



National Highways Planning Response (NHPR 25-01) Formal Recommendation to an Application for Planning Permission

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To: Mid Sussex District Council (FAO Stuart Malcolm)
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CC: transportplanning@dft.gov.uk
spatialplanning@nationalhighways.co.uk

Council's Reference: DM/26/0238

Location: LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers Common, Hassocks

Proposal: Hybrid application that seeks consent for separate and severable elements comprising: Demolition of all existing buildings bar the chapel, to retained for use within Use Class F and: a) Full planning permission for the development of the north western part of the Land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate a new SEN School with associated access from London Road, car parking, landscaping and drainage works; and b) Outline planning permission (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale Reserved) for the development of the rest of the land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate up to 210 dwellinghouses (including 30% affordable housing) with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space and .drainage works

National Highways Ref: NH26/15036

Referring to the consultation on a planning application dated 11 February 2026 referenced above, in the vicinity of the A23 that forms part of the Strategic Road Network, notice is hereby given that National Highways' formal recommendation is as follows:

~~a) offer no objection (see reasons at Annex A);~~

- ~~b) recommend that conditions should be attached to any planning permission that may be granted (see Annex A – National Highways recommended Planning Conditions & reasons);~~
- c) recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period (see reasons at Annex A);**
- ~~d) recommend that the application be refused (see reasons at Annex A)~~

Highways Act 1980 Section 175B is not relevant to this application.¹

This represents National Highways' formal recommendation and is copied to the Department for Transport as per the terms of our Licence.

Should the Local Planning Authority propose not to determine the application in accordance with this recommendation they are required to consult the Secretary of State for Transport, as set out in the [Town and Country Planning \(Development Affecting Trunk Roads\) Direction 2018](#), via transportplanning@dft.gov.uk and may not determine the application until the consultation process is complete.

The Local Planning Authority must also copy any consultation under the 2018 Direction to Planningse@nationalhighways.co.uk.

This response and all comments outlined herein are made in respect of planning matters only in National Highways' position as a statutory planning consultee, and does not confer any proprietary rights nor amount to the giving or refusal of consent, assent, approval, or awareness of or by National Highways in or of any other aspects or matters (including, but not limited to, the use of property belonging to National Highways). If anyone wishes for National Highways to consider any aspects which do not relate to planning submissions, they should call our contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Signature: 	Date: 12 June 2026
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¹ Where relevant, further information will be provided within Annex A.

Annex A **National Highways' assessment of the proposed development**

National Highways has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as a strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such we work to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity.

Recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period of time: Reasons

It is recommended that the application should not be determined for a period of three months until **11 September 2026**.

This recommendation can be replaced, renewed, or reviewed during the three-month period, or at its end, dependent on progress made with regards to the outstanding matters.

We will be concerned with proposals that have the potential to impact on the safe and efficient operation of the SRN, in this case, particularly within the vicinity of the A23.

Since our response dated 01 May 2026, we have been consulted on additional information submitted in support of the application.

This additional information comprises a Technical Note "DM/26/0238 – LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common: National Highways Consultation Response" (13 May 2026) which was shared with National Highways on 22 May 2026.

We have reviewed the Technical Note (TN) in the context of our response dated 01 May 2026.

While progress has been made, there remain outstanding matters that need to be resolved.

Throughout this response **ACTION points** for the applicant are highlighted in **underlined bold**.

Existing Traffic Data

We previously noted that traffic surveys had been undertaken at the A23 / A23000 junction and the A23 / B2118 merge / diverge and requested that the raw traffic data and video files are provided for each location.

The applicant has advised that the video files are not available from the survey company, stating that video files 'have been deleted in accordance with GDPR guidelines'. **Should it emerge that further assessment of the SRN is required the raw traffic data will need to be provided and there will be a need to consider the methodology for model validation.**

Trip Distribution / Assignment

Our response dated 01 May 2026 documented discrepancies within the trip distribution/assignment assessment.

We noted that Table 5.2 of the applicant's submission (dated 31 March 2026) sets out the applicant's trip routing assignment. We noted that B2118 N appears twice in the list, which suggests either duplication or an error in presentation. We also noted that no trips have been assigned to the following strategic road network routes:

- A272 Bolney Road (eastbound at its junction with the A23);
- A272 Cowfold Road (westbound at its junction with the A23); and;
- A23 southbound at the slip road from Brighton Road.

We note that this has not been addressed within the submitted TN and remains outstanding. The resulting details, when agreed, should then be included within the subsequent updated Transport Assessment (TA).

Committed Development

Our response dated 01 May 2026 noted that the LPA must be consulted for advice on which committed developments should be included within any junction assessment, with the correspondence provided to National Highways for review. **We note that this is required only in the event of it being concluded that junction assessment is required and we have not yet reached that point. This has not been addressed within the submitted TN.**

Background Traffic Flows

We previously noted that the TA contained background traffic flow growth which has been forecasted using TEMPro for the Mid Sussex 016 MSOA using core scenario with no alternative assumptions. Based on our earlier advice the applicant provided updated TEMPro growth factors, within the TN dated 31 March 2026, based on the use of a 'trunk road type' for the Mid Sussex 016 MSOA which we confirmed correlate to our rate calculations.

We previously noted that whilst the above is agreeable at this stage, pending confirmation from the LPA regarding any committed development to be included within the assessment, it may be necessary to apply alternative assumptions where committed developments are located within Mid Sussex 016 and form allocated sites within the adopted Local Plan. This information remains required in the event it is concluded that junction assessment is required.

Traffic Flow Diagrams

We previously requested the survey data to verify the observed traffic flows, this remains outstanding.

Junction Assessment

As noted previously, the need for junction assessment is subject to finalisation of the trip generation and trip distribution/assignment. However, as the junction assessment had been reported within the TN we provided comments.

We previously noted that the inscribed circle diameter (ICD) model inputs at both A2300 roundabouts should be updated to reflect the on-site dimensions, this remains outstanding.

We also noted the TN dated 31 March 2026 included references to B2119 rather than B2118 and this should be amended to avoid confusion.

We requested clarification of the year of the baseline assessment within the Junctions model and requested that the traffic flow diagrams and Junctions model scenarios are consistent, this remains outstanding.

We previously noted that no evidence has been provided for the A23 / B2118 merge/diverge. As such **we would expect the applicant to provide a DMRB CD122 complaint merge and diverge assessment. The assessment must be conducted on B2118 merge with the A23 NB and A23 SB diverge with Mill Lane and also at the A23 NB diverge to the A2300 and A2300 merge with the A23 SB on slip to Brighton.**

District Plan Review

We acknowledge the reference within the TN to the documents which have been produced in association with the Mid Sussex District Council Local Plan Submission Draft (Regulation 19). However, the Regulation 19 submission is not currently adopted and therefore the development proposals and infrastructure proposals which have been considered are not committed.

Travel Plan

The applicant provided an updated Residential Travel Plan (RTP) dated 27th March 2026. The RTP referenced the NPPF, and DfT Circular 01/2022 policies. **The updated Travel Plan needs to demonstrate alignment with the development vision and associated supporting measures.**

We acknowledge the additional text relation to the Travel Plan included within the TN, however this includes reference to the District Plan Review documents which are currently not adopted.

CTMP Requirements

At the appropriate stage of the planning process, we are minded to recommend a suitable planning condition in relation to the preparation, agreement, and adherence to a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP).

Conclusion

Given the above, it is currently not possible to determine whether the application would have an unacceptable impact on the safety, reliability and/or operational efficiency of the SRN.

National Highways currently recommends that planning permission not be granted (other than a refusal if the Council so wishes) for a period of three months until 11 September 2026 to allow the applicant to resolve the outstanding matters.

This recommendation can be replaced, renewed, or reviewed during the three-month period, or at its end, dependent on progress made with regards to the outstanding matters.

Standing advice to the local planning authority

The Climate Change Committee's [2022 Report to Parliament](#) notes that for the UK to achieve net zero carbon status by 2050, action is needed to support a modal shift away from car travel. The NPPF supports this position, with paragraphs 77 and 110 prescribing that significant development should offer a genuine choice of transport modes, while paragraphs 109 and 115 advise that appropriate opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport should be taken up as part of a vision-led approach.

Moreover, the carbon reduction hierarchy (avoid-switch-improve) as set out in clause 4.3 of PAS2080:2023 promotes approaches and measures to minimise resource consumption and thereby reduce carbon emissions.

These considerations should be weighed alongside any relevant Local Plan policies to ensure that planning decisions are in line with the necessary transition to net zero carbon.