations revealed there is not enough space in the highway to accommodate a crossing and all the infrastructure required.
15. Importantly the number of dwellings associated with this development (80) would not ordinarily trigger the need for a permanent crossing on the basis of low pedestrian use.

16. A refuge island was considered but the carriageway here is not wide enough to provide a refuge island.
17. It is noted that a VAS has been installed at the site east of Birch Close which may help to reduce speeds further here.

TRO & Supporting measures

18. WSCC acknowledge the historic speeding issues with this road and the applicant has agreed to progress a TRO to reduce the speed limit to 30mph which will require supporting measures. The nature and extent of these are yet to be agreed.

RTCC

19. Road Traffic Casualties and Collisions can only be considered if they are in the vicinity of the access.
20. WSCC are aware of 2 incidents in the vicinity of the proposed access and another 160m to the east of the access. This involved a medical incident where the driver lost control of the vehicle due to a health issue and the other incident was a rear end shunt where the driver was not paying due care and attention.
21. These do not highlight any patterns or defects in the highway which would be a cause for any mitigation measures.

Footway Widths & Lighting

22. WSCC acknowledge that lighting would need to be considered and factored into any speed limit or highway improvement. WSCC do not have any lighting on this road currently and any that is present is owned and maintained by Haywards Heath town council.
23. Some routes are inaccessible for all. This has been looked into by the developer and options to make the surface of the public right of way level and a shared use route for pedestrians and cyclists, is not feasible due to the combination of land ownership issues and extensive tree roots.
24. An alternative route is available (whilst longer) from Snowdrop Lane via the alley way to Marlow Drive. The improvements to the lay-by on Lewes Road will assist with this.
25. It would also seem there are areas of footway on Lewes Road that just require some maintenance to achieve better footway widths. WSCC would ask the applicant if they are willing to push back vegetation which has encroached into the usable footway to maximise the existing footway widths, as part of the off-site highway mitigation.

Lay-by works on Lewes Road

26. Plan ITL19597-GA-018 is provided to show the new footway construction over the current lay-by to link the footway as the alternative surfaced and level route to the school and local amenities. (if not using the public right of way). WSCC are satisfied these help to encourage a safe and level walking route via Snowdrop Lane,
27. Snowdrop lane is a shared surface road, and it is acknowledged that pedestrians have to walk in the road a short distance to access the footpath into Marlow Drive.
28. Whilst this is not ideal there is limited carriageway space to provide a footway here. Can the applicant provide any solutions here which may help pedestrians using this route?

Alison Meeus
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services