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Horsham District Council
Parkside
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West Sussex
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Date: 4 September 2025
Our ref: 08540

For the attention of: Hannah Darley

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| **Application ref:** | DC/25/1159 |
| **Location:** | Lodge Farmhouse, Guildford Road, Slinfold, West Sussex |
| **Proposal/Description:** | Installation of 2no. units for overnight guest use with associated decking, footpaths, parking and turning area, and recycling/refuse storage. Minor landscaping of the site, planting of native species trees, hedgerows, shrubbery and enhanced modified grassland throughout the site. |

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.

This review is based on a desktop study without a site visit of the above-referenced application and its submitted documents. Our Landscape comments are as follows:

**Review of the proposal/submitted information:**
The application site is situated off Guildford Road (A281) and within the Lodge Farm property grounds in between Great Copse (east) and Kiln Copse (west) both within Ancient Woodlands, although the woodland planting neighbouring the proposed site area boundary falls outside the Ancient Woodland boundaries.

Lodge Farmhouse is a Grade II Listed Building. The proposals and new units should have regards to the setting of this building and meet the requirements under Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework.

Lodge Farm is well enclosed to the north, east and west by extensive areas of woodland and vegetation, providing a sense of containment. However, the southern boundary remains open, allowing occasional views from across the hedgerow along Guildford Road (A281), particularly during winter months. The proposed units are modest in scale and have been designed with the aim to be sympathetic to the surrounding landscape character. Any intermittent views of Unit C1 will replace the existing structure and will not introduce a new visual element into the view.

The landscape proposals shown on the Proposed Layout Plan (231102-01-02) include areas of enhanced modified grassland, tree planting, shrub planting, and new native hedgerows. However, the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment does not appear to account for the new hedgerow creation in its calculations. Additionally, the Proposed Layout Plan included in Appendix B does not show the proposed tree and hedgerow planting. We would welcome clarification on these discrepancies and drawings amended accordingly.

The submitted drawings indicate that three trees will need to be removed to accommodate parking spaces for the two new units. While the provision of new trees appears to offer appropriate mitigation for the proposed tree loss, we do not consider the removal of the two existing trees adjacent to Unit C1 to be justified.

The proposed extension of hard surfacing appears to encroach upon existing trees. A Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, and Method Statement should be submitted prior determination to ensure that impacts to existing trees and their Root Protection Areas (RPAs) are fully assessed, and that any new hard surfaces are designed and constructed in accordance with Arboricultural recommendations.

In the interest of biodiversity, new planting should comprise native tree species found within the surrounding woodland areas. New hedgerows should consist of a native species mix and follow the recommendations outlined in paragraph 7.3 of the Preliminary Ecological Assessment (2024), or as advised by the LPA Ecology Officer.

**Recommended Conditions:**
If minded for approval, we would recommend the following conditions for your consideration:

ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING SCHEME.

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment for the site, which shall include any proposed changes in ground levels and also accurately identify spread, girth and species of all existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows on the site and indicate any to be retained, together with measures for their protection which shall comply with the recommendations set out in the British Standards Institute publication BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.

The soft landscaping plan should include plant species, number, density, location and sizes of the proposed planting. The planting specification should provide details of tree planting pits, green roofs, planting preparation and establishment operations. We would recommend an alternative to plastic guards, such as the use of perimeter protective fencing where appropriate, or guards manufactured from 100% biodegradable materials.

The hard landscaping plan should include details of specific materials, colours and finishes of paved or otherwise hard surfaces, built features and street furniture. The plans should clearly show the position of any new fencing and hard surfaces in relation to existing and proposed planting.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area. This condition is required to be agreed prior to the commencement of any development to ensure matters of tree and hedgerow protection are secured early to ensure avoidance of damage or lost due to the development and/or its construction. If agreement was sought at any later stage, there is an unacceptable risk of lost and damage to important trees and hedgerow that would result in harm to amenity.

ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN (LMP)

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority a landscape management plan for a minimum of 5 years. This should include:

a) Drawing/s showing the extent of the LMP i.e. only showing the areas to which the LMP applies, areas of private ownership should be excluded.
b) Written Specification detailing:
   - All operation and procedures for soft landscape areas; inspection, watering, pruning, cutting, mowing, clearance and removal of arisings and litter, removal of temporary items (fencing, guards and stakes) and replacement of failed planting.
   - All operations and procedures for hard landscape areas; inspection, sweeping, clearing of accumulated vegetative material and litter, maintaining edges, and painted or finished surfaces.
   - All operations and procedures for soft landscaping to SuDS features; inspection of linear drains, basins and swales, removal of unwanted vegetative material and litter, including inlets and outlets.
c) Maintenance task table which explains the maintenance duties across the site in both chronological and systematic order.
d) Mechanism for monitoring and review of the management plan and operations.

Reason - To support plant establishment and ensure appropriate management is carried out and to maintain functionality and visual aesthetic.

**Summary:**
The proposal for two units, associated infrastructure and landscaping is not raising major concerns in terms of landscape and visual impact. However, we question the extent of tree removal proposed and seek further justification. In principle, we welcome the landscape proposals, subject to the submission of additional detailed information, including planting plans and specifications.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

**Place Services – Landscape Team**

Email: 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.*