

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Arun District Council FAO: Simon Davis
FROM:	WSCC - Highways Authority: Tim Townsend
DATE:	26th February 2021
LOCATION:	Land At Wings Nursery Lidsey Road Woodgate PO20 3SU
SUBJECT:	AL/20/21/PL Demolition of Wings House & erection of 71 No. replacement dwellings (70 net new dwellings), access arrangements, sustainable drainage measures, public open space, landscaping & all other associated works (resubmission following AL/46/20/PL). This application is a Departure from the Development Plan.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	n/a (visited as part of the assessment undertaken for previous proposals AL/117/17/OUT, AL/32/19/OUT and AL/46/20/PL).
RECOMMENDATION:	More Information Required
S106 CONTRIBUTION TOTAL:	TBA

This is the WSCC Highways (CHA) response to the above planning application for demolition of Wings House & erection of 71 No. replacement dwellings (70 net new dwellings), access arrangements, sustainable drainage measures, public open space, landscaping & all other associated works (resubmission following AL/46/20/PL).

In 2017, 2019 and 2020, the CHA was consulted for comments in response to three previous planning applications for residential development on the site under Arun District Planning references AL/117/17/OUT, AL/32/19/OUT and AL/46/20/PL. The first two were for 55 dwellings whereas the last one was for 81 units.

Summary position of Highway Authority.

Additional information is required in order that the CHA can consider the proposal further. This is set-out below and summarised at the foot of this report.

Site location and access.

The site is located on the western side of Lidsey Road, the A29, an 'A' classification road serving as one of the main routes in and out of Bognor Regis. Vehicular access to the site is shown taken from two points – the northern-most one to serve 10 homes (plots 62-71) and the other (south) the remaining 61 homes (plots 1-61). The northern-most part of the site is located approximately 90m south of a railway level crossing. Access to the 10 homes is located approximately 100m south of the railway, whereas the site access serving the remaining 61 is shown located approximately 220m away from the crossing. Footways are shown either side of the main access with the secondary access serving the 10 units being designed as a private driveway (so no footways) with highway users sharing the available space.

Lidsey Road is the A29 and is one of the main district distributor roads providing access in and out of Bognor Regis, running northwards into Surrey. The section the site fronts (and that generally south of the railway line) serves mainly residential dwellings – mainly to the east side of the road with approximately nine on the western side (although there is some commercial to the rear – type and size unknown). Also to the east, can be found Woodgate Road and Woodgate Close providing access to approximately 32 dwellings – mainly bungalows; Oak Tree Lane (approximately 35 homes – predominantly houses) and beyond that some commercial development on land known as the Woodgate Centre. Lee's Yard can be found on the eastern side of Lidsey Road which is also commercial. North and east of that can be found Willows Caravan Park.

The A29 in this location has a relatively straight alignment (albeit rising slightly where it crosses the railway), has a 30mph speed limit and street lighting (from the point northwards starting outside Lee's Yard). The carriageway is generally 6.5m wide, rising to 8.5m wide opposite the former 'Basket World' (the southern part of the site). It has footways on both sides of varying widths – approximately 1.0m along the western side of the road (the site side) but wider in places on the eastern side – approximately 1.0m-2.0m. Although running continuously northwards they terminate on the eastern side of the road on the northern side of the Willows caravan park access and on the western side, opposite Lee's Yard. There is a hatched waiting area in the centre of the road to assist vehicles turning into the Willows caravan park access.

Approximately 100m to the north of the site is a railway level crossing. This is closed regularly because of the high volume of rail traffic. When the level crossing is closed, traffic on the A29 is halted, and vehicles are typically queued back some distance on both sides of the crossing and often beyond the junction of Woodgate Road to the south. Occasionally (in peak periods) the queue extends back to the 'Lidsey Bends' (where a canal once crossed/ran).

Access.

The proposed access arrangements comprise two junctions – one serving several dwellings in the form of a shared private drive with the other one a more formalised road junction with a footway leading into the site. The latter (referred to herein as the 'primary access') has a single lane approach to the A29 Lidsey Road. Residents of the new estate, when emerging, might have to wait at the junction to turn left (north-bounds) out of Woodgate Close onto the A29 if a queue of traffic resulting from the railway crossing is present. Only when such queuing dissipates, could drivers easily emerge. Drivers wanting to turn right (south-bounds) might experience some delay being blocked by the left turners and/or traffic queue although 'KEEP CLEAR' markings on the carriageway would assist in this regard. However, given that traffic movements are likely to be generally moderate during peak periods, incidences of this are not likely to happen frequently.

The risks of blocking at the secondary access are considered minimal given the low number of peak-hour traffic movements. However, like the primary access, a 'KEEP CLEAR' marking should also be applied to the carriageway at this location should planning permission be granted for the development.

Therefore, considering such impacts at the accesses alongside the NPPF, it is concluded that any detriment to movement cannot be considered severe on this occasion - subject of course to all Stage 1 Road Safety Audit recommendations being adhered to in any

final design to the Highway Authority's satisfaction (covers both access points and associated works to the public highway). However and specifically with regard to the secondary access, the applicant does need to demonstrate that the turning area for a refuse vehicle is large enough (a tracking diagram for a fire appliance has already been provided). A plan and tracking information to demonstrate the latter is required.

Proposed access road junction details (including off-site road changes).

To accommodate the traffic associated with the main part of the development, the applicant proposes a junction arrangement comprising the following:

Primary road access.

- 6.0m wide access road
- A 2m-wide footway along the southern-side the access road linking to existing footways on Lidsey Road
- 8m bellmouth radii
- Alteration to the current white lined hatching on Lidsey Road (by removing some of the hatching replacing it with a waiting area to serve the site)
- Provision of bus waiting areas (painted 'bus cages' on the road)
- Provision of 'KEEP CLEAR' road markings

Secondary access.

- 5.0m wide access
- Shared surface access arrangement for users
- Provision of 'KEEP CLEAR' road markings

Off-site.

- Tactile paving and pedestrian crossing points at nearby road junctions and also to assist with crossing Lidsey Road

The Highway Authority has reviewed the information provided (including swept-path diagrams of vehicles entering and leaving the junction) and the arrangements are found to be generally satisfactory apart from:

- A tracking diagram should be provided showing a refuse vehicle turning in the turning area in the private 'secondary driveway' adjacent to plots 63 and 64.
- A tracking diagram for a selection of vehicles should be provided showing their path around the proposed relocated north-bound bus stop marking on the A29. As shown, there appears to be a potential conflict point where vehicles attempting to overtake a stationary bus would enter part of the right hand turning lane which could result in collisions. As a result, the bus cage and bus stop might need moving. This element of the re-design should also be passed to the Road Safety Audit Team to review and comment on.

Road Safety Audit.

A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit accompanies the planning application, prepared by 'Road Safety Answers' - Reference: RSA222 dated 03/03/2020. This was the same Safety Audit as used for the previous planning application under planning reference AL/46/20/PL. Although the latest planning application now being considered is for less dwellings, the works considered in the Road Safety Audit appear to be the same as the previous proposal.

The Safety Audit has identified four (4) problems with the scheme, a summary of which is provided below (full details can be read in the Transport Statement prepared by Bright Plan Highways and Traffic Consultants):

1. Location of north-bound bus stop (obstructing visibility to the right for drivers emerging from the primary access point).
2. Visibility splays at both access points – concern that adjacent vegetation could grow and obstruct the required visibility splays if not removed or maintained).
3. Risk of pedestrians colliding with existing lighting column (eastern verge south of Willow Caravan Park access).
4. Inadequate width of verge for provision of cycle stands.

The designer has stated that all recommendations made in the Road Safety Audit are accepted. However, in-line with Road Safety Audit requirements set-out in GG119, a formal Road Safety Audit Log is required capturing each recommendation, what the Designer intends to do and then to submit this to the CHA to add its comments and the agreed course of action. As such, this should be requested from the applicants/their Transport Consultants and sent to the CHA to consider. To be provided in tabular-form and in WORD format, please. Applicant to also note and action the earlier comment made about the re-located north-bound bus stop.

Accident history (personal injury accidents – PIAs).

The TA references PIA records taken between January 2019 to January 2020. As the document states that five years of records have been interrogated, it is assumed that the January 2019 date should say January **2014**. However, the most up-to-date five years of records are required. Applicant to provide, please.

Trip generation.

Bright Plan Highways and Transport Planning Consultants have provided information to support the highways elements of the planning application. Section 4 of their Transport Statement (TS) suggests that the traffic generation would be as follows:

Trip rates per dwelling (using trip rates proposed for use as part of the Barnham-Eastergate-Westergate – BEW – Strategic Development site nearby and those used for the new A29 Business Case):

- Morning peak period (08:00-09:00) – 0.124 arrivals; 0.324 departures
- Evening peak period (17:00-18:00) – 0.312 arrivals; 0.161 departures

This translates to:

Vehicle trip generation:

- Morning peak period (08:00-09:00) – 9 (9) arrivals; 23 (19) departures (+4)
- Evening peak period (17:00-18:00) – 22 (18) arrivals; 11 (8) departures (+7)

Figures in blue are peak hour flows, whereas the figures in red and brackets are those from one of the previous proposals for 55 homes. Figures in **highlighted black** show the difference (both small increases over the approved scheme).

In its consideration of the traffic generated by the proposal, the Highway Authority concludes that the development would, based on the predicted traffic impact, generate approximately 375-380 vehicular trips per-day (which generally concurs with the applicant's Traffic Consultant's findings). This level of additional traffic using the site

access and Lidsey Road triggers the need to consider junction upgrading on the adjacent road (i.e. right-hand turning lane) which is to be provided. This will also assist with traffic flow and reducing congestion on the A29 close to the railway crossing.

The CHA concludes that the vehicular impact of the development in the locality, whilst resulting in some conflict with the Framework, could not be classed as severe.

Impact of railway crossing on traffic queues.

The Highway Authority's 'Methodology for Transport Assessments' historically required developments to demonstrate nil-detriment or better be achieved. In-light of the NPPF the County Council has reviewed this guidance. The test now looks to see whether any additional impact could be considered severe.

In order to establish what might be considered severe on this occasion, the Highway Authority has looked at a number of factors. Clearly, where traffic flows at a junction reach or exceed theoretical capacity then junction performance can become unstable. In some instances, blocking effects, increased delay and queuing could occur. This is relevant here as junction operation is influenced by the nearby railway crossing. Also, delays of over two minutes begin to have a negative effect on driver state of mind and tolerance, while delays of over three minutes may lead to adoption of behaviours such as 'u' turning and overtaking (the latter to reach a certain destination and to avoid waiting in a queue) – again a consideration for this application given the queues brought about by the railway crossing closures. Such delays might be classed as severe, typically requiring traffic management measures to mitigate.

In-line with good planning practice and guidance, the responsibility for resolution of such matters associated with a development proposal rests with the applicant. As such, the applicant has provided assessment of vehicular impact of the development on queueing on Lidsey Road.

Paragraph's 60-64 of the Inspector's Appeal Decision Notice for AL/69/11 for the nearby Woodgate Centre included discussion and conclusions about the impact of the development on queueing. Paragraph 60 states the likely impact of 100 homes (the subject of that application) would increase peak queues by about seven vehicles, or about 40m in length. The result would then be instead of a single vehicle waiting to cross the railway when the gates rise there would be three or four. While the later application (AL/60/12) sought permission for 15 less homes, the impact on the queue length (including any markings and other alterations on the A29) would be similar. However, at that time, the Inspector concluded that the impact in vehicular terms could not be considered severe. Upon re-visiting this information and based on the Wings Nursery site proposing slightly less dwellings (71 compared to 85) and with a lower trip rate than previously considered (including consideration of additional queueing times – an extra 5-6 seconds for vehicles travelling south and 10-11 seconds for those travelling north), the Highway Authority again concurs with the Inspector's conclusion for the Woodgate Centre – essentially that the vehicular impact of the development in the locality, whilst resulting in some conflict with the Framework, could not be classed as severe.

Transport Sustainability.

The development site is located in the village of Woodgate which forms the southern part of an almost continuous ribbon development northwards along the A29 and eastwards along the B2223 comprising the villages of Westergate, Eastergate and Barnham. It is remote from existing major employment centres in Bognor Regis, Chichester and

Littlehampton although there are a number of smaller local employment centres and other facilities (schools, shops etc.) in the aforementioned villages. In terms of transport sustainability, the site is on the edge of the settlement boundary and some distance from the nearest railway station at Barnham. The level of bus service passing the site is limited and the main cycle and pedestrian routes are along the busy A29. Cyclists have to share limited road space with other traffic. Pedestrians have to walk adjacent to traffic along the main road and currently have only limited assisted ways to cross the A29 (although improvements from other developments are proposed).

An analysis of each mode of transport is as follows:

Bus Services – Bus stops are located immediately outside the site on Lidsey Road. Both the north and southbound stops are directly opposite one-another. The applicant proposes facilities to assist pedestrians crossing to and from them (and improvements to the stops themselves). With regard to services, as-of spring 2021, the 66A and 66C Stagecoach services operate along the A29 approximately between 7.00am and 18.00pm. Buses call at the stops approximately once in the morning and evening peak periods and then every 1.5 hours (approx.) at other times (Mon-Fri). The route provides travel between Bognor Regis and Yapton (via Walberton). Passengers for Chichester or destinations further away would have to use further public transport services, either at Barnham or Bognor Regis.

Bus Infrastructure - No bus shelters or real-time passenger information (RTPI) displays are located close to the site. However, the applicant has agreed to provide suitable infrastructure. Therefore, if planning permission were to be secured for this site, the Highway Authority recommend that as part of any mitigation package that bus shelters and real-time passenger - or in the event the Parish Council express a wish not to maintain shelters – new bus stop poles with real-time passenger information be secured. Furthermore, provision for pedestrians to cross the road between stops will also be secured.

Cycling - The immediate area surrounding the proposed new development is limited in terms of off-road and/or segregated cycling routes. Cyclists do, therefore, have to use part of the A29 to gain access to most employment centres and local facilities such as Aldingbourne Primary School and Ormiston Six Villages Academy to the north. The A29 Lidsey Road south of Lee's Yard leading to Bognor Regis and its industrial estates is largely rural in nature, unlit and has a series of tight bends with restricted visibility close to the location of the old canal. No footways are present between Lee's Yard (found south of the site) and Marigold's Caravan Park – the latter found approximately opposite the Robin Hood public house. There is no off-road cycle infrastructure until one reaches the Bognor Regis/Felpham Relief Road found further south. As a consequence and given the amount of traffic present, which includes considerable numbers of large vehicles such as HGVs, PSV's, service and delivery vehicles, the route does not cater well for non-motorised users. However, such opportunities will present themselves as part of the nearby BEW Strategic Allocation as proposed in the emerging Arun Local Plan.

In response to current limitations for walking and cycling, the applicant is offering improvements in the form of a widened footway (from 1.0m to 1.8m wide) on the western side of the road between the main site access up-to the start of the car park serving the Prince of Wales Public House. On the eastern side of the road, the applicant proposes a new footway (again at 1.8m wide) running from the junction with Willows Caravan Park running south to connect to Lee's Yard. Alongside this, opportunities to cross the road in the form of pedestrian ramps with tactile paving are also offered.

To encourage cycling, cycle racks have been offered on land adjacent to the local shop found north of the railway line on highway land. However, given changes undertaken at this junction brought-about by development at Hook Lane (also found north of the railway line), the final detail of this would have to be looked-at at any detailed design/reserved matters stage. If it didn't prove feasible then to provide these, any monies lodged with the LPA or CHA would be returned to the applicant.

Rail - The nearest railway station to the proposed development is located in Barnham, approximately 4km away by road. It is possible to walk to the station and the route (as the crow flies) is shorter but this does involve users to walk along a series of largely rural footpaths. As for the walking/cycling comments made above, improvements to access to the station will present themselves as part of the nearby BEW Strategic Allocation as proposed in the emerging Arun Local Plan. In the meantime though, residents would have to use either the bus service, cycle, get dropped-off at the station or use their private car and park at the station (or close to).

Pedestrians and Local Services - Due to location of the site, there are limited local facilities in the immediate area. Those within a short walking distance are Aldingbourne Primary School, a local convenience shop, 'The Prince of Wales' public house, and further north, the Aldingbourne Community Centre and Ormiston Six Villages Academy. The high frequency of railway crossing closures (and associated length of barrier 'down time') do – and will continue to – delay pedestrian access journey times to local facilities until such time as the railway crossing is by-passed by the creation of a re-aligned/new A29 secured as part of the Barnham, Eastergate, Westergate Strategic Development Location as proposed in the emerging Arun Local Plan.

Footway widening and extension of a footway to Lee's Yard (one of the closest employment centres) is proposed and should be secured by S106 Agreement.

Travel Plan.

A Travel Plan accompanies this planning application. Measures included in it are set-out in tabular form in the main body of the Travel Plan document.

The Highway Authority prefers an experienced external consultant in the role of Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC). The TPC's role should also include provision of a Personal Journey Planning service to all residents of the development.

Internal layout and parking.

As this planning application is submitted as a full/detailed submission, the CHA has considered a number of detailed highway matters, including internal road layout and design of parking spaces – even though it is stated that the layout is not to be offered for adoption under the terms of a Section 38 Agreement. Parking numbers now fall under the remit of the LPA, unless road safety issues are identified by the CHA as a result of lack of numbers and/or poor design. Following scrutiny of the layout plans, the following observations are made that the applicant should address:

- Turning for a refuse vehicle is not demonstrated adjacent to plots 63 and 64. Furthermore, another area of concern is the width of the access road serving plots 5-10. This appears to be 4.1m wide which is easily blocked if a vehicle were to park on it. This should be widened to a minimum of 4.8m wide.
- Given the lack of service margins and location of some of the parking immediately adjacent to parts of the internal roadways, the layout would not be suitable for adoption under S38 in its current guise.

- Parts of the layout give a 'mixed message' with regard to user priority etc. particularly where only a single footway is provided and then terminates before what appears to be a shared-surface area. This needs to be shown better-defined (one example being by plots 38 and 48). A coloured site plan should be submitted showing improved definition of how all the different parts of the on-street hierarchy fit-together.
- A large number of the parking spaces appear to be narrow with a number in confined spaces. This will make them difficult to use and un-attractive to users, resulting in parking on-street. As such, all parking design should be re-visited with regard to sizing/dimensions. Single spaces with no obstructions either-side – should measure 2.4m wide and 5.5m long. Where driveways are 'shared' (so household spaces next to one-another), driveways should be 6.0m wide. If spaces are to be bounded by obstructions (e.g. walls, fences etc.), single spaces should be widened to at least 3.5 wide and dual spaces to 7.0m wide. Where garages are to be used, these should have internal measurements of 6m x 3m. Access to the parking spaces for plot 43 is very restricted. Enlarging the end of the adjacent access road would assist with improving this.
- Tactile paving will be required within the layout at junctions and where paths are located opposite one-another (not fully shown throughout the layout).
- A form of access protection barrier will be required at either-end of the proposed path that leads from the access road serving plots 63-71 to the A29 (the path emerges opposite plot 64).

Adoption/non-adoption and management of private estate roads.

From consideration of the submitted drawings, the internal road layout would not be eligible for adoption under S38 Agreement. This is because of lack of service margins and also due to allocation of some parking spaces on or close to the internal road network. Other matters (e.g. drainage) might also present themselves at detailed design stage when known. For any roads within the development not to be offered for adoption to the Highway Authority, a management company will need to be secured in a S106 Agreement for maintenance of the development (particularly roads and footways etc.) in perpetuity. In addition to this, a non-adoption clause would also need to be included in any S106 Agreement to prevent post-development adoption.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW).

No PRoW appear to be affected by the proposal.

Surface water drainage.

Comments will be sent directly from the drainage team to the LPA.

Arun Local Plan and Barnham–Eastergate–Westergate (BEW) Strategic Location and contributions thereto.

The emerging Arun Local Plan includes within it the BEW Strategic Location for circa 4000 homes, including A29 realignment. Although the Wings Nursery site is outside of this proposed allocation, it is very close to it. In previous responses prior to CIL being adopted by the LPA, the Highway Authority (CHA) required that the Wings site contribute to the Local Plan allocation. However, the new CIL policy now excludes sites falling outside of the Strategic Allocation. Therefore on this occasion, the CHA will not be seeking a specific S106 financial contribution towards the Strategic Site at BEW from the scheme. However, and as a matter-of-course, WSCC would look for appropriate levels of CIL funding secured from this development to be provided to assist in the delivery of the realignment of the A29. With regard to site-specific S106 requirements to deliver infrastructure necessary to deliver the development, please see below.

S106 highways requirements necessary to deliver the development:

- Widened footway on western side of the A29 from the main (southern) site access up-to the southern edge of the car park serving the Prince of Wales Public House (if within the red site boundary edging of the proposal, a planning condition might be sufficient to secure this).
- Footway on eastern side of road taken from junction of Willows Caravan Park access road to Lee's Yard (if within the red site boundary edging of the proposal, a planning condition might be sufficient to secure this).
- Bus stops, shelters and real-time passenger information contribution (and/or works).
- Travel Plan.
- Cycle stands adjacent to nearby convenience store.

Conclusion.

Additional information is required to enable the CHA to consider the proposal further. Fully details of what is required is set-out in the text above. However, a summary of it is found below:

1. Tracking diagram for a refuse vehicle adjacent to plots 63 and 64.
2. Tracking for a selection of vehicles travelling north-bounds negotiating a stationary bus in the re-located bus stop north of the primary access.
3. Evidence of correspondence with Road Safety Audit to do with proposed re-location of north-bound bus stop location.
4. Road Safety Audit Log in tabular form and in WORD format.
5. Most up-to-date PIA records for the last 5-years.
6. Updated Travel Plan with confirmation that an experienced external consultant would be appointed in the role of Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC). And confirmation that provision of a Personal Journey Planning service will be provided to all residents of the development by the TPC.
7. Replies to all bullet points under sub-heading 'internal layout and parking'.
8. Provision of red boundary edging to include all on and off-site transport mitigation proposals.

Please re-consult when the additional information set-out above is available, at which time the CHA will consider the proposal further.

Thank you.

Tim Townsend
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services