



Horsham  
District  
Council

## HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

<b>TO:</b>	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Land To The South of Furners Lane Henfield West Sussex
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	Erection of 29 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space, parking and creation of new vehicular access
<b>REFERENCE:</b>	DC/24/1538
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	Advice / More Information / Modification

### **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:**

The proposals are not considered to give rise to unacceptable landscape character and visual effects, however modification and more information is requested so that we can be satisfied that the rural qualities experienced on site and within the wider landscape can be retained and enhanced through appropriate mitigation.

### **MAIN COMMENTS:**

#### Site description & context

The proposed site is an irregularly shaped, undeveloped field, comprising grass, trees and scrub. It abuts the east of the settlement of Henfield and is allocated in the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan - Policy 2.3: Land West of Backsettow, off Furners Lane. As result, the western parcel of the site is set within the Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB) and the eastern parcel identified as open space landscape buffer outside the BUAB, in a countryside location.

Immediately south of the site lies allotments and a bowling green, and further beyond lies HDC owned Local Wildlife Site Henfield Common, a mosaic of neutral and acid grassland, spp rich rush pasture, marshy grassland, reedbed & woodland. Abutting the eastern boundary lies Grade II listed building, Backsettow House. The immediate north and west of the site comprise residential dwellings, however the site's wider context can be described as rural in nature, featuring a well-defined field pattern by hedgerow and hedgerow trees, interspersed by shaws and sporadic dwellings and farmsteads, as well as numerous orchards.

The site boundaries are varyingly defined, some with close board fence, though the majority benefit from hedgerow, reinforcing the rural qualities of the area.

Multiple public right of ways (PROWs) are located in close proximity to the site, and those that offer views onto the site include:

- PRoW 2540 (Furners Lane) runs along the northern boundary
- PRoW 2548 runs along the western boundary
- PRoW 2547 runs west-east to the south of the site

Aforementioned Furners Lane is proposed for site access, itself a narrow, rural lane running in a west-east direction with some clusters of development set back from the lane. It is generally bounded by vegetation, hedgerows and trees.

The principle of development has been established by virtue of the NP allocation. Notwithstanding this, design considerations must still be sensitive to the rural surrounds, aiming to retain existing features and minimise urbanising detractors. Please see recommendations listed below.

#### Access

1. In line with recommendations made by the Arboricultural Officer, the root protection area (RPA) of VT1 should be avoided by adjusting proposed access on to site. VT1 is typical of the local character area and is a recognised feature within the streetscape, contributing to its verdant setting. It is recommended that its retention is safeguarded and the integrity of the green corridor conserved.

#### Hard landscaping & boundary treatment

2. Clarification is requested in regard to surfacing for the PRoW – the landscape masterplan currently suggests amenity grass. Please provide a hard landscape plan indicating details of proposed surfacing throughout the scheme.
3. Please amend the remaining boundary of plot 9 to brick wall as it is visible and abutting the public realm (highlighted in yellow, below).



#### Soft landscaping

4. Layout
  - a. Trees and hedgerow were removed from the existing access to the listed Backsettown House. Whilst there is an arboricultural justification for this, the sense of arrival and a softer approach to the house must be preserved, particularly as the context of the site has fundamentally changed from a field to a housing estate. To this effect, tree planting to create a tree avenue is required. The trees along this access route must be of a larger size and a minimum 20-25cm girth.
  - b. We recommend that an area of open amenity space is managed with a regular mowing regime, as opposed to meadow. This is to provide opportunity for informal play/picnics and to safeguard the retention of the wider meadow, especially where closer to the more sensitive boundaries of the site. In addition, we recommend

delivering signage to educate future residents on meadow appearance, management, and general need for meadows in landscapes.

- c. We would also welcome the provision of some informal natural play elements (LAP - refer to the Horsham District Council Open Space, Sport and Recreation Review June 2021) within this open space, as well as an all-weather footpath and some seating so that the space can be enjoyed by all including those less able.
- d. Opportunities for more tree planting, particularly within the open space that homes the balancing pond, must be explored.
- e. Concern is raised with the arrangement and amenity of users of prpw 2548, which will travel along the garden fences of plots 29, 26 and 25. Please note space must be allowed to include a standard width footpath, grass verge, hedgerow planting and close board fence.
- f. We request enhancement planting of the existing boundary along Furners Lane and proposed hedgerow planting along PRoW 2548 to advance planting delivered prior to any development above ground floor slab level takes place. These areas are to be fenced off and protected as part of the site's enabling works therefore enhancement planting can take place as soon as possible. This will make sure mitigation measures are in place at an early stage, including during construction, and reduce the adverse effects on users of footpaths which are highly sensitive receptors.

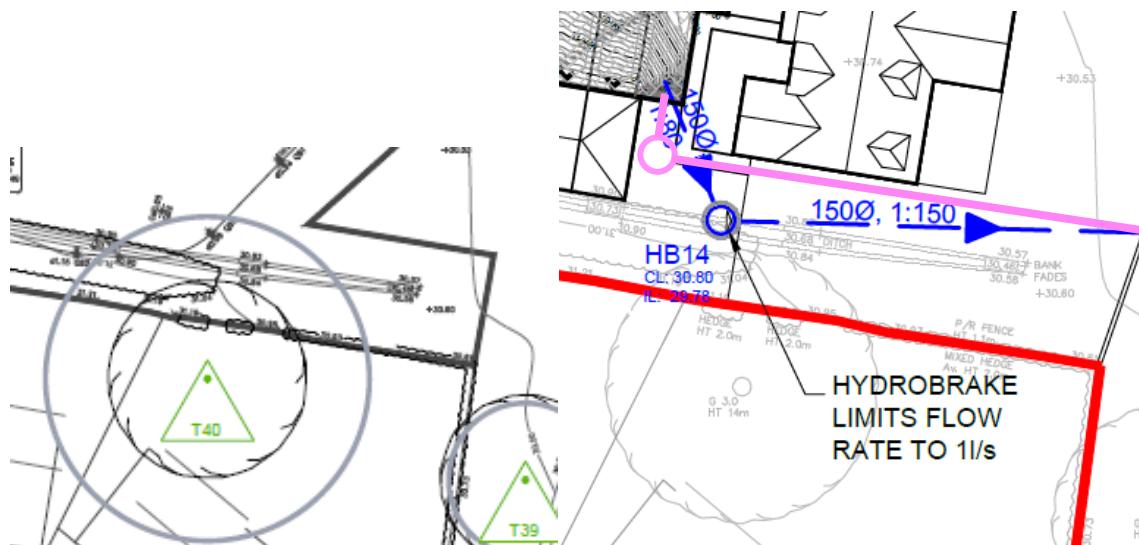
## 5. Soft landscaping

- a. We note 6 proposed tree species, however we expect to see a greater diversity and variety in species in order to minimise the risk of widespread biotic threats. We would advise selecting trees that are suitable to the landscape character and geology of the site, as well as fruiting species in the more open areas in order to reflect the character of orchards as seen in the wider landscape. The location of these must be shown in a detailed planting plan.
- b. The accompanying planting schedule, in addition to the information provided within the landscape masterplan, must also include planting numbers.
- c. We recommend that native trees are sourced from seed or stock from the Region of Provenance 40 in order to ensure resilience and therefore successful establishment.
- d. We recommend the introduction of planting within the swales and balancing pond in order to further compound effects of the SuDS and for the purposes of securing a high-quality landscape. We advise using a range of vegetation types including nectar rich plants and grasses of various heights.
- e. Please note that we expect to see information on watering regimes for successful establishment and the submission of a Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan (LMMP).
- f. With regards the LMMP, also note that we strongly recommend that chemicals including herbicides, pesticides and fertilisers are not to be applied on site at any time due to impacts on the existing and proposed waterbodies, woodland, hedgerow and ditches, and the protection of their ecological features. Alternative methods for

weeding should be considered such as hot foam or hot water systems which are effective for large areas of land, meadow preparation and hard landscaped areas, as well as hand weeding alone by careful digging or selective scything. Steel brushing in combination with acetic acid spraying, or electronic control systems are also effective in hard landscaped areas and suited to dealing with invasive species.

## SuDS

6. We request a proposed levels drawing to include levels of the swales and balancing pond based on recommendations made below.
  - a. The ground contouring, planting and inlet and outlet design should be carefully considered to maximise the amenity value. Proposed headwalls are recommended to have a softer, naturalistic approach such as cladding in Horsham stone and introducing planting, rather than typical concrete headwalls.
  - b. Balancing ponds should blend aesthetically into the surroundings and must not look like steep sided engineered structures. We recommend introducing varied depths and shallows, preferably much gentler than the maximum recommended 1:3 slope. This will provide greater opportunity for wildlife habitat and planting which has high potential for biodiversity and therefore ecological and amenity benefits.
7. We recommend moving HB14 and associated drainage outside of the RPA of T40 as much as practicably possible. The RPA does not feature on drainage proposals, therefore it is unknown what degree of root disturbance will be incurred as a result. As per opportunities set within the DAS, '*Ensure that any proposed built form is suitably offset from the root protection areas of existing trees that are to be retained*' and '*The existing site boundary vegetation should be retained... to soften views towards the proposed built form*'. See suggestion below, indicated in pink.



## Lighting

8. We concur with comments made in regard to lighting within the EIA, due to light intrusion within the rural setting and the relative proximity to the SDNP Dark Skies zone. We expect to see details of external lighting that adhere to the ecological mitigation hierarchy as proposed. However if external lighting is unavoidable, based on guidance from SDNP Dark Skies Technical Advice Note Version 2 and The Bat Conservation Trust guidance note 08/23, we recommend the following for external lighting in a countryside location to mitigate adverse landscape effects:

- a) 3000 Kelvin or lower
- b) 500 Lumens or below
- c) Shielding such as cowls, baffles or back shields to limit visibility beyond pathways.
- d) Where appropriate, use of motion/proximity sensors and set to as short a possible a timer as a risk assessment will allow. For most purposes, a 1 or 2 minute timer is appropriate.
- e) Horizontally mounted luminaires with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.

#### **RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:**

1. Please note a pre-commencement condition to secure advance planting as discussed on point 4.f. will be required. The drawing number is left highlighted as it will be subject to the further information requested.

**Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition:** No development above ground floor slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until the areas of advance planting approved under drawing xx (to include Furners Lane and PRoW 2548), are delivered. Confirmation of the delivery of these landscape works shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure identified adverse visual effects are satisfactorily mitigated, including during construction, and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

2. Once the key layout changes have been addressed, the detail below will be required and welcomed at this stage, given permission is applied in full. Otherwise, could be secured by condition.

#### **Hard and Soft Landscaping Scheme**

**Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted, full details of all hard and soft landscaping works shall have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include plans and measures addressing the following:

- Planting and seeding plans, including a schedule specifying plant numbers, sizes, densities and species in Latin names
- Coordination of planting plans with ecological enhancement measures
- Written specifications (NBS compliant) including ground preparation, cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment
- Tree pit and staking/underground guying details, including details for sloping ground and position of root barriers if required
- Details of minor artefacts and structures – such as bin stores, cycle stores, street furniture, play equipment and signage – including location, size, colour and specification
- Details of existing and proposed levels for all external earthworks associated with the landscape proposals – such as SuDS, play areas, retaining walls, banking etc - including cross sections where necessary
- Details of all external lighting

The approved landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details within the first planting season following the first occupation of any part of the development. Unless otherwise agreed as part of the approved landscaping, no trees or hedges on the site shall be wilfully damaged or uprooted, felled/removed, topped or lopped without the previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority until 5 years after completion of the

development. Any proposed planting, which within a period of 5 years, dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development that is sympathetic to the landscape and townscape character and built form of the surroundings, and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

### **Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan**

**Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan (LMMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details should apply to all communal hard and soft landscape areas and shall include:

- Long term design objectives
- Management responsibilities
- A description of landscape components
- Management prescriptions
- Maintenance schedules
- Accompanying plan delineating areas of responsibility

The landscape areas shall thereafter be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development and in the interests of visual amenity and nature conservation in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

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<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Specialists Team - Strategic Planning
<b>DATE:</b>	08/11/2024
<b>SIGNED OFF BY:</b>	Inês Watson CMLI Specialists Team Leader (Landscape Architect)
<b>DATE:</b>	15/11/2024