

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Mid Sussex District Council FAO: Martin Dale
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	2 February 2026
LOCATION:	Juhring And Hobbs Field At Saint Hill Manor Saint Hill Road East Grinstead West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DM/25/2223 Change of use of vacant land to event area with erection of permanent infrastructure to facilitate the erection of annual marquee structures including ground level alterations, wash block and toilets, generator enclosure, concrete ring and platforms together with the erection and dismantling of the temporary marquee structure themselves and overflow car parking for the Church and neighbouring sports clubs consisting of hard paved surfacing for 113 carparking spaces plus 6 disabled spaces and reinforced ground surfacing on the form of cell pave surfacing for up to 570 car spaces and reinforced ground surfacing to facilitate the erection of the marquee structures, construction of a new access and internal road, waiting area with structure, sustainable surface water and foul drainage provision, external lighting, associated landscaping and ecological enhancements, Amended Description, Plans, Documents)
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	n/a
RECOMMENDATION:	More Information

West Sussex County Council (WSCC), in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on this full application with regards to access, highway safety and capacity. The application is supported by a Transport Assessment (TA), Travel Plan (TP) and associated plans.

Site Context

The application site comprises Juhring and Hobbs Field located along Saint Hill Road, East Grinstead. The TA states that these sites are currently used for events associated with the adjacent Scientology church and other community events such as the Spring Fair, Christmas Lights and Easter Egg Hunt etc. The TA continues by saying that the events are currently held on Hobbs Field and Juhring is used for overflow parking.

The development proposals are for constructing an improved permanent access and change of use of vacant land to event area with erection of permanent infrastructure and permanent infrastructure to

overflow car parking. While it is understood that the site might benefit from the permitted development allowance granted by the 28 days allowance detailed in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 PART 4 Temporary buildings and uses Class A and B, this assumes these uses and temporary structures are compliant with the conditions and limitations of the order. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) have informed the Highway Authority that the marquee event, for example, is not compliant with these conditions and limitations.

The LPA have also advised that the marquee and associated car parking are unauthorised uses that do not benefit from planning permission. Accordingly, any traffic impact from the marquee event has no relevance to the consideration of this application and cannot form a consideration with this planning application.

Access Arrangements

The proposed scheme includes alterations to the existing bell mouth access from Saint Hill Road. Saint Hill Road is a 'C' classified road subject to 60 miles per hour speed restriction. A radar speed gun survey carried out at the access recorded 85th percentile speeds of 40 mph northbound and 38 mph southbound. In accordance with DMRB standards, the required visibility splays of 76.17m northbound and 73.18m are achievable. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit carried out on the proposed access improvement recommended that removal of trees, hedges and vegetation from visibility splays. An inspection of collision data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of past five years reveals there have been no recorded incidents of injury near to the existing access. While the alterations to the access appear to meet DMRB requirements in terms of design and that they also appear to follow the recommendations in the Road Safety Audit, the Highway Authority wish to see further information about number and frequency of events, plus the supporting data that goes with those before replying further on the suitability of the access arrangements shown. This also includes the southern access (please see further comments about this under 'Parking' below).

Parking

The proposed scheme includes a hard paved surfacing for 113 car parking spaces with an additional 6 disabled spaces and reinforced ground surfacing in the form of cell pave surfacing for up to 570 car spaces. The plans submitted show that the southern access will be utilised to access the hard paved car park. No information has been provided by the applicant with regards to visibility requirements or intensification of use of this access. It is also unclear where the coach drop-off and pickup points would be, nor how such vehicles would turn within the site. And finally, no swept path analysis is carried out for cars manoeuvring the parking spaces. Please also set out what has informed the number of spaces.

Additionally, it might be that the car park could be used for outside events and activities. The travel plan makes it clear in relation to the large event that buses will be used to pick up from the station etc, but the application, as submitted, could hold several events of this scale a year and is not proposing to provide support in these cases.

The car parking proposed is not only for events held at the church, but unspecified general parking not related to any on site event, such as but not limited to the rugby club and sports club.

Given the above, the applicants should provide further details about the parking areas and how they will be managed, whom will be permitted to use them and when, what has informed car parking numbers plus details of traffic management on event days on local roads and at the access points.

Sustainability

The opportunities to access site by walking are limited because of its rural setting, with no provision of footways or street lighting. Given the proposed use of the site for a celebratory event or other community events it is considered that many journeys would be undertaken either by private car, coaches, or car sharing by friends and families. However, the applicant should still provide further supporting information setting out how sustainable access will be provided for the site and any proposed activities.

Trip Generation and Highway Impact

The TA mentions the previously held events at the proposed grounds. However, this is only an indication, and it is unclear from the report what the scale of the development might be and how frequently the events will be held should planning permission be granted as the applicants have not detailed any specific events, periods or hours of operation for these events, other than the marquee event, or for the car parking periods.

As submitted, the application appears to be seeking an open-ended permission to use the land to hold a range of unspecified events on the land and within the church of any scale for any length of time. As such, the applicant should state whether (and how) any such uses and frequency thereof, would be controlled/limited.

Should events be large and frequent resulting in large numbers of visitors arriving by private car or similar, then the wider highway network would need to be analysed to establish what and where those impacts might be. As such, the applicant should provide much more detailed analysis of this, using both TRICS data and data obtained from facilities with similar/comparable attributes and facilities, including car parking.

Conclusion

Based on the information provided so far, the Highway Authority consider that this is insufficient to fully understand the potential impact of the proposals and because of this cannot make an informed decision about them. As such, the applicant should provide the additional information as set out in the main body of this response.

A summary of the additional information required is set out below:

1. Further information about existing temporary uses and structures on-site (and use thereof) and what is currently authorised (including traffic impact).
2. Further details of southern access point – i.e. use thereof, frequency of use, visibility splays and geometric specification and suitability thereof.
3. Information behind what has informed car parking numbers and how each car parking area is to be used (and by whom) and managed.
4. Swept path analysis of all car parking areas.
5. Plans showing the parking and turning of coaches and similarly large vehicles within the site (plus swept path analysis of the same).
6. Details of traffic management on event days.
7. Further consideration of sustainable access options for the site on event days.
8. Detailed description of the type and frequency of proposed events and what control on this is offered as part of the planning application – i.e. number, type and size of events etc.

9. Detailed traffic impact analysis for the proposed uses, the subject of this planning application, on the surrounding road network.

Please re-consult.

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West Sussex County Council – Planning Services