HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Land South of The Mount Farm The Mount Ifield
DESCRIPTION:	Erection of agricultural barn and sand school.
REFERENCE:	DC/25/0172
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice Modification
2nd Comments in Red	Advice

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The main consideration as to the suitability of the development proposal at the site with regards to trees it the location of the sand school and the new barn, and the 7 x Ash indicated for removal.

MAIN COMMENTS:

The site is bordered to the south by a young woodland. Aerial images from 2007 show a cluster of trees, and by 2018, the area had the appearance of what would generally be considered to be a woodland.

Due to the location of the barn and the sand school being placed right up to the boundary of the site, both of the new structures will be located partly within the Root Protection Area (RPA) of the trees on the northern edge of the woodland. In addition, the location of the structures doesn't appropriately consider the future growth of the trees in the area, and there will likely be future issues with crown encroachment over the sand school and barn.

I recommend that consideration is given to moving the sand school 3m to the north, away from the site boundary and moving the barn 3m to the west and 3m to the north away from the site boundaries; this would likely address the issues of development falling within the RPA and would allow for a suitable distance between the adjacent trees and the new structures. Some ground protection would also be needed to ensure that the soft ground area with the RPAs of the woodland trees is not heavily compacted during the construction phase of the development.

Regarding the 7 x Ash indicated for removal, while it is accepted that the identification of ***Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*** Ash dieback (ADB) during the autumn/winter months can prove troublesome, due to seasonal leaf drop. However, except for two of the trees for the most part they appeared to be in fair health with good bud density and there were no significant signs of excessive dead wood and tip die back consistent with ADB infected trees, and I would say it was a bit premature to remove all 7 of the trees at this stage. However, despite their fair size, in my opinion, this group of trees only makes a small contribution to the area's visual amenity value, this is because they are not visible from any nearby public rights of way, and due to the additional mature tree coverage in the area. Whereby If they were felled, the loss would not be particularly noticeable and there would be no significant loss or impact on the wider landscape. Therefore, subject to appropriate replacement I would not have any significant concerns with their removal.

Following the to the submission of the new site plan drawing, I am satisfied with the amended location of the sand school and new barn.Subject to some tree protection fencing being placed between the areas of development and the neighbouring trees; please determine as you see fit.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: Yes bespoke

Pre-Commencement Condition: No development shall commence, including ground clearance, or bringing equipment, machinery or materials onto the site, until the following preliminaries have been completed in the sequence set out below:

- The off-site woodland trees to the south of the sand school and to the west of agricultural barn whose root protection areas ingress into the site, shall be fully protected throughout all construction works by tree protective fencing affixed to the ground. The fencing shall be erected within 2m of the woodland edge, and those adjacent to the southeast corner, adjacent to the areas of proposed development.

- Once installed, the fencing shall be maintained during the course of the development works and until all machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site.

- Areas so fenced off shall be treated as zones of prohibited access, and shall not be used for the storage of materials, equipment or machinery in any circumstances. No mixing of cement, concrete, or use of other materials or substances shall take place within any tree protective zone, or close enough to such a zone that seepage or displacement of those materials and substances could cause them to enter a zone.

Reasons: As this matter is fundamental to ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees and hedgerows on the site in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

NAME:	Andy Bush Arboricultural Officer
DEPARTMENT:	Strategic Planning (Specialist Team)
DATE:	1st 19/03/25 2nd 31/03/25