

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Mid Sussex District Council FAO: Joanne Fisher
FROM:	WSSC – Highways Authority
DATE:	19 March 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
RECOMMENDATION:	MORE INFORMATION

WSSC acting as the County Highway Authority (CHA) has considered the above application for outline planning consent. Pre-application advice was also given by WSSC under reference PRE-48-24 which has been useful to determine the offsite highway works that are feasible.

WSSC raise *no objection in principle* to this outline application, subject to a S106 agreement. However, **'MORE INFORMATION'** is required surrounding the:

- **TRO scheme of supporting works**
- **and a plan showing the removal of existing layby along Lewes Road A272 (near junction of Snowdrop Lane) with footway construction.**

Plans should be submitted to the LPA for approval.

Access

The site is currently used for agricultural purposes and the proposal for a housing development of up to 80 dwellings will require a new vehicular and pedestrian access onto the A272 Lewes Road.

Lewes Road has a 40mph speed limit at the proposed location of the new access. The proposed site access arrangement drawing ITL19597-GA-004 Rev G shows the new access to provide the following:

- Simple priority junction with 5.5m access road, 2m footway on one side, and 1m service margin on the other.
- Bell mouth junction onto Lewes Road with 6m kerb radii to the east and 9m radius to the west
- Visibility splays are based on the 85th percentile speeds of the road which were 42.5mph to the east and 41.1mph to the west.
- Therefore, splays of 2.4m x 112m to the east (offset 0.3m from the edge of the carriageway) has been provided in accordance with DMRB.

- And 2.4m x 108m to the west (offset 0.3m from the edge of the carriageway) has been provided in accordance with DMRB.
- The provision of an informal crossing point with dropped kerbs and tactile paving has been provided to the west of the junction to link into the existing footway on Lewes Road.

Trip Impact

A Transport Assessment has been undertaken to review the sites transport impact. ATC counters were used to determine the existing level of traffic on Lewes Road. This was undertaken in December 2023 and the results showed the average daily flows were 587 vehicles eastbound and 628 westbound, with 85th percentile speeds of 41mph eastbound and 42.5 mph westbound.

A TRICS assessment was also undertaken. Based on 80 dwellings the expected trips in the AM peak hour would be 73 two-way trips (15 IN, 58 OUT) and in the PM peak hour would generate 64 two- way trips (44 IN, 20 OUT).

In the AM peak this would equate to 1 trip leaving the site every minute, and 1 trip entering the site every 4 minutes.

In the PM peak this would equate to 1 trip leaving the site every 3 minutes, and 1 trip returning into the site every 1 minute.

WSCC are satisfied the trips associated with this development would not generate a level of trips which would be considered high enough to require any further junction design. The travel to work census data has also been used to determine the direction of travel most likely to be taken and suggests that journeys to work made by car are most likely to travel from the site in a westerly direction with the remaining spread out in lots of different directions.

This information has been shown on network flow diagrams and show the majority of traffic movements will be making left turns out of the site and right hand turns in.

Junction Modelling

For robustness WSCC asked for the site access and the Birch Hotel roundabout to be modelled to ensure no additional highway improvements were required. The applicant used Junctions software and in summary the results show the highway network can operate within capacity in both baseline and future year scenarios.

Queue lengths were also investigated, and the results show no queues would be created as a result of the development at both the site access and the Birch Grove roundabout.

Stage 1 Road Safety Audit with Designers' Response

A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit of the site access has been undertaken following the principles of GG119 and includes a designer's response which WSCC (as the overseeing organisation has responded to - see below). 3 problems were raised including two related to the access and 1 regarding an existing gully.

RSA Problem	RSA Recommendation	Design Organisation Response	Overseeing Organisation Response	Agreed RSA Action
3.3.1	It is recommended that a Picady, or similar, programme should be checked to	Agree. A junctions 10 capacity model of the proposed site access has been	Agree. WSCC as the OO can confirm the junction's software has not raised any issues with	Agreed. No further action. Progress the S278 agreement.

	ensure that there is no excessive queuing at the access and supplied for assessment.	undertaken and included within the Transport Assessment. The capacity model was assessed for the AM and PM peak hours for a future year 2030 with traffic growth and the proposed development. The results show there is no expected queuing along Lewes Road as a result of the proposed site access.	queuing at his junction. The RFC values in the AM and PM peak hours are very low at 0.0 and 0.1 which indicates no queuing is likely to occur.	
3.3.2	It is recommended that the junction radii should be eased to provide sufficient carriageway space to prevent incursion into the opposing carriageway	Agree. The site access design has been revised this includes a compound curve radius to avoid a refuse vehicle from the overhanging the centre line of Lewes Road when turning left out of the site access.	Agree.	Agreed. Updated plans showing the compound curve to be submitted to the LPA and agreed as part of s278 at detail design.
3.4.1	It is recommended that the gully should have a pedestrian friendly cover installed or be relocated	Agree. Either a pedestrian friendly gully cover is provided, or the gully is re-located this will be assessed and agreed at the detail design stage.	Agree. The gully should have a pedestrian friendly cover or be re-located.	Agree. Plans and details of the proposed action to be submitted and agreed as part of the s278 at detail design stage.

Off-site highway improvements

The applicant has considered how sustainable the site can be in terms of linking into existing footways and cycle links and connecting into the preferred LCWIP network. As part of the pre-application advice work the applicant undertook their own survey of the existing walking and cycling routes in the local area.

Numerous options were considered such as a pedestrian crossing on Lewes Road, a shared use cycle path on Lewes Road, and the upgrading of the existing public right of way to a permissive cycle path linking into Walnut Park and local amenities. Unfortunately, most of these options were not feasible due to lack of space in the highway or landownership issues. However, the applicant has been able to propose some improvements focusing on walking routes to most of the local amenities such as the shops and schools.

They have provided a package of off-site measures which are inclusive for all and will help support walking and wheeling, in the local vicinity.

A number of off-site highway improvements are proposed shown indicatively in Fig 6.2-ITL19597 these are:

- An uncontrolled crossing across Lewes Road with dropped kerbs and tactile paving at the Birch Close junction, to improve the access and connection between the north side and south side footway. (ITB19597-GA-011)
- Removal of existing layby along Lewes Road A272 (near junction of Snowdrop Lane) with footway construction.
- An uncontrolled crossing across Orchid Park with dropped kerbs and tactile paving linking existing Footpath CU29.
- An uncontrolled crossing across Orchid Park with dropped kerbs and tactile paving for pedestrians onto Charlesworth Park.
- Adding tactile paving to the existing crossing at the Marlow Drive/Charlesworth Park junction.
- Adding tactile paving to the existing crossing at the Beech Hill/Marlow Drive junction.
- An uncontrolled crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving for pedestrians routing between Marlow Drive and Catkin Way.
- An uncontrolled crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving for pedestrians routing between Marlow Drive and Views Path.
- Adding tactile paving to the existing crossing at the Northlands Avenue/Larch Way junction.
- Adding tactile paving to the existing crossing at the Beech Hill/Aspen Close junction.
- An uncontrolled crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving for pedestrians across Rowan Close for pedestrians routing between Aspen Walk and Northlands Avenue.

All of the above are to be included in the s106 agreement and delivered by the applicant.

Potential Relocation of the existing 30mph / 40mph speed limit change on Lewes Road to the east of the proposed site access road

The applicant has confirmed they are willing to progress a TRO to reduce the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph. It is acknowledged the site access and visibility splays are based on existing observed speeds and therefore the proposed access is not dependent on a speed limit change.

Advice from our road safety team (as part of the advice given at pre-app stage) is that given the nature of the road and current vehicle speeds; some form of supporting measures would be required on the long straight section of Lewes Road. This would be required to ensure the 30mph limit is respected by most drivers.

The applicant was also made aware that lighting issues will inform the TRO. The lighting present is not owned by WSCC (likely owned by the Town Council) and we have no details. Without knowing what the design criteria is for this lighting WSCC is unable to ascertain whether this would be considered a system of street lighting. Therefore, lighting design would need to be factored into any speed limit or highway improvement. *Please can the applicant provide a plan to the LPA of the 'supporting measures' that will be included in the TRO scheme of works as part of the S106 agreement to ensure the*

applicant covers the cost of the TRO and an obligation is in place to deliver the TRO scheme of works if it is accepted.

Framework Travel Plan

A Framework Travel Plan is submitted and approved.

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) require a Travel Plan to be submitted as part of this planning application to support and encourage sustainable and active travel. The fee of £3,950 plus VAT is a requirement of any submitted travel plan to cover the additional resource implications and costs of assessing and auditing the TP through the lifetime of the plan and its 5-year monitoring period.

WSCC would expect to see this included in a S106 agreement, to ensure the plan is obligated.

Internal Layout

Whilst this is only an outline application WSCC would offer some general comments here regarding the layout at this stage.

- consideration should be given to guidance in the DFT document 'inclusive mobility' and the governments Active Travel England guidance on layouts.
- Permeable layouts are encouraged, and pedestrians and cyclists take precedence over the car.
- Navigation from different spaces in the development needs to be shown to work for all people. Inclusive design is encouraged. Crossing from one side of the development to the other needs to be thought about so all users of the development can be included in accessing all areas and play spaces.
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Summary

WSCC are satisfied the proposal meets paragraph 116 of the NPPF:

"Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios."

Alison Meeus

West Sussex County Council – Planning Services