HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Highdelf Church Place Pulborough
DESCRIPTION:	Installation of plastic mesh to provide parking spaces (Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed).
REFERENCE:	DC/25/0976
RECOMMENDATION:	**Advise / Objection**

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The proposed placement of plastic mesh to provide parking spaces directly beneath the mature lime trees at the site protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO/1523), which are also sited within the Pulborough Conservation Area, is not compliant with current industry standard BS5837:2012, which provides guidance on tree protection during development. The trees in question make a significant and positive contribution to the character and amenities of the Conservation Area

MAIN COMMENTS:

Due to the location of the parking spaces within the soft ground area of the tree's Root Protection Area (RPA), even with the use of a plastic mesh the repeated movement of heavy vehicles will compact the soil, reducing oxygen and water availability, while also causing irreversible damage to the root system, particularly the fine feeder roots responsible for nutrient uptake. Such impacts could result in long-term decline or in the worst case the loss of the trees, underscoring the need to respect RPA boundaries.

Furthermore, regular vehicle use beneath the tree's canopy introduces practical concerns, including possible damage to parked cars from falling sap, twigs, and bird excreta, all common issues associated with parking under mature trees, especially lime trees. Over time, these factors wound not only diminish the usability of the parking bay but also likely give rise to pressure to heavily prune, or in the worst case seek removal of the trees with the aim of improving the relationship between the parking bays and the trees. This is due to the perceived nuisance associated with tree related detritus falling from the trees onto the parked cars below; I this is a foreseeable issue, should the area underneath the canopy of the trees be repurposed for the use of parking vehicles.

Additionally, it has not been appropriately demonstrated as part of the submission that no ground preparation works would be needed to achieve a flat level surface to lay the plastic mesh upon. In this respect, it is worth noting that every part of the trees is protected under the TPO, including their roots. Whereby, should any ground preparation works be needed to achieve a flat level surface, this action has the capacity to result in surface root severance, which could be deemed as willful damage and would thus represent an offence under the TPO.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: N/A

NAME:	Andy Bush Arboricultural Officer
DEPARTMENT:	Strategic Planning (Specialist Team)
DATE:	31/07/25