



HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Leonardslee Gardens Brighton Road Lower Beeding West Sussex
DESCRIPTION:	Extension to the visitor entrance building to house a new ticket sales area and café; Infilling roof to the former generator block courtyard, re-roofing of the Alpine House and internal/ external reconfigurations and link extension; Single storey winter garden conservatory to the Stable Block; Terrace extension to the east and internal/ external reconfigurations; Change of use from redundant staff offices and staff accommodation within the stable block to guest accommodation including extension to Honey Cottage; Change of use to the partial first floor of the Red House to staff accommodation; Small WC extension, reinstated chimney stack, and roof alterations to the Engine House; Lightweight wedding pavilion to the lawn, south of Leonardslee House; Landscaping changes including to the forecourt of Leonardslee House.
REFERENCE:	DC/25/1146
RECOMMENDATION:	No Objection / More Information

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

Little to no visual change is anticipated from the development proposals when appreciated from the local footpath network. The changes are considered appropriate to the context of the registered Park and Garden, therefore no concerns are raised with the principle of development or likely effects on the overall character of the site and wider area or visual amenity of the area and users of the gardens.

Notwithstanding the above, the site is located within the High Weald National Landscape (HWNL) and partially abuts Ancient Woodland (AW), therefore further lighting information should be secured so that we can be satisfied that the proposals do not have an adverse effect on these highly sensitive landscape receptors. Please see advice below.

MAIN COMMENTS:

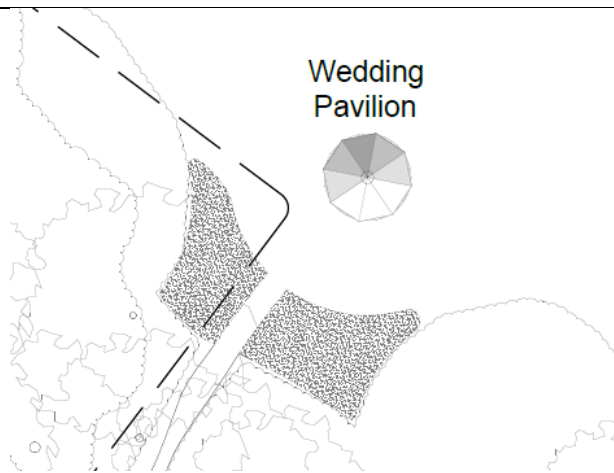
LVA

1. The LVA provided has been reviewed following the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note (2020) and while not fully compliant, it is considered to be proportionate to the proposed development.
2. Whilst the methodology is sound, key parts of the assessment itself have been missed or carried out incorrectly, which include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Receptor sensitivity should be assessed by combining judgements of value with the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change or development proposed. However, the assessment discusses sensitivity in terms of susceptibility, failing to identify value and susceptibility separately, and thus judgements on sensitivity are not compliant with the methodology.
 - b. In addition, not all landscape receptors have been discussed in terms of their sensitivity or susceptibility.
 - c. Trees as a landscape receptor neglects to mention the removal of T97, a category B Japanese cedar of *moderate visual amenity value*, as described in the AIA. The AIA goes on to say that the trees are, '*considered to be of very high cultural and arboricultural value*'.
 - d. We disagree that there will be no effects on the HWNL as we cannot conclude that no change will occur to the dark night skies component and/or indirectly to the AW component, given that full lighting details have not yet been submitted. Nevertheless, we accept that there is scope for a sensitive lighting scheme to be secured.
 - e. Visual receptors do not include visitors of the park and garden, whose value should be high given the historic setting and nationally designated landscape, and whose susceptibility should be high given their enjoyment is directly related to the visual setting.
3. Notwithstanding the list above, our judgements largely concur with the report, with the exception of effects on the HWNL as well as visual effects on visitors of the park and garden. While the latter will vary given the various areas of development on site and attached historical views, we judge the overall magnitude of visual effect to be high beneficial, given the prominence, short distance and extent of the development in views, as well as the reduction in hardstanding, modern materials and reinstatement of historic views. This change will be permanent and long term. As such, overall visual effects when combined with the other receptors are deemed to be minor beneficial.

Other observations:

4. The HWNL Dark Skies Planning Advice states that developments should be located away from dark sky sensitive areas, avoiding AW in particular. Therefore, a sensitive lighting strategy that demonstrates compliance with the advice must be submitted. The 'External Lighting Strategy' within the Design and Access Statement does not provide sufficient information for us to be confident that lighting pollution will not increase as a result of the proposals. As per the High Weald AONB Management Plan requirements, the following information is requested:
 - a. Location of lighting elements for all proposed development areas, including the wedding pavilion if proposed
 - b. Lux levels plan to also include existing lighting present on site
 - c. Colour temperature, direction and light fitting design for all proposed lighting elements
 - d. Information regarding motion/proximity sensors if proposed
5. Crocosmia is listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act in England and Wales, and thus should not be included within proposals, as reiterated by the various Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (PEAs) submitted. Please remove and consider an alternative with extended seasonal interest.
6. English Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) is a protected species listed on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act in England and Wales, and is reflective of the local landscape character. Given its potential loss as a result of translocation, we recommend that it is introduced to the planting mix. We recommend it be introduced in proximity to woodland, for example by the proposed wedding pavilion, as opposed to within planting beds.
7. Please clarify what the shaded hatch is to the south of the proposed wedding pavilion:



Additional details to consider:

8. Despite recommendations made within the relevant PEA, there appears to be no planting proposed in proximity to the wedding pavilion. We concur with recommendations made and would welcome planting proposals of the species listed within the PEA in this area.
9. A Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan (LMMP) should be submitted in order to deliver the landscape strategy, however this may be secured via condition.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: If you're minded to recommend the application for approval without the concerns addressed above please get in touch as specific conditions will be required.

NAME:	Elly Hazael Trainee Landscape Architect (Planning)
DEPARTMENT:	Specialists Team - Strategic Planning
DATE:	20/10/2025
SIGNED OFF BY:	Inês Watson CMLI Specialists Team Leader (Landscape Architect)
DATE:	27/10/2025