

Applicant response to Landscape Officer comments 09/09/26

Initial comments from Landscape Officer in black

Second comments from Landscape Officer in blue

Response from applicant 09/09/26 in red

MAIN COMMENTS:

1. In order to mitigate adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity, and to comply with HDPF Policies 25, 26, 31 and 33, existing vegetation must be protected, conserved and enhanced. In order to safeguard the existing green infrastructure bounding and within the site, proposals must:

- a. Demonstrate compliance with BS 5837:2012. As such, development within root protection areas (RPAs) should only be observed where unavoidable.
- b. Avoid existing trees and vegetation backing onto garden plots or being enclosed within residential curtilage whenever possible, to secure their long-term retention and sympathetic relationship with future occupants of the site.

2. It is also recommended that placing RPAs in private gardens is avoided where possible.

3. As the site is partially undeveloped, the layout can be adjusted to fully avoid RPAs. The alteration of the access road and the removal of the following dwellings is thus recommended:

- a. Plot 6 - within the RPA of T42, which benefits from a TPO.

Not addressed.

The dwelling at Plot 6 is not within the RPA OF T42. The area within the RPA is a garden space only. The Arb Implications Report (section 6.2.2) states that to minimise impacts on T42, all excavation within these RPAs will be undertaken manually, under the direct control and supervision of an appointed arboricultural consultant, so that any over dig into the RPAs is avoided, and any roots encountered can be treated appropriately.

As such the potential impacts can be suitably mitigated and we will not be removing plot 6 from the development. Any issues regarding pruning can be controlled as the tree is protected by a TPO and the Council have full control over its management. We also note the Arb Officer has not raised concern with this aspect of the site.

- b. Plot 13 and the associated road - within the RPAs of T24 & T26.

The RPA of T24 has been avoided, with thanks. However, concern is raised regarding the proximity of the plot and the existing treeline, which is likely to result in a poor relationship and shading concerns. This places the trees at considerable risk of future

lopping or felling pressure, which would further erode the site's landscape character and amenity value. Please amend.

I have attached a supplementary statement from our Arb Consultants which addresses this point in detail which is not repeated in full here, but in summary, their assessment concludes that the dwellings and its garden is designed to ensure a positive relationship between the property and the retained trees. The Arb Officer comments in relation to this plot have been addressed in the revised layout by relocating the dwelling 3m outside of the canopy extent of the tree, the orientation of the dwelling altered as recommended and avoiding any incursions into the RPA of oak no. 24.

c. Plot 7 - within the RPA of 'notable' T19, which benefits from a TPO. While recognised that the current buffer zone is larger than the BS minimum requirements, the removal of this parcel will allow for the delivery of a more meaningful open space that can deliver on the amenity typology as per the requirements of Horsham District Council's Open Space, Sports & Recreation Review 2021 (OSSR). See point 7.

Not addressed; please amend.

See response under point 7 below.

4. In addition, as per point 1b, the location of any proposed boundary treatment must clearly exclude existing vegetation from plot ownership, providing a maintenance strip between the garden boundaries and existing landscape features.

Not addressed; please amend. A path is noted along the southern boundary, however its purpose is unclear; please clarify.

The existing vegetation and proposed landscape buffers are separate to plot ownership and demarcated by fence lines etc. as shown on the proposed site layout plan (drawing no. P101) and this can be secured via condition- e.g. 'the landscape buffers shall be owned and maintained separately to any individual plot' etc. etc., the more detailed layout, showing exact locations of fencing, new planting etc. can be secured via a fully-detailed soft landscaping scheme condition.

I have attached an updated version of this plan showing indicative access points to all landscape buffers (green hatched arrows). The exact dimensions of an access strip are not yet known as this will depend on the species planted within the landscape buffers, which can be secured via condition as above.

5. Wider, planted buffers are also encouraged to conserve and enhance the semi-rural landscape character.

Planted buffers have been provided on the western boundaries of Plot 6 and 24, the northern boundaries of Plots 8-13, and the southern boundaries of Plots 14-17, with thanks. However, please note that the long-term retention of the planting cannot be

guaranteed within private amenity space, as it will be dependent on future occupiers' choice. As above, maintenance strip with access is therefore requested alongside the exclusion of the planted buffer from the plot's ownership.

See response under point 5 above.

6. Planning and Land Management Guidelines for N1 - Mannings Heath Farmlands Landscape Character Area (LCA) as defined by the Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment (2003), of which the site is located, state to, 'conserve and enhance tree cover around village fringes and on approach roads'. As such, we request that the access road be tree-lined on approach to Sandygate Ln.

Amended, with thanks. Closed.

7. We note the site meets the minimum threshold for multi-functional greenspace provision, as identified in the OSSR. For a scheme of this size, it is acknowledged that not all typologies of open space can be delivered on site. Nevertheless, it is considered that larger areas of natural and semi-natural green space can be delivered along the boundaries, which will simultaneously address concerns with landscape and visual amenity. We echo comments made by HDC's Arboriculturalist regarding the introduction of post and rail fencing to limit access and compaction to the RPA of T19. As such, given the proposed central open space mostly comprises TPO RPA, this space should be widened to deliver amenity space to be enjoyed by residents, as per point 3c. The inclusion of seating and feature planting is recommended as a minimum to meet the OSSR requirements.

A timber knee rail has been provided, however this is deemed unlikely to limit access and thus compaction to the RPA of T19. This treatment should be amended to reflect post and rail fencing, as previously requested by HDC's Arboriculturalist, however this can be secured via condition if necessary. We recommend further guidance from HDC's Arboriculturalist is sought to determine if the area fenced off is sufficient in protecting the RPA of T19. In any case, no amenity space or provision of seating/feature planting has been indicated, therefore OSSR requirements remain unmet. Please amend.

We are happy for a post and rail fencing to be secured by condition. We are awaiting any further comments the Arb Officer may have re: the RPA of T19 but consider this is robustly demonstrated to be acceptable.

In relation to OSSR requirements, the OSSR study doesn't specify a current or required provision of amenity greenspace for the village of Lower Beeding. It does however identify an 'over-provision' of parks and gardens. It's therefore unclear which OSSR requirements are unmet. Notwithstanding, given the limited scale of development and site constraints, we are not able to provide additional open space beyond the two areas

shown in the proposed site plan- the central 'green' around the Oak tree/T19, and the landscaped area to the south-west of the site.

As you will be aware the NPPF has recently been updated to encourage sustainable development in edge of settlement locations such as this, and states that development should be approved unless the benefits of the proposal (in this case- the provision of 24 new homes, including affordable housing) would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects. The absence of additional open space (beyond what is already proposed) would not represent an adverse effect that would substantially outweigh the benefits both in terms of the national policy position. As such we will not be removing Plot 7 as this would be unnecessary and would reduce the amount of much-needed new homes in the district.

8. Clarification is requested regarding 'PPS (S)' and 'PPS (F)' to the southwest of the scheme, attached below.

No clarification provided, however these have since been removed from plans. Closed.

These annotations relate to foul and surface water pumps (below ground).

9. In addition, some of the tree planting appears to be proposed within the RPA of existing trees. We request these are adjusted and planted in a similar location outside of RPAs.

Amended, with thanks. Closed.

10. Clarification is requested regarding the new area of hardstanding in the southwestern corner of the scheme.

The hard landscaping area is required for access to the below-ground foul and surface water pumps as per point 8 above.