# HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

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| **TO:** | Horsham District Council – Planning Dept |
| **LOCATION:** | Land West of Ravenscroft Storrington |
| **DESCRIPTION:** | Reserved matters application (internal access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to Condition 5 of Outline Planning Permission reference DC/16/1677 for Phase 1 RM Area 4 comprising 82 (C3 Use) residential units, car and cycle parking, ne |
| **REFERENCE:** | DC/26/1527 |
| **RECOMMENDATION:** | Advice / More info – An updated Tree Protection Plan with the RPAs of the surveyed trees included. |

**SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:**

The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP) prepared by Jago Keen of Keen Consultants. The supporting information generally provides a fair assessment of the likely tree-related impacts arising from the proposed development.

Overall, the scheme appears to have been designed to minimise impacts upon existing trees and hedgerows whilst retaining the site's most significant arboricultural features.

The principal visual amenity loss arises from the removal of trees T7, T8, T12, T13 and T14. Owing to their prominent roadside position, these trees are readily visible within the local street scene, and their removal will inevitably alter the character of the site frontage in the short term. The submitted information advises that their removal is necessary to facilitate the proposed site access.

However, it is noted that the Tree Protection Plan (Drg No. 1452-KC-XX-YTREE-TPP02 Rev0) does not include the plotted Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of the surveyed trees. Whilst the tree canopies are shown, the bizarre omission of the RPAs significantly limits the ability to fully assess the relationship between retained trees and the proposed development. Given the importance of RPAs in assessing potential impacts on retained trees, an updated Tree Protection Plan showing all calculated RPAs should be provided.

**MAIN COMMENTS:**

**Tree and Hedgerow Removal Observations**

The AIA advises that the removal of trees T7, T8, T12, T13, T14, T40-T46 and T71-T74, together with sections of hedgerows T6 and T16, is required to facilitate the proposed development. The majority of these trees are categorised as Category C specimens, whilst Group T40 is identified as Category U.

The proposals also include the removal of hedgerow features T42 and T46, together with sections of T6 and T16.

From a visual amenity perspective, the most notable losses are T7, T8 and T14, together with the associated roadside vegetation. Whilst the loss of these trees is unfortunate and will be noticeable in the short term, none are considered to be of such arboricultural significance that their loss could not be adequately mitigated through a robust programme of replacement tree and boundary planting. Subject to appropriate replacement planting, the long-term impact on local tree cover is unlikely to be significant.

**Veteran and High-Value Tree Observations**

The supporting information advises that the site's most significant trees, including veteran and Category A oak specimens T23, T24, T25 and T47, are to be retained. These trees represent the principal arboricultural assets on the site and make a significant contribution to local character, landscape quality and visual amenity.

Based on the submitted plans, the proposed layout appears to have been designed around the retention of these trees. In particular, T47 benefits from a substantial separation distance from the proposed built form and associated infrastructure. The retention of these high-value trees is welcomed.

It is also noted that trees T23, T24, T25 and T47 are located within areas of public open space rather than private domestic curtilages. This is considered a positive aspect of the design and should reduce the potential for future pressure for pruning or removal arising from shading, nuisance or perceived safety concerns.

**Root Protection Area (RPA) and Layout Relationship Observations**

The Tree Protection Plan (Drg No. 1452-KC-XX-YTREE-TPP02 Rev0) does not show the Root Protection Areas of the surveyed trees. This omission is unusual, as the assessment of development proposals in relation to RPAs forms a fundamental part of the arboricultural assessment process. Whilst the tree canopies are plotted, the absence of the RPAs prevents a full assessment of the relationship between retained trees and the proposed development.

An updated Tree Protection Plan should therefore be provided showing the RPAs for all surveyed trees.

Notwithstanding the above, the submitted information suggests that the proposed development generally seeks to avoid incursions into the RPAs of retained trees. However, this cannot be properly verified without the RPAs being plotted. Furthermore, ground

protection is shown adjacent to T5 and T9, which may indicate either construction activity within RPAs or the need for tree protection measures to move during the construction process. Clarification should be sought on this point. Should development be proposed within retained RPAs, a clear arboricultural justification and detailed construction methodology should be provided.

It is also noted that the RPAs for roadside trees T5 and T9 are shown as standard circular RPAs derived in accordance with BS5837:2012. However, BS5837:2012 identifies RPAs as a design tool and advises that were rooting is likely to be asymmetric, a polygonal RPA of equivalent area should be prepared to better reflect actual site conditions.

In this case, the presence of the existing highway is likely to have constrained rooting on the road-facing side of the trees. BS5837:2012 specifically advises that factors such as existing roads, structures, topography and drainage may justify modification of RPA shape. It is therefore considered that the RPAs for T5 and T9 should be reviewed and amended where appropriate to more accurately reflect likely root distribution.

**Mitigation and Replacement Planting Observations**

The supporting information advises that tree losses will be mitigated through replacement planting and additional landscaping throughout the site. Additional tree planting is welcomed and should assist in offsetting the identified losses over time.

**ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:** None at this stage as awaiting requested amendments.

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| **NAME:** | Andy Bush Arboricultural officer (Planning) |
| **DEPARTMENT:** | STRATEGIC PLANNING - SPECIALISTS |
| **DATE:** | 12/11/26 |