



HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	The Haven Dog Field, Okehurst Road, Billingshurst
DESCRIPTION:	Change of use of land to secure dog walking field with parking and access (Retrospective)
REFERENCE:	DC-26-0544
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:	
Engineering works/increased compaction of underlying soil to date may have impacted upon the key rooting area of the nearest Ancient Woodland (AW) edge trees at the point of access. The proximity of the proposed change of land use is currently within the minimum recommended buffer to AW of 15m.	
MAIN COMMENTS:	
The land parcel that has been developed is directly adjacent to a section of designated Ancient Woodland (AW). The woodland is approximately 2.7Ha in size with good connectivity to the larger surrounding Ancient Woodland parcels in the area (Smerricks and Lannards Copses) which account for a substantive local land area of nearer 40Ha in total. An existing agricultural field access has been upgraded for domestic vehicle use in close proximity to the woodland edge and a containment fence has been erected circa 6m from the woodland boundary. Direct impacts on the AW are seemingly limited to the impacts of engineering/increased traffic on the nearest mature woodland edge trees. The minimum recommended buffer from AW to new development is 15m. If the change of use is acceptable in other planning terms, it may be considered prudent to require the minimum buffer in this instance and to encourage the buffer to be managed in a more ecologically sensitive manner moving forwards.	
ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:	

N/A	
NAME:	ANDY CLOUT – ASST. ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER
DEPARTMENT:	STRATEGIC PLANNING - SPECIALISTS
DATE:	06/05/26