



Horsham District Council
Parkside
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

Our ref: 19169
Date: 30 June 2026

For the attention of: Sam Nye

Application ref: DC/26/0737
Location: Land East of Woodfalls Manor, Loxwood Road, Rudgwick, West Sussex
Proposal/Description: Permission in Principle for the erection of a minimum of 6 and maximum of 9 dwellings.

Thank you for consulting with Place Services on the above application. This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

Summary

Not supportive on landscape grounds	☒
No landscape objection, subject to attached recommendations and/or conditions	☐
Further information required prior to determination	☐
No landscape comments / does not wish to comment	☐

This review is based on a desktop study of the above-referenced application and its submitted documents. Our Landscape comments are as follows:

1.0. Site Context

- 1.1. The site is situated on the northern side of Loxwood Road, southwest of Rudgwick and comprises a parcel of grassland, the site is bound by mature vegetation along the southern and western boundaries; of which, the southern boundary along Loxwood Road is subject to a Tree Preservation Order. Close board fencing of residential properties defines the eastern boundary; the northern boundary is open to the wider field parcel.
- 1.2. Public Rights of Way (PRoW) footpath RUD-1384-3 is located to the west on the western boundary of the neighbouring property; this extends north from Loxwood Road and joins footpath RUD-1384 which follow east-west orientation broadly parallel with the site boundary.



2.0. Planning Policy Context

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015)

- 2.1. The following policies are considered relevant to this application: Policy 23: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation; Policy 24: Environmental Protection, Policy 25: District Character and the Natural Environment, Policy 26: Countryside Protection and Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity.

Rudgwick Neighbourhood Development Plan (RNDP) (2021)

- 2.2. The Neighbourhood plan objectives include *“To ensure that future development is consistent with the largely rural character of the Parish”* and *“To promote good design that is consistent with the character and heritage of the Parish”*.
- 2.3. Policy RNP1.2 states that: *“All development, regardless of its location or whether it is allocated for development, should be designed to: a) maintain the settlement pattern in the parish and avoid the coalescence of the individual settlements. b) avoid the diminution of a settlement’s individual identity and actively respond to its built pattern.”*
- 2.4. Policy RNP8.2 states that: *“Irrespective of their location, the scale and massing of new developments should respect the character and appearance of the surrounding built and natural environment.”*

3.0. Review of the proposal/submitted information

Location, Land Use and Amount of Development

- 3.1. The site is located outside the built-up area boundary (BUAB), as identified within Fig 2 of the submitted Planning Statement (dated April 2026) and contributes towards the rural verdant character of Loxwood Road.
- 3.2. Views from Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are likely to be limited owed to the presence of boundary vegetation and vegetated nature of footpath RUD-1384. However, we expect a comprehensive Landscape and Visual Appraisal is undertaken to assess visual impact as well as landscape. The requirement for detailed assessment is noted within para 6.41 of the Planning Statement.
- 3.3. Although the site itself is not identified within the Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment (April 2014), Area RW5 covers field parcels to the immediate southeast across Loxwood Road. The study notes the “attractive rural character of the area and its contribution in some sections to settlement setting”. The site is likely to share these characteristics, with a similar rural quality and role in relation to the settlement edge. Spatially, the site does contribute to maintaining a gap in development on the northside of Loxwood Road. Development would erode this gap and further reinforce the ribbon form settlement described in para 6.33 of the Planning Statement.

- 3.4. The site is currently an open grassland field with trees along the road frontage that contribute to the rural character of Loxwood Road, as well as to the experience of recreational users of the PRow.
- 3.5. The site is located within Landscape Character Area (LCA) I1: Rowhook and Rudgwick Wooded Ridge of the Horsham Landscape Character Assessment and LCA LW4: Low Weald Hills of the West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment. LCA I1 is described as:

This area has a very strong structure of large woodlands, hedgerows and shaws, which wrap over the undulating ridges of Weald Clay. The pasture fields are sometimes entirely enclosed by woodland and shaws with very sinuous boundaries. Other areas are hedged with standard oak trees. Much of the landscape has a parkland and estate farmland character. There is a general lack of settlement, apart from a few ridgetop villages and hamlets linked by narrow lanes. These have a local mix of traditional building materials, half timber and brick and tile.

The overall sensitivity is considered high and cumulative impact of small-scale change is identified as a key sensitivity.

- 3.6. We consider the site possesses features of the key characteristics of LCA LW4 including “Mostly rural character with intricate patchwork of small to medium size pasture fields with a combination of sinuous and straight boundaries. Larger, more open, field patterns in the east.” The current land use of small pasture is considered a sensitive characteristic of the site and its contribution towards the rural character of Loxwood Road is considered valuable.
- 3.7. The application is for up to 9 dwellings on the site. The Coloured Sketch Site Layout (dwg. 25022 / SK03) provides an illustrative layout for 7 dwellings where the proposed access off Loxwood Road would require the removal of several existing trees along the frontage. While such removal may be acceptable in arboricultural terms, we have concerns regarding the resulting effect on the verdant rural character of Loxwood Road. Furthermore, the illustrative layout has not allowed for any communal amenity space and has the potential to introduce pressure on the vegetated boundaries where rear gardens face onto them. This raises concerns regarding the potential for boundary degradation over time.
- 3.8. The Coloured Sketch Site Layout (dwg. 25022 / SK03) provides an illustrative layout for 7 dwellings, we have reservations as to whether the site could accommodate up to 9 dwellings as being sought for, without giving rise to adverse effects on its landscape structure and character.

4.0. Summary

- 4.1. Overall, the site is considered to possess valuable characteristics which contribute towards the rural verdant character of Loxwood Road and small rural pastures which are characteristic of LCA LW4 and I1. The site also contributes to a gap in development along the northern side of Loxwood Road, which helps to interrupt the ribbon settlement pattern. We therefore have reservations as to whether the site could be developed without giving rise to adverse effects on its landscape structure and character.

5.0. Recommended Submission Documents

- 5.1. Should an application be forthcoming, it should demonstrate that the proposals have regards to landscape and visual sensitivities of the site location. From a landscape perspective, the number of dwellings should be limited to 7 dwelling maximum.
- 5.2. We expect the following documents are submitted as a minimum:
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal
 - Tree survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement
 - Landscape Strategy

Please contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Place Services – Landscape Team

Email: landscape@essex.gov.uk



Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of Horsham District Council.

Please note:

This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.

We are unable to respond directly to applicants/agents or other interested parties. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant/agent or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer at the relevant LPA, who will seek further advice from us where appropriate.