HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Land to the South of Station Road Warnham
DESCRIPTION:	Erection of 8nos bungalows with associated parking and landscaping utilising the permitted access off Station Road
REFERENCE:	DC/26/1595
RECOMMENDATION:	Holding objection- The proposed access requires significant amendments to address arboricultural concerns. Should a more suitable access arrangement be achieved, the concerns raised are likely to be resolved.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), which provides a reasonable assessment of the site's tree resource in terms of condition, quality and retention value.

The proposal would require the removal of T2a (Category U), T9 (Category C1), G1 and sections of roadside vegetation to facilitate the proposed access. These losses are not, in themselves, considered significant. However, the principal arboricultural constraints are the mature roadside trees, including T1, T3 and T6, which make an important contribution to the character and amenity of Station Road.

The main arboricultural concern relates to the proposed access. Construction of the access would require substantial engineering works within a constrained section of frontage occupied by T1, T2 and T3. It has not been demonstrated that the access can be constructed without unacceptable impacts on these retained trees and their Root Protection Areas (RPAs).

Whilst an alternative access position further east would likely require the removal of T5, the resultant arboricultural harm would be substantially less than that arising from the current proposal.

MAIN COMMENTS:

Tree Removal Observations

The proposed tree removals comprise T2a (Category U), T9 (Category C1), G1 and sections of roadside boundary vegetation associated with the proposed access. These removals do not give rise to significant arboricultural concerns.

Site Layout observations

The mature roadside trees, particularly T1 T2, and T3, are correctly identified within the AIA as high-quality landscape features and are important to the character of the site frontage.

The indicative layout appears broadly acceptable from an arboricultural perspective. Development is focused within the centre of the site, allowing the majority of the boundary tree cover to be retained. Given the size of the proposed rear gardens and the generally modest stature of the retained boundary trees, future pressure for pruning or removal is likely to be limited.

Nevertheless, consideration should be given to reducing garden depths slightly and retaining boundary trees within a managed landscape buffer to provide greater long-term protection for the retained tree around the site boundaries.

The principal issue with the site layout as proposed is the location of the access. The site visit confirmed that the access would pass through the section of frontage containing some of the site's most significant trees, namely T1, T2 and T3. Based on the information submitted, it is difficult to see how the access could be constructed without substantial encroachment into their Root Protection Areas (RPAs) and thereby adhering to the core principals of BS587.

The submitted AIA identifies the access as the principal point of interaction between the development and the retained trees. Whilst the proposed removals are limited, the access would require excavation, grading, drainage infrastructure, visibility splays and hard surfacing within a constrained frontage heavily influenced by the RPAs of the retained trees. These works, rather than the direct tree removals, represent the primary arboricultural concern and are likely to result in unacceptable harm to the retained roadside tree group.

A more appropriate solution may be to relocate the access further east. Whilst this would likely require the removal of T5, the loss of a single field maple would result in substantially less arboricultural and landscape harm than the impacts likely to arise from the current access position.

Accesses Reliance Previous Prior Approval DC/20/1812

The previous prior approval for the or the creation of the new filed access for agricultural or forestry use, approved under DC/20/1812, is acknowledged, as this seems to be the main justification for the assess arrangements as proposed.

However, based on the information available, including site observations, there is no evidence to demonstrate that the approved development has been implemented within the required timeframe. The prior approval was issued on 16 February 2021 and, pursuant to Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A, Paragraph A.2(2)(d)(vi) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, the development was required to have started/implemented within five years of that date, namely by 16 February 2026.

Whilst some limited vegetation clearance appears to have taken place within the proposed access location, mostly bramble removal, there is no clear evidence that a material operation sufficient to implement the approved development, such as the construction of the vehicle crossover or associated highway works, have been undertaken before the expiry of the permission.

As such, given the absence of evidence confirming implementation of the scheme approved under DC/20/1812, only limited weight should be afforded to the previously approved access arrangements at the site.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: None at this stage

NAME:	Andy Bush Arboricultural officer (Planning)
DEPARTMENT:	STRATEGIC PLANNING - SPECIALISTS
DATE:	23/11/26