



Horsham
District
Council

HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Land North of Girder Bridge, Gay Street Lane, North Heath
DESCRIPTION:	Use of land for the stationing of 6 static caravans for residential purposes (to be occupied by Gypsies and Travellers) and associated landscape works
REFERENCE:	DC-26-0010
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice / Modification / More Information
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:	
<p>In order to make a fair assessment of direct impacts of highway engineering on the existing mature landscape features, further investigation and submission of supporting information is required at this stage of the planning process.</p>	
MAIN COMMENTS:	
<p>The site is a field immediately adjacent to the railway embankment. It is bounded to the West by an historic right of way that has a belt of mature trees that line the field boundary and extend along the Western side of the trackway to the main road. Species are typical of the Low Weald landscape setting with dominant oak trees and understorey field maple, hazel, cherry, wild apple etc. Several trees within the vicinity exhibit veteran characteristics typical of long standing relatively undisturbed woodland/shaw.</p>	
<p>The mature oak trees form a significant landscape feature visible from wider public viewpoints to the South and West as well as from the train line.</p>	
<p>One oak tree within the centre of the field, possibly formerly on a dividing hedgerow line (growing on a damaged scaffold of roots where surrounding soil has been historically removed) would be removed to accommodate the proposed positioning of the pitches.</p>	
<p>The application has been submitted with the claim that an existing surfaced form of driveway to the property of Girder Bridge, and beyond it to the agricultural access into the existing field, is already in existence. On closer inspection whilst some compacted ground is evident to the existing dwelling access, the standard of existing hardstanding is inadequate (currently no more than a rutted track) and does not extend to the proposed desired access to the field.</p>	

Whilst the planning statement refers to a basic 300mm deep construction consisting of road scalplings overlaid by pea shingle surfacing, this approach to upgrading the existing track and creating a new extension to the existing access would be foreseeably harmful to the key rooting areas of the adjacent mature trees.

It is recognised within both the planning statement and the submitted tree survey report that the track should not be widened or extended, as this would foreseeably be harmful to the long established key rooting areas of the adjacent trees.

If on highways grounds, it is viable to increase and extend the vehicle usage of the track to serve further dwellings, it will require WSCC clarification as to whether widening to separate pedestrian access along the existing PROW is required.

If no widening or passing bay provision is required, I recommend that the applicant be requested to provide a detailed, site specific construction detail for the upgraded access and extension beyond, that takes full account of the need to use specialist engineering to avoid foreseeable harm to the key rooting areas of the surrounding mature trees.

This will require assessment of where existing ground can be viably upgraded and where cellular confinement systems with uncompacted fill will be required to comply with the relevant design standard (BS 5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations).

Details of any associated edging, gates, pillars and other associated landscaping would also be required to make fair assessment direct impacts on both the rural environment and the trees.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

N/A

NAME:	ANDY CLOUT – ASST. ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER
DEPARTMENT:	STRATEGIC PLANNING - SPECIALISTS
DATE:	27/01/26