



Horsham  
District  
Council

## HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

<b>TO:</b>	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Land To The West of South Hill Farmhouse Storrington Road Thakeham
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	Erection of 5no. detached dwellings with associated access, car ports and landscaping.
<b>REFERENCE:</b>	DC/25/0053
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	Holding Objection / Advice
<b>SUMMARY OF COMMENTS &amp; RECOMMENDATION:</b>	
<p>In the absence of a landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) to demonstrate otherwise, it is our judgement that the loss of existing boundary vegetation associated with the development proposals has an adverse effect on the visual amenity of the receptors on Duke's Hill, as well as an eroding effect on the rural landscape character of the area, contrary to policy 25 of the HDPF.</p> <p>The increase in overall level of activity in the countryside location, and additional light and noise pollution incurred as a result of the development, is contrary to policy 26 of the HDPF and would detract from the tranquillity and sense of place of the rural countryside setting, exacerbated further by the loss of boundary vegetation as above.</p> <p>If minded to approve, it is recommended that the northern boundary tree line is retained and enhanced to soften the appearance of the development and retain the verdant character of the lane. See further recommendations below.</p>	
<b>MAIN COMMENTS:</b>	
<p><u>Site description and context</u></p> <p>The proposed site is situated to the east of the settlement of Thakeham, set outside of the Built Up Area Boundary in a countryside location. The site is generally bounded by mature hedgerows and trees, reinforcing the rural qualities of the area while creating a sense of containment within the wider landscape. An existing substation can be found in the north-east of the site. Agricultural land abuts the southern and western boundaries and private gardens to the east and north-west.</p> <p>The site's wider landscape context can be described as a mixture of pastoral and developed in nature. Sporadic dwellings and farmsteads are located along Storrington Road and Duke's Hill, and the old Thakeham mushrooms site to the south and along Storrington road. The closest settlement is Thakeham village, also a conservation area, situated to the east of the site along The Street. It comprises a ribbon of development of large dwellings predominately set back from the road and screened by mature vegetation.</p>	

Proposed access to the site will be achieved by widening existing access on Duke's Hill; a verdant, sunken lane, bounded on both sides by dense vegetation and mature trees, and running generally in a north-west to south-east direction beyond the northern boundary treeline. Views of the site are available at the existing site entrance, as well as glimpse views along the northern boundary, which are more open during the winter season. These are experienced by visual receptors travelling through the countryside area and read in line with the rural context of the surrounds.

Multiple public rights of way (PRoWs) are located in the surrounds, however views into the site from the footpath network are limited on account of intervening vegetation. Notwithstanding, glimpsed views of the site as proposed will be experienced from PRoW 2474, as identified in our mapping records. Submitted Landscape design strategy refers to this PRoW as 6981.

### Landscape character

The proposed site falls within F1 - Pulborough, Chiltington & Thakeham Farmlands Landscape Character Area (LCA) as defined by the Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment.

The site and the surrounding contextual landscape is deemed to be representative of the local landscape character area, exhibiting many of the key characteristics of F1, including: *undulating sandstone ridge; extensive arable and some horticultural land use with glasshouses and mushroom farms; leafy sunken lanes with sandstone exposures; small historic villages built of sandstone and half timber such as West Chiltington and Thakeham; and scattered small cottages and farmsteads mainly along lanes.*

Key issues include *pressure for housing and commercial development and increasing traffic on some minor roads.* The visually prominent northern escarpment and the sunken lanes have a high sensitivity to change. Planning and Land Management Guidelines state to:

- *Conserve the character of the leafy sunken lanes of the area.*
- *Restore hedgerows and plant new hedgerow trees, particularly in areas of arable farmland.*
- *Extend existing woodlands and establish new ones.*
- *Encourage significant native woodland planting integrated with existing hedgerow network south of Thakeham.*
- *Support the retention of orchards as a distinctive feature of the area.*
- *Encourage the planting of new orchards.*

### Design considerations

1. In the absence of an LVA we have made the professional judgement that the proposal will give rise to adverse effects on the visual amenity for receptors on Duke's Hill and an eroding effect on the landscape character.
2. Key concern lies with the level of tree removal on the northern boundary to facilitate the construction of the maintenance path to the substation. This will expose the development to view from Duke's Hill, considerably changing the lane from rural to a much more suburban setting. Furthermore, the current layout provides no scope for enhancement planting within the boundary, as the bank is outside of the red line boundary.
3. In addition, we note the site meets the minimum threshold for multi-functional greenspace provision, as identified in the Horsham District Open Space, Sports & Recreation Review 2021. Therefore to mitigate aforementioned adverse effects, we recommend providing Natural Greenspace within the northern part of the site. In line with Planning and Land Management Guidelines in regard to F1 LCA, we recommend planting an orchard or native



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<b>DATE:</b>	14/02/2025
<b>SIGNED OFF BY:</b>	Inês Watson CMLI Specialists Team Leader (Landscape Architect)
<b>DATE:</b>	19/02/2025