



Horsham District Council  
Parkside  
Horsham  
West Sussex  
RH12 1RL

Our ref: 18751  
Date: 15 June 2026

For the attention of: Alice Johnson

**Application ref:** DC/26/0660  
**Location:** Ingfield Manor School Ingfield Manor Drive Five Oaks  
Billingshurst West Sussex RH14 9AX  
**Proposal/Description:** Expansion of the existing school including the construction of 3 linked single-storey buildings, a sports hall, playground, parking, landscaping, drainage, and associated development, following demolition of redundant buildings.

Thank you for consulting with Place Services on the above Full planning application. This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

### Summary

|                                                                               |                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Not supportive on landscape grounds                                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| No landscape objection, subject to attached recommendations and/or conditions | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Further information required prior to determination                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| No landscape comments / does not wish to comment                              | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

This review is based on a desktop study the above-referenced application and its submitted documents. Our Landscape comments are as follows:

#### 1.0. Site Context

- 1.1. The Site is located at Ingfield Manor School/Woodview School to the west of Five Oaks hamlet, accessed via Ingfield Manor Drive. Slinfoldland Farm buildings are located west of the Site. The surrounding landscape comprises open farmland and woodland, with some areas designated as ancient and deciduous woodland. A number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) run around the Site and along the main access.
- 1.2. The Site comprises a grassland field enclosed by established vegetation, derelict buildings and part of the woodland to the west. The topography falls to the southwest by around 4m.

## 2.0. Planning Policy Context

- 2.1. Within the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015) the following policies are considered relevant:
- Policy 24 - Environmental Protection
  - Policy 25 - District Character and the Natural Environment
  - Policy 26 - Countryside Protection
- 2.2. Within the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2021), Objective 2 states “*Ensure that the provision of local infrastructure and facilities including medical provision and schools is adequate to address the needs of existing and future residents*”. The application must also consider Policy 17 Views to St Mary’s Church.

## 3.0. Review of the LVIA:

- 3.1. The application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) undertaken by Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology in February 2026 (Ref: LLD3660-LPL-REP-001 Rev. 01).
- 3.2. The Methodology is included within Appendix C2. Overall, we consider that the methodology is limited and does not set out a clear approach to assessing the effects on the landscape character and visual amenity. Further detail should be submitted explaining how sensitivity (value + susceptibility) and magnitude of change and combined to form the overall judgements for individual receptors.
- 3.3. We therefore judge that the submitted LVIA has not been produced in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (GLVIA3). Para 2.24 of GLVIA3 states “*In all cases there is a need for the judgements that are made to be reasonable and based on clear and transparent methods so that the reasoning applied at different stages can be traced and examined by others.*”. Based on the included Methodology, the approach to assessing landscape and visual effects is not clear and is not traceable to ascertain the judged effects.
- 3.4. We therefore request a tabulated format is submitted for clarity of judgements for both Landscape Character and Visual Amenity.

### Landscape Character

- 3.5. Within the Horsham Landscape Character Assessment, the Site is located within Landscape Character Area (LCA) G3 Slinfold & Five Oaks Wooded Farmlands. Key characteristics of this LCA which are relevant to the Site include:
- Gently undulating wooded landscape
  - Many small streams draining to the Adur
  - Small hedged pastures
  - Extensive coppice woodland in small and large irregularly shaped blocks
  - Largely rural character

- 3.6. No judgement has been provided for the landscape sensitivity, the magnitude of change, or the overall effects for each of the identified receptors. We therefore cannot conclusively ascertain the landscape effects associated with the proposed development, excepting the descriptive judgements within Para 5.7-5.12.
- 3.7. Para 5.11 states that an overall **minor beneficial** landscape effect will be experience at the landscape scale. However, the methodology provides no definitions for the types of effects judged, and therefore we cannot assess whether this is an accurate assessment of the landscape character effects.
- 3.8. The assessment of effects on landscape character understates the extent of tree removals required to facilitate the scheme and bases its minor beneficial judgement on the removal of derelict buildings. As above, we judge that additional information on the methodology and the justification of effects on individual landscape receptors is required to understand how this judgement has been reached.
- 3.9. We therefore advise that the following landscape receptors are assessed individually:
- The Site and Immediate Context
  - Landscape Features (i.e. trees and vegetation, buildings)
  - Relevant LCAs

#### Visual Amenity

- 3.10. Figure 4.2 Viewpoints and Zones of Visual Influence (Page 18) provides the locations of the 8no. assessed viewpoints. Viewpoint photography is included within Appendix B.
- 3.11. We welcome the inclusion of photography, which was undertaken in January 2026, and therefore represents the worst-case scenario with reduced leaf cover.
- 3.12. Overall, the assessment of visual effects is limited throughout the submitted LVIA, with no conclusive judgements on the assessed effects for each of the identified visual receptors.
- 3.13. At a minimum, we would expect the following visual receptors to have been individually assessed, given they have been included within the viewpoint photography:
- PRoW BIL-1347-1
  - PRoW BIL-1348
  - Ingfield School Drive
- 3.14. Para 4.16 of the LVIA assesses that PRoWs have a **high-moderate** susceptibility, and road users have a **moderate-low** susceptibility, with a **medium** value for all receptors. Whilst we do not disagree with these judgements, a break down of each visual receptor in a tabular format should be have been included for clarity.
- 3.15. No judgement has been provided for the visual sensitivity, the magnitude of change, or the overall effects for any of the identified receptors. We therefore cannot conclusively ascertain the visual effects associated with the proposed development, excepting the descriptive judgements within Para 5.13-5.17.

- 3.16. We therefore consider that the assessment of visual effects is insufficient and requires a more detailed assessment considering the close presence of surrounding PRowWs.

#### **4.0. Review of Submitted Proposals:**

- 4.1. The Site is located close to the existing school site and is accessed via the Ingfield Manor Road. The presence of surrounding buildings associated with the school and the adjacent Slinfoldland Farm contributes to reducing the sensitivity of the site to development.
- 4.2. The Site also comprises a number of existing derelict buildings, including a 3-storey building, which would all be removed as part of the development. We acknowledge that the removal of these buildings would contribute to enhancing the visual amenity of the Site.
- 4.3. PRowWs are located on three sides of the site, offering near- and mid-distance views into the Site or of the boundary vegetation and trees. Reducing the visual effects of the proposals on these PRowWs should be an important consideration within the development process. We do however consider that further information submitted within the LVIA would provide clarity on the effects and the proposed mitigation to reduce such effects.
- 4.4. Whilst the replacement of existing taller derelict buildings with new single-storey buildings is positive visually, we note that the site development has resulted in the removal of a number of trees. As above, we therefore disagree with the broad judgement that the landscape effects are beneficial.
- 4.5. As per Table 03 of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement (Ref: LLD3660-ARB-REP-001), 7 Category B, 13 Category C and 2 Category U trees are proposed for removal to facilitate the scheme. Whilst we appreciate that no Category A trees are proposed for removal, we advise that a 1:1 replacement on removed trees is provided within the Site.
- 4.6. Additional tree planting could be proposed within the car parking area to break up parking bays. This will contribute to compensatory tree planting, biodiversity, softening the built proposals, visual amenity and SuDS benefits.
- 4.7. An overlay of tree removals with the proposed layout should be submitted, to demonstrate the locations of trees compared with the proposed works.
- 4.8. Proposed ornamental planting is located between the buildings and potentially in some shaded areas. We advise that shade tolerant species are proposed in any shaded locations or are situated in areas with more available sunlight.

#### **5.0. Summary**

- 5.1. Overall, we judge that the provided methodology is insufficient, and further information is required on the approach in accordance with GLVIA3. Judgements should also be provided for all of the identified receptors and be presented in a tabular format for clarity.

- 5.2. Prior to the recommendation of Landscape Plans and Management Condition wording, we require additional information surrounding the LVIA to ensure that judgements are transparent, consistent and robustly justified. This is necessary for ensuring that findings can meaningfully inform the landscape design and mitigation scheme that responds appropriately to identified effects.

Please contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

### Place Services – Landscape Team

Email: [landscape@essex.gov.uk](mailto:landscape@essex.gov.uk)



Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of Horsham District Council.

**Please note:**

*This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.*

*We are unable to respond directly to applicants/agents or other interested parties. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant/agent or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer at the relevant LPA, who will seek further advice from us where appropriate.*