



HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Land at Holbrook Farm, Brighton Road, Horsham
DESCRIPTION:	Outline planning application for up to 180 dwellings, open space and associated works and infrastructure with all matters reserved apart from access
REFERENCE:	DC-26-0530
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:	
The access proposal has a negative tree and hedgerow loss that can be reasonably mitigated within the wider site. The schematic layout has some potential design and management issues for the successful retention of the large mature oak trees present, including the veteran tree in the Eastern section of the site.	
MAIN COMMENTS:	
The extent of tree and hedgerow loss to achieve access points for vehicles and pedestrians to/from the Brighton Road is reasonably detailed and within the parameters of what has previously been considered as apart of the pre-application proposals for this allocated site. Sufficient space exists within the Eastern side of the schematic layout for an appropriate scheme of tree/landscape mitigation planting in this respect. The schematic plan for the desired layout includes loss of a section of the historic N-S hedgerow line (identified as H3) that currently divides the field network. This is regrettable however, seemingly necessary in respect of viable options to access the Westernmost field for development purpose. It may be possible to lay this hedge to conserve the remaining landscape heritage feature and provide a better longer term habitat resource. The visually significant trees are principally restricted to individual oak trees on the lines of former/denuded hedgerow lines and the belt of woodland that wraps around and encloses the Northern and Western boundaries on the Horn brook stream bank.	

In the Eastern portion of the site is situated the largest and most statuesque oak (identified as T56). It is of an age, size, and condition for the species that confers veteran status. In addition to visible large deadwood and habitat features, the stem is hollowing. Some concern is highlighted within the submitted arboricultural report as to the extent of decay/sound buttressing to support the current, formerly unmanaged, natural crown form. Some enforced reduction of crown form is therefore a likely requirement of the change of land use/frequency of human proximity.

Within the proposed development context it is recommended that not only is the minimum recommended buffer for a veteran tree of this size and condition complied with, but also that future pedestrian access be restricted within this zone.

The three mature oaks centrally positioned within the site (identified as T37, T38 and T40) are of varying condition. All three trees exhibit significant veteran features and given time are potentially future veteran trees themselves.

As with T56, the change of land use has inherent foreseeable pressures on the longer term retention of the trees once enclosed within a residential development scheme.

T40 is on the roadside and is currently the most visually significant tree within the public realm by virtue of its proximity to the road and busy garden centre junction. It is covered in ivy growth that precludes a fair assessment of health and condition. Providing the tree is sound for retention it is important that there are no planned or latterly requested alterations to the highway verge area within its off-set minimum recommended root protection area. No pavement or highway alteration is currently shown within submissions and this must be adhered to if hoping to successfully retain the tree in the longer term by conserving its key soft ground rooting environment, much of which will likely run laterally along the roadside.

Trees T37 and T38 are declining in health as one would associate with trees of this age within a farmed landscape. It is important for their future health that not only are their minimum recommended root protection areas conserved, but that future pedestrian access/human proximity respects their decrepitude.

I recommend that the buffer to both trees from new engineering (access road and hard standing) be increased within finalised layout design and that post and rail fencing or similar be utilised to subtly maintain separation from organised recreation.

The schematic layout respects the mature boundary landscaping and does not pose any additional significant foreseeable arboricultural concerns for the surrounding woodland.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

Yes – Standard Outline condition for tree protection prior to commencement of anything on site that enables enforcement:

Outline Approval Tree Protection condition

No development shall commence within any Reserved Matters Area or on works to construct the accesses hereby approved, including demolition pursuant to the permission granted, ground

clearance, or bringing equipment, machinery or materials onto the relevant part of the site, until the following preliminaries have been completed in the sequence set out below:

a) A plan shall be submitted to show all trees on the relevant part of the site to be retained as well as those off-site whose root protection areas ingress into the relevant part of the site, such trees shall be fully protected by tree protective fencing affixed to the ground and robust ground protection measures as necessary, in full accordance with section 6 of BS 5837 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations' (2012).

b) Once installed and inspected and approved by the Local Planning Authority Tree Officer, the barrier fencing and any other ground protection measures shall be maintained during the course of the development works for that phase or sub-phase and until all machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site.

c) Areas so fenced off shall be treated as zones of prohibited access, and shall not be used for the storage of materials, equipment or machinery in any circumstances. No mixing of cement, concrete, or use of other materials or substances shall take place within any tree protective zone, or close enough to such a zone that seepage or displacement of those materials and substances could cause them to enter a zone.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure the successful and satisfactory retention of important trees and hedgerows on the site in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

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