

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Mid Sussex District Council - FAO: Andrew Watt
FROM:	WSSC – Highways Authority
DATE:	22 April 2025
LOCATION:	Site Of 60 Keymer Road Hassocks West Sussex BN6 8AR
SUBJECT:	DM/25/0484 Mixed use redevelopment of the site comprising of ground floor commercial/community use and 26 No. new residential units on upper floors alongside associated parking and public realm improvements.
RECOMMENDATION:	More Information

West Sussex County Council, in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on proposals for redevelopment (previously car workshop and auto retail) to mixed commercial/community use with 26 x flats on upper levels and associated parking and public realm improvements. The application is supported by various plans and documents including Transport Statement (TS).

Site Context / Accessibility

The proposal is to demolish existing vehicle repair centre and erect building of 26 x flats (8 x 1-bed, 15 x 2-bed, 3 x 3-bed) with 2 x commercial units of 188sqm on ground floor. Associated works include car parking and footway works (remove crossovers). Access will be via Dale Avenue by modified crossover.

The site is located at corner of Keymer Road (B classified) /Dale Avenue (D classified), both subject to 30mph speed restriction. The site is also bordered to the west by John Saxby Place (private road).

There is no on-street parking on Keymer Road outside site and nearby junction with Dale Avenue is protected by double yellow lines. On-street parking on Dale Avenue is adjacent shopping parade with time limit in place.

There are amenities within walking distance of the site using street lit footways. Dale Avenue features dropped kerb/tactile paved crossing and there is a signalised pedestrian crossing of Keymer Road. The nearest bus stops on Orion Parade provide Mon-Sat services between Hurstpierpoint and Haywards Heath with a less frequent Mon-Fri service between Burgess Hill and Lewes. Relevant colleagues have been consulted regarding potential for Realtime boards at these stop and comments will follow in due course.

Hassocks Train Station is 7-minute walk/ 3-minute cycle distant from the site. There are side roads along this route from the site to the station that would benefit from improved crossing facility (dropped kerb/tactile paving). Considering the additional pedestrian traffic that could result from the development and to accord with National Planning Policy Framework para. 115 (b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users) and Mid Sussex Local Plan policy DP21.

Cycling takes place on carriageway in vicinity of site (signed) although there does appear to be shared used path outside site on Dale Avenue. It is considered a number of amenities are within cycle distance, including the Train Station and that there are options for sustainable/active travel modes for residents.

As a TS has been provided it would be beneficial for a Travel Plan Statement (TPS) to also be provided and secured via legal agreement with monitoring fee of £1,695 + VAT. 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.

Public Realm Improvements

The Area Office have been consulted on the proposed public realm improvements and acceptability of these from, maintenance point of view, comments to follow.

Access

The LHA has reviewed data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of the last five years. There has been a recorded injury incident on Keymer Road near junction with John Saxby Place. However, from an inspection of incident data it is clear that this was not due to any defect with the junction/ road layout.

The existing crossover on Keymer Road will be removed and footway reinstated. The crossover on corner junction (on Dale Avenue) will also be extinguished and footway reinstated. The crossover central to site frontage on Dale Avenue will be retained for access to car parking for residents but will be narrowed to suit use proposed. A minor works licence would be required for these works. Swept path tracking should be provided showing cars can pass within this narrowed access point.

Whilst full extent of visibility splays is not shown to south, it is clear from the plan and WSCC highway boundary mapping that splays to the junction with Keymer Avenue (north) can be achieved and splays in excess of required 2.4m x 43m to south can be provided within publicly maintained highway land. However, the proposed new trees, especially those adjacent access might impact these splays and the applicant should address this point. The applicant should also consider how visibility of pedestrians on adjacent footway will be achieved for vehicles emerging from the covered parking area.

It is also noted that an area of tactile paving proposed is to be confirmed (at corner of Dale Avenue) – please clarify.

Trip Generation

TRICs has been used to estimate existing vehicle movements against that proposed. The vehicle repair centre could see 10 trips in AM and 9 in PM peak hours. Over 55's housing/flats could see 6 trips in AM and 5 in PM peak. The TS does not account for commercial units' trips as it asserts that these would be ancillary trips not generating new traffic. The LHA consider that being local shops some trips will already be on road network or would be accessed by foot, yet depending on end user there could be some dedicated new vehicular trips that are not accounted for. Considering scale of retail units proposed the LHA do not consider these additional movements would be excessive. Furthermore, the access itself will be for residents only and thus the total predicted 72 vehicle movements/day is not considered excessive compared to existing use and would not warrant a Road Safety Audit. The LHA do, however, require the visibility points raised above to be addressed before full assessment of access suitability can be made.

Car & Bicycle Parking

28 x car parking spaces are proposed, 2 of which will be for accessible/disabled use – these appear to be spaces 25 and 26 though additional hatching/markings should be provided to enforce this.

Under WSCC Guidance the site is in PBZ2 thus require total 40 spaces plus 5 x visitor spaces. Car ownership data reveals that for the geographical area, flats with 1 vehicle in ownership = 15 and flats with 2 vehicles in ownership = 10. Furthermore, nearby car parks and on-street parking have been assessed for capacity and found a total parking stress of 51% meaning there is spare capacity for parking nearby the site if required. The LHA are also mindful that the nearby road network is protected from on-street parking in locations that would be detrimental to highway safety and that the site location provides opportunity for travel by means other than the private car and thus would not raise an objection to the level of parking proposed.

The site provides 14 x cycle parking spaces for the flats, 6 x cycle parking spaces for the retail element and 4 x mobility scooter parking spaces. WSCC Guidance requires 0.5 cycle spaces per 1–2 bedroom flat and 1 space per 3-bedroom flat (total 14.5). LHA therefore advise an additional space. Considering accessible location and reduced car parking, there may be benefit to providing slightly more cycle parking.

CONCLUSION

In summary the LHA require further information:

- Consider improvements to side road crossings along route to Train Station (dropped kerb/tactile).
- WSCC Area Office and Realtime teams to provide comments on public realm proposals and whether Realtime required at nearby bus stops (comments to follow).
- Consideration to providing TPS.
- Proposed trees may impact vehicular visibility splays – please address.
- Demonstration of pedestrian visibility splays for cars exiting covered parking area to adjacent footway.
- Noted that an area of tactile paving proposed is to be confirmed (at corner of Dale Avenue) please clarify.
- Swept path tracking for cars passing within the narrowed access point.
- Additional marking/ hatching for accessible parking spaces – in accordance with DfT Inclusive Mobility.
- Consideration of additional residential cycle parking.

Please ask the applicant for this additional information and re-consult.

Katie Kurek
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services