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Planning Application PL/2026/00168

Change of use of Hazelbury Manor (Grade I listed), Dower House (Grade I listed) and The Granary (Grade II listed) from mixed used, residential (C3) and agricultural, to hotel use (C1) with ancillary parking.

Hazelbury Manor, Bradford Road, Hawthorn, Corsham, SN13 8HX

Note on Access Operation and Public Rights of Way

This Highway Technical note has been prepared to respond to the comments raised by the Parish Council, the Highway Authority and the Public Rights of Way (PROW) Officer in relation to the proposed change of use of Hazelbury Manor to a 23-bed hotel.

1. Existing Access Arrangements

The site currently benefits from three established access points which connect to the surrounding highway network via existing estate tracks. These tracks also coincide with a number of recorded Public Rights of Way including Bridleway BOX51 and Footpath BOX54.

These access arrangements are longstanding and already accommodate a mixture of users including:

- agricultural vehicles
- estate traffic
- walkers
- equestrian users
- cyclists

The proposal does not introduce any new access points or alter the point at which the site connects to the public highway.

All Egress is to be taken from the Northern access onto Bradford Road, where visibility is being provided based on recorded 85th percentile vehicle speeds. This arrangement has been found to be acceptable by the Highway Officer.

2. Land Ownership and Ability to Undertake Works

It is important to clarify that the internal access tracks are not within the ownership of the Applicant although the Applicant benefits from established rights of access over the tracks but does not control the underlying land ownership.

As a consequence, the Applicant is not in a position to undertake significant engineering works, such as widening of tracks or construction of formal passing places, without the agreement of the landowners.

The proposal must therefore rely on management measures and the inherently low traffic demand associated with the development, rather than physical alterations to the route.

3. One-Way Access Operation

The proposed operational arrangement introduces a one-way circulation system within the estate which will operate as:

- Ingress: southern access from Bradford Road via BOX54
- Egress: northern route via Bridleway BOX51

This arrangement has two important benefits:

1. It removes opposing vehicle movements along the same track, significantly reducing the potential for conflict.
2. It minimises the likelihood of vehicles needing to reverse, either along the track or onto the public highway.

The one-way arrangement will be clearly indicated through appropriate signage and management of the site access, ensuring that drivers follow the intended route.

It is understood that some occasional agricultural vehicles do use the access roads in a two way manner and this is likely to continue. The use is very infrequent however, and as set out below, the likely traffic generation from the Hotel is also low, so the likelihood of any possible conflict will be minimised.

4. Traffic Generation

The Transport Statement demonstrates that the development will generate very modest levels of traffic.

Based on TRICS data, the development is expected to generate:

- 8 two-way trips in the AM peak hour
- 8 two-way trips in the PM peak hour
- approximately 73 two-way trips across the whole day

This equates to approximately 3–4 vehicle movements per hour on average, spread across a 15-hour operating day.

Furthermore, national hotel occupancy data indicates an average occupancy of around 79%, meaning the traffic generation figures represent a robust worst-case scenario and actual traffic flows are likely to be lower. These traffic levels are extremely low and comparable to those associated with a small rural residential cluster.

5. Interaction with Public Rights of Way Users

It is acknowledged that sections of the access tracks coincide with Public Rights of Way, including bridleways. However, several factors significantly limit the potential for conflict:

- Traffic volumes associated with the development are very low.

- Vehicle movements will be spread throughout the day, rather than concentrated in peak periods.
- The one-way circulation system removes head-to-head vehicle conflict.
- The route is already used by agricultural vehicles and estate traffic.

In practical terms, the proposed traffic levels will result in infrequent vehicle encounters, meaning that the experience for walkers and equestrian users will remain largely unchanged.

6. Management and Maintenance Measures

Although the Applicant cannot undertake structural alterations to the track, they are committed to implementing active management measures to ensure the safe operation of the access routes.

These measures may include:

- regular cutting back of vegetation to maximise the usable track width
- maintaining the surface condition of the route where possible
- installation of signage appropriate to the heritage setting advising drivers of shared use with walkers and horses. The applicant suggests a planning condition should be used to require prior approval on the siting, scale and design of discreet signage
- provision of low speed advisory signage within the estate

These measures will help ensure that all users of the route are aware of the shared nature of the access and that vehicles proceed cautiously.

7. Overall Assessment

When the above factors are considered together, the potential for conflict between vehicles and PROW users is extremely limited.

Key points are:

- the very low traffic generation associated with a 23-bed hotel
- the one-way circulation system, which removes opposing traffic
- the existing mixed use of the track by agricultural and estate vehicles
- the applicant's commitment to ongoing management and maintenance

As such, the development will not materially alter the character or operation of the existing access routes.

8. Accident History

A review of the accident history for the area has revealed that in the last 5 years there have been three recorded accidents that have resulted in injury. One occurred in February 2024 to the south at the junction close to the southern access where a car pulled out on the junction into the path of an approaching vehicle on Bradford Road. This resulted in one slight injury.

A second occurred in July 2023 to the north at the junction of Bradford Road with the access leading to Forage Café and Restaurant where a cyclist was waiting to turn right and was struck by an approaching car. This resulted in a serious injury to the cyclist.

A third occurred in November 2023 also at the Bradford Road junction with the access leading to Forage Café and Restaurant where a car pulled out into the path of an oncoming vehicle resulting in two slight injuries.

No accidents have been recorded at any of the accesses to Hazelbury Manor, and of the three accidents that have been recorded, it would appear that driver error was the key factor in each case. There does not appear to be any overarching trends for the incidents which this development would exacerbate.

9. Conclusion

The proposed development will generate very modest levels of traffic and will operate using a managed one-way access system that significantly reduces the potential for vehicle conflict.

Given the Applicant's limited control over the land forming the access tracks, physical alterations such as widening or formal passing bays are not feasible.

However, the combination of low traffic volumes, one-way operation, and ongoing management of the route provides a proportionate and practical solution that ensures safe shared use of the access tracks and Public Rights of Way.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in highways and access terms.

Nick Culhane March 2026