

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Mid Sussex District Council - FAO: Caroline Grist
FROM:	WSSC – Highways Authority
DATE:	2 July 2026
LOCATION:	Land West Of Gatesmead Wickham Way Haywards Heath
SUBJECT:	DM/26/1315 Proposed 49 new homes together with open space and associated infrastructure.
RECOMMENDATION:	More Information

West Sussex County Council, in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on proposals for 49 x dwellings and associated works. The LHA previously provided pre-application advice under ref. PRE-77-25. The application is supported by various technical documents and drawings including a Transport Assessment (TA), Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) and Travel Plan (TP).

The TA is based on a vision-led approach in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to design in a way that opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport are promoted and moving away from designing developments that result in car dependency.

Site Context & Accessibility

The site is located west of the cul-de-sac 'Gatesmead'. It would be accessed through continuation of the cul-de-sac which is planned to become adopted public highway. The site is also north of Old Wickham Lane and pedestrians will be able to access this route via internal links. Centre of Haywards Heath is located south of the site.

The DfT Connectivity Tool has been used to assess the sites connectivity to public, walking and cycling modes at a score of 65 where the site will link into Old Wickham Lane to the south. Table 3.1 outlines a range of local amenities within suitable walking/cycling distance.

Walking

2m wide footways adjoin Gatesmead assisting pedestrians linking into Birchen Lane and Portsmouth Lane providing a route on to Sunte Avenue bus stops. The site will also connect into Public Right of Way (PROW) network (FP47bCU eastern boundary and FP46aCU southern boundary). Whilst the site access road will link into Gatesmead and the footway network, it is considered the most direct route to nearest bus stops and Haywards Heath town centre is to the south via pedestrian link to Old Wickham Lane.

PROW

WSSC PROW team should be consulted separately on the proposed connections to PROW FP47bCU bordering east of site and FP 46bCU south of site (Old Wickham Lane) and proposed financial contribution to resurfacing section of FP46cCU. Where the site access road crosses FP47bCU, safe crossing arrangements were advised with appropriate gradient, signage and surface and advice from WSSC Structures Team was for a mounded earth solution. It is advised MSDC also consult WSSC PROW team on these proposals and the links/surfacing of other PROWS associated with site.

Bus & Train

From the pedestrian link to Old Wickham Lane, the Train Station is approx. 12-minute walk/ 4-minute cycle to the south. The station includes services on Brighton mainline including Brighton, Worthing, London and others and features cycling parking.

Sunte Avenue and College Road bus stops are closest within walking distance of the site and feature services such as Haywards Heath-Lindfield circular. The two eastbound bus stops were assessed a few years ago as part of a BSIP funded RTPI (Realtime information boards) project and it was decided not to progress with displays. The eastbound bus stop on Sunte Avenue already has a display and the westbound stop is only served by a few journeys before 07:30.

Further services available from stops within Haywards Heath in vicinity to Train Station such as East Grinstead, Brighton, Crawley.

Cycling

Various local cycle routes within the vicinity as highlighted by Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) include route 6 on Balcombe Road (within 10 minutes of site). Gatesmead features traffic calming and 30mph speed limit meaning on-carriageway cycling would be suitable. MSDC Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) also identifies routes including route C accessed from Old Wickham Lane. Many areas of Haywards Heath with local amenities, services (including schools) and public transport are within 10–15-minute cycling isochrone from the site centre.

Travel Plan Statement (TPS)

The size of the development requires Travel Plan Statement and monitoring fee of £1,765 to be secured by legal 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.

A framework TP has been provided which includes background information about the site including accessibility credentials by different sustainable and active transport modes. Targets are set as 21% walk/cycle/public transport/car share by year 5, baseline travel surveys will be undertaken and targets updated once completed. Progress against targets monitored and reported annually.

Annual TP newsletter to promote public transport, walking and cycling and promote travel events, offer personalised travel planning. Residents Welcome Pack will include promotion of public transport including available discounts and offers.

We advise the final TP, secured by legal agreement, be updated to include:

- Details of TP Coordinator.
- Car sharing should be promoted through Residents Welcome Pack.
- Advise Residents Welcome Pack also includes public transport timetables/routes, promote journey planning resources, provides cycle and walking routes/paths maps.
- There are schools and college within Haywards Heath that are within walking and cycling distance of the site – the TPS should explore making links with any schools that have a travel plan in place.
- £150 voucher will be offered to each home but further info on this should be included and it should be able to be used for:
 - a. a season ticket for the local bus service
 - b. a rail season ticket or network card
 - c. a contribution towards the purchase of a new bicycle and/or equipment
 - d. Bikeability training up to 4 members of the household (further details and course costs are available at <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-safety/one-to-one-cycle-training/>)
 - e. 12 months free membership to any local Car Club (including joining fee)

Access Arrangements

The LHA has reviewed data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of the last five years. There have not been any incidents recorded on Gatesmead or Birchen Lane. There have been some incidents recorded on Portsmouth Lane and junction to south with Gander Hill/Sunte Avenue/Summerhill Lane. However, from an inspection of incident data these do not appear to relate to any defect with the junction or road layout.

Vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist access will be via continuation of Gatesmead into the site. Footway is proposed to link to existing on Gatesmead via uncontrolled (dropped kerb/tactile paved) crossing point. A build out/ carriageway narrowing is proposed into the site for traffic calming, similar to existing on Gatesmead to the east. A crossing for PROW FP47bCU is also proposed on this raised table section.

Table 3.5 shows ATC site 3 on Gatesmead revealed 85th percentile speeds for westbound and eastbound movements but these have been set out for peak hours only. Nevertheless, forward visibility into the site has been provided on a 20mph design speed (25m visibility splay) as has pedestrian visibility from the proposed crossing points. Considering the existing road geometry and that which it will continue to be considered appropriate and in line with Manual for Streets principles. The drawings demonstrate a vehicle waiting at the give way line can see and be seen by a vehicle proceeding along the one-way section.

Swept path tracking plans show a refuse collection vehicle can manoeuvre the access road through the build out (single carriageway) and once within the site can pass a car and turn within the site to enable an exit in forward gear.

Off-Site Highway Improvements

An audit has been undertaken of the walking routes from the site to Sunte Avenue bus stops and College Road bus stops and to Train Station and opportunities for improving these routes identified. The following offsite improvements will be provided and should be secured as part of the s278 access works either by condition or within the s106 agreement:

ACTIVE TRAVEL FACILITIES REVIEW PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS ROUTE TO SUNTE AVENUE BUS STOPS (DRAWING: 0005 Rev P02):

- Proposed tactile paving/dropped kerbs or tactile paving to existing dropped kerbs along Gatesmead x 3.
- Addition of tactile paving to existing dropped kerbs across Birchen Lane.
- Proposed tactile paving/dropped kerbs across Portsmouth Lane.
- Proposed tactile paving/dropped kerbs across Sunte Avenue.

ACTIVE TRAVEL FACILITIES REVIEW PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS ROUTE SOUTH TO COLLEGE RD BUS STOP AND STATION (DRAWING 0007 Rev P02):

- Proposed tactile paving and dropped kerbs crossing of College Road.

Stage 1 RSA

8.1 Problem – Item A1.13

Embankments adjacent footways/carriageway with no safety margin to prevent falls. Auditor recommends providing safety margins. Designer states they will consider this at detailed design stage as form of separation (horizontal margin, grading, or barriers) will need considering depending on RPAs. Whilst the LHA agree details can be provided and agreed at detailed design, we advise designer to check and demonstrate that there is sufficient width to provide this at this stage.

8.2 Problem – Item A2.1

Narrowing on inside bend – no visibility splays showing vehicles approaching narrowing can see opposing vehicles on inside bend in both directions. Auditor advises providing forward visibility splays over adopted land. Designer states blue visibility splay line shows 25m SSD (for 20mph) to carriageway narrowing in both directions in advance of give way lines. This will be further reviewed at Detailed Design stage. Whilst LHA agree, designer should confirm that land this passes through will be adopted highway/ applicant maintained.

8.3 Problem – Item A2.1

Forward visibility splay on Gatesmead for vehicles approaching from east appears to extend to private land. Auditor advises splay amended so does not extend through private land. Designer has clarified that splay passes through land under the applicant control thus ongoing maintenance can be given. Whilst LHA agree, it would be useful for extent of adopted highway land for adjoining site to be provided.

8.4 Problem – Item A4.2

Pedestrian crossing points without visibility splays, those shown are not to standard (X distances 0.8m and 1.2m) which will result in inadequate visibility of oncoming vehicles for pedestrians crossing. Auditor advises appropriate visibility splays demonstrated where these can be maintained. Designer has stated that splays have been demonstrated at 'x' distance of 1.2m yet auditor has already stated this is not to standard. A minimum 1.5m 'x' distance should be used. Please amend splays and response accordingly.

8.5 Problem – Item A4.2

No footway on northern side between footpath and northern footway. Auditor states pedestrians will walk along verge/carriageway rather than cross road twice and advise an additional length of footway to link up (from PROW to northern side footway on Gatesmead). Designer states it is not feasible to provide footway on northern side in this location as this would require embankment widening which would encroach into woodland buffer and root protection areas. LHA advise further information and consultation with the LPA is undertaken on this point – what is the extent of the woodland buffer and root protection areas, what mapping has been used to ascertain that an embankment widening/footway here is not achievable?

It is also noted that tactile paving at uncontrolled crossing east of build out (on Gatesmead) may not be sufficient depth (3 rows of tactile) to be compliant for visually impaired. Designer is advised to review this and all tactile paved crossing points to ensure these are of suitable dimensions for visually impaired.

Internal Layout

In addition to tracking for a refuse collection vehicle into and within the site, a fire tender has also been tracked and shows these can access all areas required to be serviced.

Internal junctions and corners within the road layout also show 25m forward visibility suitable to 20mph design speed.

The main access road features segregated footway and thus crossing point/s (dropped kerb/tactile paving) would be beneficial at this section.



In addition, at this junction (or clarify how visually impaired will navigate the change to shared surface):



It is noted there is another build out circled here to reduce speeds, but this is after the corner, and it is questioned whether further south on the straight spine road would be more effective in reducing speeds:



Shared surface spurs are where vehicle speeds are anticipated to be low, in cul-de-sacs and where the volume of motor traffic is below 100 vehicles per hour as per Manual for Streets (MfS) paragraph 7.2.14.

Pedestrian paths throughout the site are hard-bound and provide interconnectivity through different site areas and open space as well as connection to footpaths east and south of site boundary. The paths are approx. 2m. To enable shared use this could be widened to 3m. Please review internal footpath connections and widths to ensure LTN1/20 compliant.

Car Parking

The car parking provision has been assessed on the housing mix of 4 x 1-bed, 11 x 2-bed, 11 x 3-bed, 11 x 4-bed and 12 x 5-bed units using WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments. The site is in PBZ3 and would require total 105 (approx.) resident spaces. Table 4.1 sets out minimum parking provision proposed meets or exceeds WSCC guidance. There appears to be 112 x external spaces and 23 x garage spaces (where garage of 3m x 6m count as 0.5 space). The LHA consider that parking more than meets the standards. MSDC, as Local Planning Authority (LPA), could consider whether reducing car parking provision

may be appropriate in terms of promoting sustainable transport use, though the LHA is mindful that the provided Travel Plan Statement will seek to do this.

Visitor parking should be provided at 0.2 space per unit which would require 9.8 spaces and the parking plan shows provision for 10 x spaces. Applicant should consider providing additional access aisle hatching/ markings in accordance with DfT *Inclusive Mobility* for some spaces.

Bicycle Parking

Bicycle parking will be provided in a dedicated store for each plot. Table 4.2 sets out that bicycle parking will either meet or exceed WSCC guidance. Details of cycle parking can be secured by condition.

Trip Generation and Junction Capacity Modelling

Trip generation assessment has been undertaken on 55 x dwellings which is considered robust as the development is for 49 x units. Both Business as usual (BaU) and Decide & Provide (vision led) scenarios have been assessed.

Greater London has been included within total person trips but not to determine mode share, however excluding Greater London from person trips shows increase of 1 and 2 person trips in AM and PM peak hours respectively and this has been used for the BaU scenario – total 40 person trips in AM and 59 in PM peak hours.

For Decide & Provide TRICs forecasted trends to person trips have been applied showing total person trips as 31 in AM and 37 in PM peak hours.

Trip distribution has been demonstrated based on census data and shows majority of trips are to Haywards Heath. Mode share from census data has been applied to both BaU and Decide & Provide person trips to show car driver totals in AM and PM peak hours.

BaU car driver trips are 34 in AM and 27 in PM peak hours.

Para 5.5.5 explains rationale behind adjustments to mode share percentages applied to the Decide & Provide figures for car drivers - 24 in AM and 15 in PM peak hours. It is presumed 60 dwellings stated in table 5.12 is typo as previously it is stated the assessment has been undertaken on basis of 55 x dwellings.

Assigned to highway network most trips would travel south on Portsmouth Lane. The junction of Portsmouth Lane/Birchen Lane has been modelled for capacity for 2025 baseline and 2030 future year (with and without development). Core Temprow growth factors have been applied for BaU scenario and behavioural change growth rates have been applied for Decide & Provide scenario in the peak hours. The maximum resulting ratio to flow (RFC) is 0.21 in AM BaU 2030 + development scenario. An RFC of less than 0.85 indicates junction is operating within capacity. Considering this and fact that this is based on 55 x dwelling development, the LHA does not consider additional junctions require capacity testing and does not consider that a 'severe' impact on the operational capacity of nearby road network and junctions would result from the development.

Conclusion

Further information is required, summarised below:

- TP updates now or to be secured by legal agreement along with the monitoring fee.
- RSA further information as set out above and amend Designers Response accordingly.
- Check tactile paving at uncontrolled crossing east of build out is sufficient dimensions for compliance
- Internal Layout – review locations within site that require uncontrolled crossings (dropped kerb/tactile paving) and demonstrate these.
- Review spine road (straight section) build out location.
- Review internal footpaths that connect to PROW and Old Wickham Lane to ensure suitable width/LTN1/20 compliant.
- Additional access aisle hatching/markings for some disabled/accessible parking bays.

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