



Horsham
District
Council

HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Land West of Parsons Field Stables Pickhurst Lane Pulborough West Sussex
DESCRIPTION:	Use of land for the stationing of 2 static caravans for residential purposes and associated day rooms. Erection of stable buildings and formation of hardstanding (retrospective) Associated landscape works including planting of native hedges and removal of hardstanding (Retrospective)
REFERENCE:	DC/25/1371
RECOMMENDATION:	Holding Objection / More Information

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The landscape concerns previously raised in relation to application DC/25/0317 remain unresolved and continue to be relevant to this application.

We remain of the view that the urbanising form and loss of mature boundary vegetation has an adverse effect on the visual amenity of receptors on Pickhurst Lane and Public Right of Way (PRoW) 1983, as well as an eroding effect on the rural landscape character, contrary to policies 23 and 25 of the HDPF. Furthermore, the increase in overall level of activity in the countryside location, as well as additional light and noise pollution incurred as a result of the development, contribute to the partial loss of tranquillity and sense of place of the rural countryside setting. The current proposal and retrospective development does not conserve or enhance the key features and characteristics of its landscape character area, contrary to policies 26 and 33 of the HDPF.

Should the principle of development be found acceptable, we recommend that the fencing layout is revised and treatment amended, and that robust mitigation planting is proposed to soften the appearance of the development while retaining the wooded and verdant character of the area. Please see further recommendations below.

MAIN COMMENTS:

1. Please review our previous comments under DC/25/0317 for a description of the local and wider landscape context which apply for this proposal.
2. Our previous assessment is repeated here for ease:
 - a. *Policy 26 of the HDPF requires proposals to be essential to the countryside location be of a scale appropriate to their countryside character location, not lead, either*

individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside and/or conserve, and/or enhance, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located. Further policy 23 requires the development to not have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the landscape and to sensitively designed to mitigate any impacts on its surroundings.

- b. The retrospective development results in a sense of domestic sprawl to the detriment of the undeveloped character and quality of the local landscape. More importantly, due to the recent clearing of hedgerow and vegetation on Pickhurst Ln and the site's western boundary, the site is now visually open and particularly sensitive to views. The dense vegetation which contributed to the verdant character of the lane and PRoW 1983 and positively reinforced the rural character enjoyed by these receptors has been lost. . In addition...the recent vegetation clearance and introduction of closeboard fencing along the boundary has also introduced urbanising detractors to the rural setting.*
- c. As result, it is our professional judgement that the proposals have an adverse effect on visual amenity and an eroding effect on the landscape character as a result of vegetation removal and the introduction of domestic and urbanising features that appear out of place or dominant within the context of the surrounding landscape. The proposed site layout plan is not reflective of the works carried out to date and makes no provision for mitigation and replacement planting.*
- d. Furthermore, as result of the substantial ground works along the woodland edge to install the closeboard fence, concern is raised with the long term retention of existing trees on the western boundary, which are likely to suffer decline and future loss as a result of their RPAs being heavily disturbed during works and encroached by hardstanding. This will have a further eroding effect on the wooded character of the area.*
- e. It can therefore be concluded that the proposals and retrospective development do not conserve or enhance the key features and characteristics of its landscape character area and give rise to an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the landscape, contrary to HDPF Policy 23, 25 and 26.*

- 3. The Arboricultural Statement (AS) somewhat supports the concerns raised under point 2d, acknowledging, 'a risk to tree health from the alkaline properties of uncured cement', however fencing proposals remain unchanged and do not adequately address the long term risk to the retention of the existing trees.
- 4. Furthermore, the AS references to a separate report assessing the impact of proposed drainage works on individual trees and ancient semi-natural woodland (AW) located to the south of the site, however this has not yet been submitted.
- 5. We continue to request the submission of a comprehensive tree survey, including RPAs, to identify existing vegetation proposed for removal or retention. This is essential to understand the impact of the proposals on existing trees and hedgerows.
- 6. While the proposed slight reduction in hardstanding is welcomed, it does not address our concerns raised under point 2.

Considerations should the principle of development be found acceptable

- 7. The proposed planting within the wooded strip between the site boundary and the land ownership is welcomed, however there is not enough information provided to be confident in its deliverability or efficacy, particularly given the narrow depth available for planting. We request that the closeboard fence and stables be relocated outside of the RPAs of the existing treeline and replaced with post and rail fencing. In addition, we request native hedgerow and woodland understory planting be proposed within the resulting deeper strip, in order to soften and screen the urbanising features experienced from the abutting PRoW.
- 8. The reinstated mixed species native hedging at the entrance is welcomed, however appears to currently be only one species, which is unlikely to be sufficiently robust, nor

provide the required level of screening. We recommend planting a further layer of mixed species native hedging immediately to its south.

9. The following requirements are repeated from our comments under DC/25/0317 as they continue to apply to this scheme:

- a. Soft landscape details to include planting plans, planting schedule and tree pit details.
- b. We require tree and native hedgerow planting using the species listed within section 7.4 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Sylvatica Ecology Ltd, 2025) in the following locations:
 - i. Alongside all boundaries and in between pitches.
 - ii. Mature and semi-mature specimens in order to soften the appearance of the development and screen views from Pickhurst Ln.
- c. Newly planted *Prunus laurocerasus* (Cherry laurel) is of key concern due to the proximity of abutting AW. Its removal is required due to its invasiveness and its propensity to overshad and outcompete other planting, as well as its urbanising appearance that is incongruous with the setting. Please provide a programme of works detailing its removal.
- d. In order to conserve and protect the abutting AW, planting stock must be locally sourced and grown, in line with Woodland Trust guidance. Please provide supplier information to ensure risk to AW is mitigated.
- e. Hard and soft landscape specification.
- f. Details of all hard surfacing materials and finishes, including layout, colour, size, texture, coursing and levels.
- g. Proposed and existing services above and below ground such as drainage, power, communications cables and pipelines. Please include drainage ditch levels and location relative to existing trees.
- h. Closeboarded fencing is advised against in this location, please amend to reflect post & rail fencing throughout, with native hedgerow as per 9b.
- i. Details of all external lighting. Woodland and particularly AW, which are key characteristics of the local landscape, can be deteriorated due to increasing levels of light pollution, therefore light spill must be considered sensitively so as not to cause potential adverse effects.
Given the intrinsically rural setting, outside lighting should be restricted or absent in order to avoid light intrusion. If outside lighting cannot be reasonably avoided, 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 to mitigate adverse landscape effects in regard to external lighting in a countryside location:
 - i. 3000 Kelvin or warmer
 - ii. 500 Lumens or below
 - iii. 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.
 - iv. Horizontally mounted luminaires with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.

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)
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DEPARTMENT:	Specialists Team - Strategic Planning
DATE:	06/10/2025
SIGNED OFF BY:	Inês Watson CMLI Specialists Team Leader (Landscape Architect)
DATE:	06/10/2025