



HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Hawksbourne Wood Rusper Road Rusper West Sussex
DESCRIPTION:	Variation of Condition 1 and the removal of Conditions 7 and 10 of previously approved application DC/23/1806 (Change of use of land and associated siting of 6 No. Eco Lodges for short-term tourist accommodation) relating to the repositioning of site entrance and removing water neutrality requirements.
REFERENCE:	DC/26/0269
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice / Objection
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:	
Proposals are to formalise an existing track previously used for forestry access. Works include 'tidying and improving', however details have not been specified. The proposed track runs through and alongside Ancient Woodland for the majority of its length. Ancient Woodland is classified as an irreplaceable habitat and is highly significant to both the character and the ecological function of the area. NPPF 193(c) states that any development resulting in its loss or deterioration should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists. Existing access, approved for use under DC/23/1806, does not run through or alongside Ancient Woodland, except for the immediate entrance which is noted to be formalised with suitable visibility splays. As such, given existing access, proposals are not considered to meet such exceptional reasons as per NPPF 193(c) and are therefore not supported on landscape grounds. See further details below.	
MAIN COMMENTS:	
1. Government guidance states that direct effects of development can cause loss or deterioration to Ancient Woodland by: i. Increasing levels of air and light pollution, noise and vibration ii. Damaging or compacting soil iii. Damaging roots and understory 2. Indirect effects can also cause loss or deterioration to Ancient Woodland by: i. Increasing the amount of dust and soil pollution ii. Increasing disturbance to wildlife, such as noise from additional people and traffic	

iii. Increasing damage to habitat, for example trampling of plants and erosion of soil by people accessing the woodland or tree root protection areas iv. Changing the landscape character of the area. 3. While no details have been provided as to the proposed works, the increase in overall level of vehicular activity, in combination with the likely introduction of lighting, is likely to cause direct and indirect loss or deterioration of Ancient Woodland by virtue of the effects listed under points 1 and 2.	
RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: N/A	
NAME:	Elly Hazael Trainee Landscape Architect (Planning)
DEPARTMENT:	Specialists Team - Strategic Planning
DATE:	23/04/2026
SIGNED OFF BY:	Inês Watson CMLI Specialists Team Leader (Landscape Architect)
DATE:	23/04/2026