

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Arun District Council FAO: Amy Myer
FROM:	WSCC - Highways Authority
DATE:	13 January 2021
LOCATION:	Nursery Fields Land to the North of Chalcraft Lane West Bersted PO21 5TS
SUBJECT:	BE/148/20/OUT Outline application with some matters reserved to provide up to 225 residential units with associated infrastructure, open space and vehicular and pedestrian access. This application affects a Public Right of Way.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	n/a
RECOMMENDATION:	More Information
S106 CONTRIBUTION TOTAL:	n/a

Introduction

1. The site is recognised as forming part of the West of Bersted allocation (policy SD3) within the Arun Local Plan. The application is therefore understood to be subject to the requirements of the policy as well as the adopted West of Bersted Framework Masterplan.
2. The current live planning application (BE/81/20) to the immediate east of the current site is also acknowledged.
3. The application is supported by way of a Transport Assessment, the scope of which has been discussed with WSCC Highways.
4. In making these comments, WSCC Highways have reviewed
 - a. Nursery Fields Transport Assessment, dated 11th November 2020
 - b. Site Access Arrangement, drawing number ITB14224-GA-009
 - c. Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan, drawing number 01304_PP_02 Rev P1

Access

5. Vehicular access is indicated to be via a new priority junction onto Chalcraft Lane. This is shown on drawing number ITB14224-GA-009. This priority junction has already been accepted to serve the development proposed as part of BE/81/20. The current development will understandably add an additional number of vehicle movements through this junction.

6. However given the increase in traffic through the proposed junction, the TA provides further consideration of the suitability of the priority junction to serve the development proposed as part of BE/81/20 and the current application. Whilst the TA refers to highway design standards (namely TA 42/95) that were replaced last year, the capacity assessments provided within the TA indicate that the junction would operate well within theoretical capacity. As such, there are no capacity reasons to seek an alternate form of access.
7. It's understood that the priority junction would have been the subject of a Stage One Road Safety Audit for BE/81/20. The provision of a Stage One RSA is a WSCC policy requirement for all major applications. However it's unclear if the Road Safety Auditor has reviewed the proposed access arrangement on the basis that this would serve both the current application and the development proposed within BE/81/20. Whilst a further new Road Safety Audit is not necessarily required, confirmation is still sought from the applicant that the Safety Auditor has considered the vehicular access on the basis of all development that will now use it.
8. Related to the above point, although the vehicular access remains effectively unchanged, the access drawing now includes a Toucan controlled crossing to the immediate north. Further comments are made on the Toucan crossing and related infrastructure within the 'Access by Sustainable Modes' section.

Trip Generation and Highway Capacity

9. The highway capacity impact of the whole West of Bersted allocation has already been tested as part of transport modelling undertaken to support the adopted Arun Local Plan. Through this, mitigation has been identified as being necessary to ensure the transport network would continue to operate without severe impacts when the development is complete. Further comments are made on the requirements for this development to contribute towards the transport mitigation identified for the West of Bersted allocation within the 'Other Matters' section below.
10. The TA forming part of the current application assesses purely the capacity impact of the development as proposed. The purpose of the modelling is to identify what mitigation may be required to ensure this phase of the allocation does not result in any severe capacity impacts.
11. Three assessment scenarios have been presented; for 2023, 2025, and 2031. Limited weight is given to the 2023 scenario as the development is not expected to be completed by this time. 2031 represents the end of Local Plan. The impact of the development as a whole (i.e. the whole allocation)

has been considered for 2031 through the Local Plan transport modelling. 2025 is considered to be the most realistic assessment year at which point this phase of development is expected to be completed. The following comments are consequently made in connection with the 2025 assessment year. All future year scenarios include a number of committed/permitted developments. The assessment also includes the currently pending BE/21/20.

12. Based on the agreed trip rates (which are based on the assumption that the development would comprise entirely houses with no flats), the current development is anticipated to result in the following vehicle trips.

	AM			PM		
	Arrival	Departures	Total	Arrivals	Departures	Total
225 Houses	26	71	97	67	25	92

13. The impact has been assessed in the network peak periods only. This is standard practice and acknowledges that the network is most sensitive to change at these times when traffic flows are generally at their greatest.
14. Vehicle trips have been distributed across the highway network using Census location of place of work data for existing residents within the proximity of the development (this is considered to be a reasonable proxy to determine likely commuting locations for employment trips). Trips for other purposes (leisure and education) have been considered using a gravity model with trips proportionately distributed towards those centres nearest to the site. The consequence of this distribution is that the majority of trips would remain within Bognor Regis/Bersted or travel towards Chichester. Trips have been assigned to potential destinations based on the most direct route available.
15. Following on from the traffic distribution exercise, the TA considers the impact on those junctions that are forecast to experience increased entry flows of 30 or more vehicles. All of the junctions assessed are demonstrated as continuing to work within theoretical capacity taking account of the development as proposed.
16. Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network are severe. WSCC Highways are satisfied that the development as proposed would not result in a severe impact.

17. Given this site forms part of a wider allocation, the Local Planning Authority may wish to give further consideration to the wider implications of the proposals in connection with the site allocation policy and master plan. This will then ensure that permitting the current scheme would not in anyway prejudice the delivery of the wider development by cumulatively resulting in severe impacts on the highways network contrary to para 109 of the NPPF, the Local Plan allocation policy and the WB Masterplan.
18. The only observation that would be made is in respects of the modelling is for the double mini-roundabout at North Bersted Street/Chichester Road/Chalcraft Lane junctions. The modelling is indicating the potential for queuing in the short link between the two roundabouts. The queuing indicated is though greater than the link length. In practice, drivers are considered unlikely to proceed onto the roundabout if the way ahead is blocked. As such, whilst this oddity is noted, operationally the roundabouts are expected to operate without any notable issues resulting from the proposed development.

Access by Sustainable Modes

19. The TA demonstrates that the site is within reasonable walking distance of various day to day services. The existing highway network includes appropriate infrastructure to accommodate the potential increase in walking trips.
20. Reference is made within the TA to the upgrading both in terms of surfacing and status of public right of way 136 to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. The change in status will presumably be achieved either through the offering for adoption of the route as public highway or through a permissive use agreement to enable cyclists to use this alongside pedestrians. It's recognised that the applicant will be able to achieve this upgrade where the right of way crosses their site. However, there is a section at the eastern end that connects onto Chalcraft Lane that lies outside of the current applications red edge. The TA indicates that a contribution is to be made to WSCC to enable surfacing improvements.
21. Notwithstanding the fact that the applicant can undertake surfacing improvements to the public footpath via a s278 agreement under the Highways Act 1980, there is the concern that through upgrading the on-site route to enable pedestrian and cyclists access, effectively cyclists are being led to a point where they cannot then legally continue their journey without dismounting. This is far from ideal. It is recognised that the applicant cannot undertake works beyond their application boundary without first obtaining the permission of a 3rd party. It is still recommended that an obligation is placed

upon the applicant to use all reasonable endeavours to seek the permission of the 3rd party to enable a continuous foot/cycle way to Chalcraft Lane following the line of footpath 136.

22. With regards to cycling, it's accepted that a range of services are within reasonable cycling of the site. Existing cycling infrastructure is somewhat limited, although there is a signed route that runs between New Barn Lane and the existing community centre access road with there being an associated Toucan crossing on Chalcraft Lane with a short continuation of cycle route onto Central Drive. The West of Bersted allocation also includes policy requirements regarding the provision of cycle routes, so improvements to the wider network will be achieved as a consequence of the allocation. Further comments are made on the wider transport requirements of the proposed allocation and the current development within the 'Other Matters' section below.
23. In respects of the current application, a shared foot/cycle way is indicated on the north side of the access road serving the development (it's acknowledged that details of the access road are not to be approved at this stage although such matters are shown on the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan that is to be approved) linking into a Toucan crossing on Chalcraft Lane. The existing footway on the eastern side of Chalcraft Lane is indicated to be widened to 3.2 metres from the Toucan crossing to Central Drive, from where cyclists will join the carriageway. There is very limited consideration within the TA in terms of how this proposed arrangement complies with current guidance. LTN 1/20 in particular advises against shared use foot/cycle ways and instead promotes the physical segregation of cyclists and pedestrians.
24. Given that the site is indicating pedestrian/cyclist accesses at two other points (namely via footpath 136 (notwithstanding the potential issues identified with this) and onto the community centre access road (which connects to an existing Toucan crossing linking to Central Drive), the provision for cyclists alongside the main access road and the associated works on Chalcraft Lane are potentially superfluous and as shown conflict with LTN 1/20.
25. It's recommended that this aspect (namely the provision of shared use facility within the development, the Toucan crossing, and the proposed widening works along Chalcraft Lane) of the application is either removed or reassessed and amended to ensure compliance with LTN 1/20. In the event this southern route is removed, the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan would need to be updated.

26. Through the design of the on-site layout, the use of the other two pedestrian/cyclist access points should be further promoted. This would necessitate changes to the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan. The Parameter Plan currently shows a very indirect connection through the site onto the existing cycle route on the community centre access road. A far more direct and convenient route could be achieved.
27. The layout of the site should otherwise in all respects provide cycle friendly street design (i.e. to restrict vehicle speeds) to encourage on-carriageway cycling as per the guidance within LTN 1/20. This would be reviewed as part of any reserved matters application.
28. Bus stops are available on the A259 to the immediate north. The frequency of the existing bus service is such that this would offer a realistic alternative to the use of the private car. Walking distances are recognised as exceeding the suggested maximum 400 metres. The most direct walking distance would make use of public right of way 134. As part of the current development, the applicant should seek to undertake surfacing improvements to this footpath to make it suitable for use by all. A scheme of improvements should be secured via condition.
29. The framework travel plan is noted. A full travel plan based on the framework would be required to be implemented upon first occupation. This should be secured via condition.

Layout

30. Given the current application seeks outline approval with only matters of access to be approved, other than the comments made above regarding certain aspects, the illustrative on-site layouts have not been reviewed in detail at this stage. However the parameter plans, which are to be approved, have.
31. As a more an observation at this stage with such matters more to be determined as part of any future reserved matters, the illustrative layout does show a number of connections into existing and proposed areas of developments. Such linkages are welcomed as these increase the permeability of the site.
32. Related to the above point, as the site forms part of the wider West of Bersted allocation, the layout and parameter plans should not at this stage be precluding vehicular access to adjacent phases of development. Such matters are outlined within Section 7.2 of the adopted masterplan. In determining this application, the Local Planning Authority should be satisfied that the requirements of the adopted master plan are met.

Other Matters

33. As noted within this response already, the land forming part of the current application is included within the West of Bersted allocation. To enable the allocation as well as other housing and employment growth proposed as part of the Arun Local Plan, various transport mitigation has been identified. It's acknowledged that the West of Bersted allocation is required only to provide proportionate contributions towards this infrastructure. In turn, the current development would also be expected to proportionately contribute towards that infrastructure identified to support the West of Bersted allocation.
34. The TA does indicate a willingness to contribute towards Local Plan infrastructure. Contributions should though be determined against the WSCC/ADC Local Plan Transport Mitigation Apportionment Study (June 2020). This is considered to be the most up to date document in terms of proportionating contributions from Arun Local Plan allocations. It must also be recognised that the policy allocation for West of Bersted includes other specific cycling infrastructure. Again, as the current application forms part of the overall allocation, the site should also demonstrate how it satisfies this element of the policy requirement.

Summary

35. In highway terms, the principle of this development is acceptable. Further information would be required to address the above points.
36. Prior to WSCC Highways making a formal recommendation, the applicant should,
- Confirm that a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been completed for the proposed priority junction onto Chalcraft Lane that includes the development proposed through BE/81/20 and BE/148/20.
 - Reassess potential cycle connections from the site towards Bognor Regis and update the Green Infrastructure Plan accordingly. Specific reference is made to the need to reconsider or remove the shared use along the access road and associated works on Chalcraft Lane.
 - Reassess contribution requirements against the WSCC/ADC Local Plan Transport Mitigation Apportionment Study towards strategic infrastructure identified for the West of Bersted allocation.

Ian Gledhill
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