HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Land North of Shermanbury Road Shermanbury Road Partridge Green West Sussex
DESCRIPTION:	Outline Application for the demolition of existing buildings and structures and the erection of up to 75 dwellings with public open space and vehicular access point from Shermanbury Road with all matters reserved except access.
REFERENCE:	DC/26/1318
RECOMMENDATION:	More information

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The metric currently demonstrates that the development will have a +2.85% net gain (+1.05 units) in area habitats and a +94.43% net gain (+1.46 units) in hedgerows. Comments regarding the baseline assessment need to be addressed prior to grant of planning permission. Several post-development comments pertaining to trees, habitat classifications and layout will require action at Reserved Matters. A draft HMMP has not been provided as per the HDC local validation requirement, however given this application is outline only, the information submitted to date pertaining to the post-development habitat targets is considered sufficient at this stage.

MAIN COMMENTS:

The comments below pertain primarily to the Biodiversity Net Gain proposal as submitted in the above application. However, it should be noted that these comments are not exhaustive. All other ecology matters will be reviewed by Place Services and NatureSpace, where necessary.

The metric calculation tool submitted currently demonstrates that the development will have a +2.85% net gain (+1.05 units) in area habitats and a +94.43% net gain (+1.46 units) in hedgerows. In accordance with HDCs significant on-site criteria, the proposed on-site BNG is considered significant and therefore a legal agreement to secure the delivery will be required. Monitoring reports will need to be submitted to HDC typically in years 1,2,5,10,15,20,25 and 30, and an upfront monitoring fee will need to be paid. However, please note the below comments may result in modifications that will alter the final BNG calculated figures.

<u>Baseline</u>

1.0 One entry of mixed scrub in the metric has been assigned poor condition, however the condition assessment tables in Appendix B do not show any parcels achieving this condition (with 2 or fewer passes). Please can this be further clarified.

1.1 It is noted that Section 5.13 of the Ecological Appraisal (FPCR, 2026) identifies that the tree lines comprised mature pedunculate oaks, which is agreed. Please can further detail be provided as to why these were not therefore classified as ecologically valuable line of trees, as per the UKHab classification.

Post-development

2.0 It is understood that tree T2 (T36 in the Arboricultural Assessment, FPCR 2026) will be lost to the development. However, no trees have been accounted for as lost in the metric. Please can this be amended.

2.1 It is understood that T1 (T35 in Arboricultural Assessment) is to be retained, however a nearby building will be demolished and unsealed surface removed around the veteran tree. Therefore, it is advised to seek the HDC Arboricultural Officer's comment on the proposed working methods to undertake this, to ensure there will be no deterioration to the veteran tree.

2.2 It is noted that a pathway comprising sealed surface is proposed to the north of the main residential footprint leading to the proposed LEAP/LAP. Please ensure these are not within the very large tree RPAs, and if this is unavoidable, it is advised to consult the HDC Arboricultural Officer on working methods and any impacts. Certainty of retention in their current conditions needs to be ascertained for BNG purposes prior to discharging the deemed biodiversity gain condition.

2.3 It is advised to provide an area of open space for informal play and kickabout which should be designated as modified grassland, to reduce disturbance on the proposed other neutral grassland areas to ensure they meet their targeted condition.

2.3 Please detail whether mown paths will be incorporated into the north of the site.

2.4 It is advised to respect the rooting volume for the proposed tree species to be planted, considering the scaling up with mature size. This will inform species selection for the more clumped tree areas. The impact of shading on other neutral grassland from the number of trees and species proposed may also need to be considered to ensure that the grassland meets the desired condition.

2.5 It is strongly advised to incorporate a management strip between boundary vegetation and the main residential footprint, and any gardens that back onto boundary vegetation should have a vegetated buffer between the edge of the curtilage and boundary vegetation to minimise the impact of artificial lighting.

HMMP

3.0 A draft HMMP as not been provided as per HDCs local validation requirements. However, the target condition criteria for the proposed habitats have been provided, and thus it is considered that as this is an Outline application, this is sufficient at this stage. A full and final HMMP will be required to discharge the S106 obligation. It is advised to consult Natural England's HMMP template, companion document, and checklist, for expected content.

3.1 It is recommended that species composition of individual trees, hedgerow and scrub are selected by their contribution towards the local wildlife identified to be, or likely to be, utilising the site. For example, it is understood that the site has wintering bird

interest, including redwing and fieldfare, as well as brown hairstreak. Therefore, shrub species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, rowan, holly, dog/field rose and dogwood should be incorporated into planting plans (further botanical species may be added depending on the findings of ongoing faunal species surveys). It is recommended that habitats comprising these species, such as scrub and hedgerows, are pruned on a rotational basis and/or in February, to ensure fruiting overwinter. It is also recommended to incorporate other species for seasonal interest, such as crab apple, field maple, wild cherry, guelder rose and silver birch. Individual trees to be planted near boundary vegetation and in the north section should comprise of native and archaeophyte species only, with non-native and ornamental species limited to the main residential footprint.
ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: If minded to approve: Scenario 3: BNG Required + Irreplaceable Habitat

NAME:	Linsey King Ecology Officer (Planning)
DEPARTMENT:	Strategic Planning - Specialists
DATE:	23/11/2026