



HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Woodmans Farm, London Road, Ashington
DESCRIPTION:	Prior notification for the erection of an agricultural building and associated works
REFERENCE:	DC-26-1320
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:	
The farm is immediately adjacent to a designated Ancient Woodland (AW). Extent of recent engineering associated with the change of land use from grazing field to hardstanding/proposed building, partially within the recommended buffer to the woodland, may have some limited direct impacts on edge tree rooting. Loss/incursion into the vegetated buffer may have indirect longer term ecological impact on the habitat, dependant on future usage. Recommend that an ecological view be sought on the impact of the development if the change to hardstanding associated with the proposed building requires retrospective planning permission.	
MAIN COMMENTS:	
The site immediately abuts an area of Ancient Woodland (AW) referred to on historic maps as Coombewick Furzefield. The woodland is semi-natural in appearance (ASNW) and typical of the Low Weald soil, vegetation consisting of Oak over Hazel understorey with indicator species of Wild Service tree, Crab apple and Wild Cherry. The woodland forms the Western extent of a much larger block of AW that includes both ASNW and Plantation woodland (PAWS). It comprises a large area of approximately 70 ha of unfarmed land in total, making it an extraordinarily valuable sized area of contiguous woodland habitat in the Southern section of the District. New development in the countryside should protect this recognised irreplaceable landscape habitat by ensuring semi-natural vegetated buffers are maintained to any change of use or new building that may potentially have a detrimental impact on the longer term integrity and habitat value of the woodland.	

It is evident that the former grazed field abutting the woodland, where the proposed building is to be sited, has been subject of recent engineering works to alter ground levels and instal hardstanding upto and into the edge of the woodlands vegetated buffer. This engineering may have had direct impacts on the rooting areas of the edge trees and appears to have involved the removal of some of the longstanding vegetated buffer to the woodland edge.

The build position is set back within the site and would not in itself be of undue concern in terms of direct impacts on the future health of the existing woodland edge trees.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

N/A

NAME:	ANDY CLOUT – ASST. ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER
DEPARTMENT:	STRATEGIC PLANNING - SPECIALISTS
DATE:	02/09/26