



Horsham District Council
Parkside
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

Date: 29 August 2025
Our ref: 08319

For the attention of: Hannah Darley

Application ref: DC/25/1077

Location: The Fords Bonfire Hill Southwater West Sussex

Proposal/Description: Erection of 2 x no detached dwellings and garages utilising existing access and landscaping

Thank you for consulting with Place Services on the above Full planning application. This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

Site Context:

The application site is located to the west of Southwater and adjacent to a cluster of dwellings on Bonfire Hill. The site comprises a small grassland field surrounded by hedgerows and trees which enclose the site. Holy Innocents Parish Church is located to the east of the site. Several public rights of way (PRoW) are located close to the site, including one along the northern site boundary through Kirsty's Wood.

Planning Policy Context:

Within the Horsham District Planning Framework, Policy 26 (Countryside Protection) states:

"In addition, proposals must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, and/or conserves, and/or enhances, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located, including;

- 1. The development pattern of the area, its historical and ecological qualities, tranquillity and sensitivity to change;*
- 2. The pattern of woodlands, fields, hedgerows, trees, waterbodies and other features"*

Review of the proposal/submitted information:

The development site is located within a field which is set back from Bonfire Hill and is separated by vegetation and trees along the roadside. There are limited concerns regarding visual impacts from Bonfire Hill, owed to the enclosed nature of the site. The proposals would not be prominent within the landscape.

The access to the development proposals utilises the existing access to The Fords, situated around the existing vegetation (trees and hedgerows) on site. The proposed parking garage is located within the root protection area (RPA) of T14 on the western edge (Tree Constraints Plan). Consideration for the construction methods that limit impacts on the roots must be had.

A PRoW runs along the northern site boundary however is separated from the site by a close-board fence. There is potential for views of the proposed buildings over the top of the existing fence, however the dwellings would be viewed in context with other linear development along Bonfire Hill and is not out of character.

We question whether the parking garages are best situated in their proposed locations, since they would obscure views out of the windows located on the front of the house. There may be alternative arrangements which locate the garages away from directly in front of the houses.

Cut and fill will be required to build the retaining walls between the plots. All excavated material should be retained on site and, where possible, integrated into the proposals. Information on the new proposed levels should be submitted, inclusive of the new private access road and each of the plots. The height of the retaining walls along their full extent should be included.

Post and rail fence is proposed within the RPAs of the trees on the southern boundary. Posts should be erected without impacting upon the roots of these retained trees.

Further information regarding the hard and soft landscaping proposals should be submitted, however this can be Conditioned.

Recommended Conditions:

If minded for approval, we would recommend the following conditions for your consideration:

ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: SUBMISSION OF LANDSCAPE DETAILS

Prior to commencement of landscape works hereby approved, details comprising plans and particulars shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority showing precise details of the hard and soft landscaping which shall form part of the development hereby permitted. Any scheme of landscaping details as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority shall show the existing trees, shrubs, and hedgerows on the site where to be retained and shall include details of:

- A specification of soft landscape works, include a schedule of species, size, density and spacing of all trees, shrubs and hedgerows to be planted, areas to be grass seeded or turfed, including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment.

- Paved or otherwise hard surfaced areas including the extent and specification for footways and kerbing, together with the type and specification of all permeable paving and asphalt surfaces.
- Existing and finished levels shown as contours with cross-sections, if appropriate.
- Specification of all means of enclosure and all boundary treatments between individual plots, all boundary treatments around the perimeter of the site.

Such details as may be agreed, shall be implemented in their entirety during the first planting season (October to March inclusive) following approval, or in any other such phased arrangement as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

If any of the existing (shown for retention) or proposed landscaping shown in the approved details dies, is removed or becomes seriously damaged within 10 years of planting/approval then it shall be replaced in the next planting season (October to March) with others of a similar size and species unless a variance is otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area. This condition is required to be agreed prior to the commencement of any development to ensure matters of tree and hedgerow protection are secured early to ensure avoidance of damage or loss due to the development and/or its construction. If agreement was sought at any later stage, there is an unacceptable risk of loss and damage to important trees and hedgerow that would result in harm to amenity.

Summary:

Overall, we consider that the proposed development can be accommodated within this site without causing major adverse effects on the landscape. We advise that our recommendations and the conditions included be considered.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Place Services – Landscape Team

Email: landscape@essex.gov.uk



Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of Horsham District Council.

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.