

From: Isabel Irvine [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 May 2026 17:34
To: Sophie.Moore [REDACTED] >
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: DC/26/0544 Haven Dog Field - Ancient Woodland Comments

Hi Sophie,

Thanks for your email and for sending the Arboricultural officer's comment through.

Arboriculture Comment

In response to the Arboricultural Officer's comment, we acknowledge the proximity to the Ancient Woodland; However, given that this is a retrospective application, the fencing and gates do not form part of this application, as they have already been erected utilising permitted development rights. There is no restriction on the erection of fencing up to 2m in height under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GDPO), Schedule 2, Part 2, Class A. There is therefore no built development within 15m of the Ancient Woodland that would create root damage. Accordingly, it does not set a precedent for built development within 15m of an Ancient Woodland.

We note the comments about the existing agricultural field access. This has been upgraded by laying additional hardcore on top of compressed soil and stone which formed the existing access. Given this was an existing field access we consider that the proposal would not have additional impacts on the ancient woodland. We are however happy to ensure that the proposed buffer area to the ancient woodland is ecologically sensitive and well managed. We welcome any thoughts from the Arb Officer on what they would like to see in the buffer area and its management.

Ecology comment

We have also noted the ecology comment dated 12/05/26. We are pleased to see that they have no objection and have noted their suggested conditions. Regarding the lighting design strategy for biodiversity, this is not necessary as the application does not include or propose any lighting. This condition is therefore not relevant to this permission.

We also note the request for a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy submitted within 3 months of consent. We are currently in the process of creating this, so will get this to you shortly to avoid the need for this condition.

Environmental Health Comment

We also had not seen the full comment from Environmental Health dated 6/05/26. We have now reviewed this and note that they ask for a condition on opening hours, restricting them to 8am-7pm Monday to Friday and 9am-1pm on Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays. This is very restrictive.

The nearest residential dwelling, Shortloes Farm House, is located on the opposite side of Okehurst Road, approximately 40m from the site access. This is the minimal distance away - in a field that is 2ha in size, dogs are unlikely to be gathered around the site access and could instead be at the northern end of the field which is more like 200m away from this residential property. The road, along with verge-side tall hedgerows and trees, screens the site from this dwelling. The next closest dwelling is approximately 500m to the south west of the site, separated from the application site by agricultural land, Okehurst Road and mature vegetation which provides substantial screening and separation.

Only one private booking is permitted at any one time involving a maximum of 2 vehicles and 6 dogs per booking. This is a low intensity use. Within this context, occasional intermittent barking from a dog(s) during opening hours will not in any way generate harmful disturbance. It is no different to dogs using a local park or public rights of way (such as the one next to the site). In fact, this proposal provides a controlled location for dog exercise, which reduces uncontrolled activity occurring in the surrounding countryside and therefore provides wider community benefit. Also, longer opening hours into the morning and evening allow for dogs to be exercised and walked in periods of hot weather. This is important as it allows dogs to be exercised in prolonged periods of hot weather (like now!).

It is also important to take into account that this is a retrospective application and the site has been operating using the opening hours stated in the management plan to date, with no objections from residents or enforcement action.

There are a series of approvals in Horsham District Council for dog fields at similar or closer distances to dwellings, with longer opening hours than those requested by the Environmental Health Officer and opening hours similar to our site. These include:

- Retrospective permission at Slaughter Farm, Chapel Road (Ref. DC/23/0242). Restricted to the opening hours of 6am - 9pm Monday to Sunday. It was also conditioned that the application would have no more than 12 dogs present on site and no more than 6 dogs on either side of the site at any one time. This is more dogs on the site at any one time than our proposal, meaning more noise could occur.
- Application on a land parcel off Hole Street (Ref. DC/21/1044) was restricted to 7am - 8pm Monday to Saturday and 8am - 8pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- Retrospective permission at The Pheasantry, Kent Street (Ref. DC/25/0877) was restricted to 7am - 7pm Monday to Sunday (with no delineation between weekdays and weekends). Significantly more dogs (23) were also permitted on the site, which could lead to increased noise.
- Retrospective application for Furry Friends Freedom Field, Prestwood Lane (ref. DC/22/0815). Restricted to 7am - 7pm daily (with no delineation between weekdays and weekends). Note that this site has more dogs (10) than our proposal, which may result in more noise.

- Application at Dawes Farm, Bognor Road (Ref. DC/21/059). Restricted to 7am - 8pm Monday to Saturday and 8am - 8 pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Overall, we are happy to accept a condition restricting the use of the site to 6 dogs at any one time. This is significantly less than the number of dogs permitted on other sites approved within HDC. However, the opening hours requested (8am - 7pm Monday to Friday and 9am - 1pm Weekends and Bank Holidays) are very restrictive and are not comparable to the approach taken by the Council regarding other dog field applications approved in the District which are in proximity to residential properties. Therefore, similar to other approved dog field applications in the HDC we are happy to reduce opening hours to 7am-9pm (with no delineation between weekdays and weekends/bank holidays).

I hope all of the above is agreeable. Please let me know if you need any more clarity on the points raised.

Many thanks,

Isabel Irvine
Graduate Planner



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