HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Bowood, Bashurst Copse, Itchingfield
DESCRIPTION:	Demolition of existing dwelling. Construction of replacement dwelling with detached garage/garden store
REFERENCE:	DC-24-1736
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend that the Veteran tree and Ancient woodland (AW) at the site are appropriately plotted and consideration given to design that gives planned space to limit both direct and potential indirect impacts of property re-development.

Moving the position of the dwelling E as proposed, further into the site to accommodate the desires for a modern home and associated infrastructure places greater future pressure on the conservation of the irreplaceable habitats that are present within the rear amenity area.

MAIN COMMENTS:

The property is sub-divided by the boundary of the remaining Northern Section of the Bashurst Copse Ancient woodland (AW).

It would appear that the development of the property occurred circa 90 years ago. This original development, possibly combined with building of the other dwellings in the cul-de sac involved the removal of a significant part of the woodland block that remained at the turn of the Century.

When the assessment of remaining AW was undertaken it would appear likely that it was considered that only the contiguous belt of woodland, down to and around the stream along the E boundary, remained undamaged.

Subsequent usage of domestic property curtilage for all 5 dwellings has likely involved a denudation of the remaining AW characteristics in some areas.

The boundary line of the woodland is currently designated at approx. 15m from the nearest part of the rear elevation of the existing dwelling. A further 25m of garden depth appears to have been utilised historically and is laid to grass.

It would be prudent for the applicant to get confirmation from Natural England as to where the current woodland boundary is located and what would be an appropriate way to demarcate and manage the remaining woodland of value.

The garden has a number of mature trees within relatively close proximity to the existing/proposed dwelling position and associated levels changes. In addition there is a mature oak tree and a large, veteran, Wild Service Tree. The latter tree is a key indicator species of AW. In this instance, the tree is of national importance by virtue of its age, size and condition.

It is recognised that the property was formerly subject of approvals for a replacement dwelling and that a significant proportion of the curtilage is designated AW. The current proposal is accompanied by an AIA tree report that recognises that the remaining trees of merit near the area of proposed demolition and construction could be reasonably protected from direct impacts of development harm.

However, over the past 20 years, the recognition of the importance of conserving irreplaceable habitats and ensuring that they are not detrimentally affected by new development has become a greater consideration and recognised planning constraint.

In my view space exists on the property to enable a modern re-development of a substantively sized detached dwelling. However, siting, levels alterations and constraint over future site usage are important considerations at this stage of the planning process.

I recommend that the proposal for a replacement dwelling be re-considered at this stage of the planning process to include recognition of all the existing, measured, physical landscape constraints.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

Yes – if minded to approve current application or similar – 3.9 Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection details required.

NAME:	ANDY CLOUT – ASST. ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER
DEPARTMENT:	STRATEGIC PLANNING - SPECIALISTS
DATE:	11/12/24