

Horsham Local Plan Examination

WSCC Hearing Statement

September 2026

1. This hearing statement has been prepared by officers on behalf of West Sussex County Council in its role as Local Highway Authority.

Matter 6d: Strategic Policy HA(NP1): Land at Adversane (Kingswood) (MM227)

2. On 28 December 2022 following a period of rainfall, the privately-owned embankments failed and slipped onto part of the public highway that is designated A29 Church Hill in Pulborough. Engineers advised that it was not safe to reopen the road to pedestrians and vehicles, so a temporary closure was introduced.
3. The County Council does not own the land on which the embankments stand so it is not responsible for completing the required works and does not have legal rights to carry out works without the landowners' permission. Both embankments have moved and worsened since the original landslip. The County Council has served statutory notices that the landowners have appealed. One of those appeals remains the subject of ongoing legal proceedings so cannot be discussed in public.
4. In April 2023, the road partially reopened to traffic. To maintain highway safety, a section of A29 Church Hill is limited to a single lane protected by concrete barriers and the flow of traffic is controlled by two-way traffic signals. This is intended as a temporary solution while work takes place to find a permanent solution to the issue. The temporary solution reduces the capacity of the A29 in Pulborough resulting in longer journey times and rat-running on less suitable routes in and near the village such as A285, A272, Broomers Hill Lane, New Place Road & Rectory Lane and to the south including Rackham Street and part of Greatham Lane to rejoin the A29 via the B2139 through Amberley.
5. As part of the Horsham Local Plan Transport Assessment (Document Ref: HDCJB15b) traffic modelling has been undertaken to understand the cumulative impacts of development. Although the future baseline position is that the A29 in Pulborough will reopen to two-way traffic and this should not prevent the site from being allocated for development, there is currently no confirmed date for the temporary restriction on A29 to be removed. Therefore, a sensitivity test has considered the potential for a continued capacity restriction on A29 at Church Hill. It should be noted that the strategic transport model does not represent every road on the highway network but provides a suitable indication of the likely future impacts. As illustrated by figures 5-3, 5-4, 5-5 and 5-6 of the Horsham Local Plan Transport Assessment, if the capacity restriction on A29 Church Hill were to remain in place, additional development-related traffic would be diverted onto less suitable routes. At the end of the Plan period once the proposed development has been built out, this would constitute a

severe highway impact, which led to the County Council's soundness objection. As the impact of development will grow over time as it is built out and there is uncertainty about when the road will reopen, the County Council considers that this requires assessment as part of future planning application(s). The assessment should consider the impacts of development with the temporary restriction in place to understand the point at which a severe highway impact could occur that requires mitigation and monitoring.

6. A date for full reopening of the road to two-way traffic has not been given but, a recent update since the close of the main modification representation period means that, the County Council now expects the issue to be resolved within the first five years of the plan period.
7. To address the soundness issue, in its representation on MM227, the County Council has requested the inclusion of an additional clause within Policy HA(NP1) Criterion 6, which is referred to as Criterion 6f. In light of the latest update and discussions with the LPA, the County Council agrees with the inclusion of the following clause (instead of its proposed Criterion 6f) within Strategic Policy HA(NP1) Criterion 6, as proposed by the LPA following the main modifications representations period:

"Proposals should take account of the one-way working operation on a section of the A29 at Church Hill, Pulborough, should it still be in effect, in developing its transport strategy and, if necessary, mitigate and monitor assessed temporary impacts on the A29 and surrounding routes, as advised by the Local Highway Authority."

24 September 2026