HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Leonardslee Gardens Brighton Road Lower Beeding West Sussex
DESCRIPTION:	Extension to the visitor entrance building to house a new ticket sales area and café; Infil-ling roof to the former generator block courtyard, re-roofing of the Alpine House and in-ternal/external reconfigurations and link extension; Single storey winter garden conserv-atory to the Stable Block; Terrace extension to the east and internal/ external reconfigu-rations; Change of use from redundant staff offices and staff accommodation within the stable block to guest accommodation including extension to Honey Cottage; Change of use to the partial first floor of the Red House to staff accommodation; Small WC exten-sion, reinstated chimney stack, and roof alterations to the Engine House; Lightweight wedding pavilion to the lawn, south of Leonardslee House; Landscaping changes in-cluding to the forecourt of Leonardslee House.
REFERENCE:	DC/25/1146
RECOMMENDATION:	**Advice**

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessments (AIAs) & Arboricultural Methods Statement for the Engine House, Main House Forecourt, Proposed Stable Block, Visitor Entrance Building Extension, and Former Generator Block are a fair assessment of the tree related impacts of the development proposals at the site. All documents are supported by a Tree Protection Plan (TPP), which appears satisfactory and proportionate to the proposed works. Subject to full compliance with the TPP and the specified Arboricultural Method Statements (AMS), the arboricultural impacts are considered acceptable.

2nd response in Red – No arboricultural concerns are raised in relation to the proposed drainage scheme for the Engine House element of the development. While it is acknowledged that the site is designated as Ancient Woodland, the long-established use of the land as a botanical garden, together with the historic landscaping works associated with that use, has significantly altered the original ground conditions. In particular, the excavation works undertaken in the 1800s to create the adjacent lake are likely to have generated substantial quantities of clay spoil, which were deposited around the lake edge, effectively covering and capping the pre-existing land levels.

Furthermore, there are no trees within influencing distance of this part of the scheme that would pose a constraint. Therefore, the proposed works will, in this instance and in my view, not result in the deterioration of Ancient Woodland.

MAIN COMMENTS

No trees within the serval areas of proposed development st the site, are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), nor is the site located within a Conservation Area. As such, no trees within influencing distance of the several schemes are subject to statutory tree controls

Engine House

The proposal results in the removal of two low-quality Category C hedgerows (H3 and H6). All higher-value trees, including Category A specimens T158 and T159, are retained. Potential indirect RPA incursions have been identified where new hard surfacing and construction traffic coincide with RPAs of retained trees.

The TPP sets out appropriate protective fencing, construction exclusion zones, and controls on ground disturbance. These measures are acceptable.

Mitigation planting forms part of the wider landscaping scheme and adequately compensates for the minor losses.

No concerns, subject to implementation of the TPP and AMS**.**

Main House Forecourt

The works require the removal of two individual trees (T97 – Cat B, and T107 – Cat C), hedgerow H2, and part of Group G13. These are moderate impacts within the context of the wider landscape, given the mature tree coverage in the area.

The primary constraints relate to significant RPA incursions where resurfacing intersects the RPAs of several Category B trees (T106, T121, T163) and groups G15 and H7. The specification of no-dig surfacing and retention of existing hard surfacing is appropriate. Construction-traffic risks are acknowledged and managed through the TPP.

Mitigation planting is proposed for the removals and acceptable, from an Arboricultural perspective.

No concerns, subject to adherence to no-dig construction methods and the TPP.

Proposed Stable Block

Tree removals include two Category B trees (T118 and T119) and a portion of Group G15. These represent a low to moderate level of impact, again due to the additional tree coverage in the area, and throughout the site.

The design of the raised viewing terrace is proposed to be constructed on small-diameter piles with a permeable surface, this construction method is appropriate and minimises RPA disturbance. Indirect impacts to 25 retained trees are noted. Pruning of T113 is acceptable.

The TPP correctly prohibits underground services within RPAs and sets out robust protection measures.

Mitigation planting with 5-year establishment is considered to be appropriate, from an Arboricultural perspective.

No concerns, subject to compliance with the AMS and TPP.

Visitor Entrance Building Extension

The proposal requires the removal of one Category B tree (T45) and four Category C trees (T46–T49). These removals are minor in arboricultural terms.

No engineered RPA incursions are proposed, but indirect impacts may occur during construction. The installation of 2 m-high protective fencing prior to commencement is appropriate and must remain in place throughout the works.

Mitigation planting and 5-year establishment care are acceptable, from an Arboricultural perspective.

No concerns, subject to full installation and retention of protective fencing as specified.

Former Generator Block

Only one tree (T164) is to be removed. Several high-value retained trees, including three Category A trees and a Veteran specimen (T86), are located in proximity to the works. As the development activities are contained within a courtyard, reliance is placed on strict Construction Exclusion Zones rather than full site-wide fencing.

This approach is acceptable only if CEZs are rigorously maintained, as construction error poses a significant risk to T86 and numerous mature retained trees. Mitigation planting and a 5-year maintenance period are appropriate.

No concerns, subject to strict enforcement of all CEZs and supervision in accordance with the AMS.

Conclusion

Across the sites, the proposed tree removals are limited and acceptable, and all higher-value trees, including key Category A and Veteran trees, are retained and appropriately safeguarded from development activity. The cumulative impact is low to moderate and can be satisfactorily mitigated through replanting and the wider landscape strategy**.**

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: Yes –

6.8 Arboricultural Method Statement - Implementation

Regulatory Condition: All works shall be executed in full accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment/Method Statement/Tree Protection Plan [INSERT - Title, Reference, Date].

Reason: To ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees, shrubs and hedges on the site in accordance with Policies 30 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

NAME:	Andy Bush Arboricultural Officer
DEPARTMENT:	Strategic Planning (Specialist Team)
DATE:	07/11/25