



Horsham
District
Council

HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Land North of East Street Rusper
DESCRIPTION:	Erection of 18no. 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom dwellings, (including 6no. affordable housing units), together with access from East Street, vehicle and cycle parking, landscaping and open space, and sustainable drainage.
REFERENCE:	DC/25/0523
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice / More info / Modification to the pipe and service hatch in the RPA of T55.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The submitted Arboricultural Methods Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection plan (TPP) prepared by David Archer Associates are a fair assessment of the tree stock at the site, what trees are proposed to be removed and how the retained ones will be appropriately protected should the scheme come to fruition. However, the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) is missing; please ask as to why the application was not supported by an AIA.

I also note the discrepancy in dates between the AMS and TPP. Whereby, the AMS report is dated November 2024, and the TPP is dated February 2025. The significance of this being, the date of the AMS suggests that the initial tree survey was undertaken before a 17m length of the mature tree belt on the southern boundary of the site was pre-emptively felled in January 2025, in the area where the site access is proposed. This action resulted in the loss of several mature and smaller understory trees; around 17 trees in total. The reasoning behind these works is likely because the trees were perceived to be a barrier in achieving the development proposals at the site, this is because, if they were still in situ, their removal and what impact this would have on the character and amenities of the area would have been a material consideration in the planning process. The removal of these trees has, in my opinion, resulted in significant landscape harm and a direct loss of amenity, and wildlife habitat to this semi-rural countryside location.

At the time the felling works were completed, the trees in question were free from any planning constraints such as a TPO or being located within a Conservation Area. Therefore, no consent was needed from the Council to fell these trees. Nonetheless, it is disappointing that the applicants appear to have sought to circumvent the constraint these trees would have posed to the development by removing them before the submission of the application.

The felling of these trees prompted the Council to serve the Woodland Order, on the roadside trees along the southern boundary of the site; ref TPO/1579 Wooded Roadside Strip to the East of 10 East Street, Rusper, Horsham. No Objections to the new TPO were received within the required time frame, and the order was confirmed on the 21/05/25 without modification.

MAIN COMMENTS:**Tree removals,**

Two individual ash trees, T12 and T14—both within the area covered by TPO/1579—are indicated for removal. These trees are exhibiting advanced symptoms of Ash Dieback, a chronic fungal disease characterised by leaf loss and crown dieback. Regardless of the outcome of this application, due to their roadside location, it would be prudent to remove T12 and T14 on highway safety grounds. Additional proposed removals include the group G2, a mixed-species cluster of small, low-merit, self-seeded specimens. The removal of this group should not result in any significant localised or wider landscape harm due to the limited quality of the trees.

Although not listed in the Arb report, it is worth noting that in the area affected by the pre-emptive felling (and now covered by TPO/1579), several felled trees—specifically Field maple, Ash, Blackthorn, and Hawthorn have produced new growth from their stumps and are still alive. The significance of this being their location within the area covered by TPO/1579, a Woodland Order. Woodland Orders differ from individual, group and area orders, whereby they protect all the trees within the designated wooded area regardless of their species or size. In addition, all trees and saplings which grow naturally or have been planted in the area covered by a Woodland Order, after the Order is made are also legally protected by the Order. This is because the purpose of a woodland TPO is to safeguard the wooded unit as a whole, which depends on regeneration or new planting to maintain tree coverage in such areas.

As such, to create the new access as proposed would require the removal of trees protected by a TPO, albeit small trees at the moment. Nonetheless, if left in situ they would grow, and overtime reach a similar size and level of landscape, and habitat value as those previously the felled. Furthermore, a cursory review of the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) documents suggests that the pre-application tree removals were not considered in the BNG assessment. Please seek confirmation on this from the BNG Ecology Team.

Site Layout observations,

The site layout as suggested in the Landscape masterplan and TPP Drawings No. M458-100 Revision: P3 and TPP 01, implies that consideration has been given to the position of the proposed dwellings and more importantly their main garden areas are shown to be sited at an appropriate distance from the mature tree coverage around the periphery of the site. If permitted the new dwellings are unlikely to be affected by common tree-related issues with shade, and tree-related detritus; which is positive.

Root Protection Area (RPA) conflicts below,

With the exception of a SUDS drainage pipe located within the RPA of the off-site Oak T55, no direct development is proposed within the RPA of any retained tree, which is positive. Consideration should be given to moving the pipe and service hatch a few metres to the west, outside the RPA of T55, to address this conflict.

Tree Protection measures,

The tree protection details set out in the TPP are in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction and are satisfactory.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: None at this stage

NAME:	Andy Bush Arboricultural Officer
DEPARTMENT:	Strategic Planning (Specialist Team)
DATE:	10/06/25