HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Swallowfield Brighton Road Mannings Heath
DESCRIPTION:	Construction of an agricultural track around the perimeter of field and woodland.
REFERENCE:	DC/23/0447
RECOMMENDATION:	No Objection/ Conditions
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION: **The submitted Retrospective Arboricultural Impact & Tree Protection Strategy is a fair assessment of the species, size, and condition of trees on and immediately adjacent to the site.**	

MAIN COMMENTS:

A high number of individuals and groups of trees at the site are protected by TPO/0340; the order was served on 03/07/1980. For the most part, the protected trees are Oaks located in a central location within the field around site boundaries.

A new access track has been partially constructed around the perimeter of a field to the southeast of the main dwelling at the site Swallowfield. Mechanical excavations to a depth of 300mm below the original ground levels have occurred, and a sub-base comprising of large-diameter chalk fragments has been placed within the excavated area. Excavations have occurred within the Root Protection Area (RPA) of 9 protected and 2 unprotected trees.

Under the current industry standard BS5837:2012, the default position is that development with the RPA of retained trees should be avoided. Several of the mature Oaks have suffered root damage due to the way the works have been undertaken with little to no consideration as to what impact this would have had on the trees in the area, which is regrettable.

Tree roots are primarily found in the top 1000mm to 1200mm of soil, and given the age, and the underdeveloped nature of the tree's location, in this instance, there is the capacity for roots to be found at greater depths. Due to the depth of the excavation and the level of root severance that has taken place, it is likely that over time the affected trees will begin to exhibit signs of decline in the form of crown dieback; however, it is unlikely that the damage sustained by the trees is extensive enough to warrant individual tree removal due to the risk of failure in high winds.

In terms of the amenity value of the trees at the site when viewed within the local landscape context, though of high amenity value when viewed from within the site. However, due to the extent of the tree coverage around the edge of the site, from beyond, in the wider public domain, they are not.

The proposed remedial measures and soil improvements, as set out in the submitted Retrospective Arboricultural Impact & Tree Protection Strategy, appear reasonable and should promote new root development and aid in the recovery of the affected trees.

In addition, to help mitigate the impact of the development on trees, 18 extra heavy standard-size trees with a trunk girth of 14-16cm at 1m above ground level and a total height of more than 3.5m are proposed to be planted. The level of proposed tree planting appears robust and commensurate with the number of trees that have been affected by the development activity at the site. As the replacement trees mature, I'm confident they will positively contribute to the verdant nature of the area.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

Regulatory Condition: The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Retrospective Arboricultural Impact & Tree Protection Strategy documents prepared by MDJ Arboricultural Consultancy Date: May 2023, for the South Access Track, Swallowfield Estate, Church Lane, Mannings Heath, Horsham.

Reason: 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 Bush Arbocultural Officer
DEPARTMENT:	Strategic Planning - Specialist Team
DATE:	