HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Hillrise, Lordings Lane, West Chitlington
DESCRIPTION:	Erection of a first floor extension above existing garage
REFERENCE:	DC-25-0154
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice / More Information / Modification

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The development may have a detrimental impact on the mature oak tree in close proximity, dependant on the extent of engineering required within its constrained rooting area behind the retaining wall.

Modification of the design could foreseeably negate this aspect. Alternative methods of construction could be viable but need to be substantiated to make fair assessment.

MAIN COMMENTS:

The proposed extension and access staircase are in very close proximity to a mature oak tree that is situated at a raised level (atop a retaining wall at the edge of the garage forecourt apron of hardstanding) within a couple of metres or so of the front corner of the garage.

The tree is of fair form and condition for the species and makes a positive contribution to public amenity and the character of the streetscene.

It has a single stem that forks into three main spires at circa 3.5m from ground level. Some pruning works have historically been undertaken to maintain the trees crown size in a slightly reduced form, likely due to the trees stem and branch structure being deemed as being in close proximity to the existing built form.

Increasing extent of built form and habitable purpose will foreseeably place the tree under greater future pressure for repeated lopping to contain its size and reduce associated nuisance.

The proposed staircase requires engineering to be introduced in close proximity to the tree stem. Standard practice would require excavations at a proximity foreseeably likely

to damage the trees key rooting area which is constrained to some extent by the retaining wall.

It is recognised that the applicant is prepared to consider alternative methods of construction to achieve the structure. I recommend that if viable and acceptable in other planning terms, the design be amended to remove all requirements for excavations within the retained bank by relocating the means of access either internally or to another elevation.

If the existing proposed position is to be pursued and specialist methods of cantilevering to support the staircase and/or using the retaining wall as a support for its weight are to be considered they need to be assessed for viability at this stage of the planning process.

I recommend that modification/further details are requested to make a fair assessment of the impact of the proposal on the tree and the character of the streetsecne.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

N/A

NAME:	ANDY CLOUT – ASST. ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER
DEPARTMENT:	STRATEGIC PLANNING - SPECIALISTS
DATE:	12/03/25