



## HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

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| <b>TO:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Horsham District Council – Planning Dept                                                                                                          |
| <b>LOCATION:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Cedar Cottage Sandygate Lane Lower Beeding West Sussex                                                                                            |
| <b>DESCRIPTION:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 24no. dwellings including the creation of a new access from Sandygate Lane with associated works. |
| <b>REFERENCE:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | DC/26/0640                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Holding objection / Modification                                                                                                                  |
| <b>SUMMARY OF COMMENTS &amp; RECOMMENDATION:</b> <p>The metric calculation tool currently demonstrates that the development will have a - 49.62% net loss (-1.39 units) in area habitats. However, there are concerns pertaining to the baseline assessment that need addressing, and further comments are raised regarding the relationship between the layout and the boundary vegetation, and scope for further habitat creation and enhancement on-site in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>MAIN COMMENTS:</b> <p>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.</p> <p>The metric calculation tool submitted currently demonstrates that the development will have a -49.62% net loss (-1.39 units) in area habitats. As there is no net gain on-site, <b>this cannot be considered as significant on-site BNG and therefore a legal agreement to secure on-site proposals is not required.</b> However, there are current concerns with the baseline assessment, and there is scope for further on-site delivery in accordance with the biodiversity gain hierarchy, which are likely to alter the final BNG calculation figures – please see the comments below for further detail.</p> <p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>1.0 6x individual trees in the garden have not been recorded at baseline within the metric as per the metric user guide (see Appendix 1 Baseline Habitat Plan within the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, Arbtech 2026). Further justification is therefore requested for their omission (please see page 60 of the statutory biodiversity metric user guide on recording medium+ size class trees within private gardens, and the Tree Schedule within Arboricultural Implications Report, SJA Trees 2026).</p> |                                                                                                                                                   |

1.1 It is noted that no boundary vegetation is included within the BNG assessment. Confirmation is requested on whether any of the boundary vegetation (hedgerows, trees etc.) are within the applicant's ownership.

#### Post-development

2.0 As it stands, the layout results in many of the residential gardens backing on to the boundary vegetation and being located within multiple tree RPAs (see the Tree Protection Plan, drawing no. SJA TPP 25319-041 within the Arboricultural Implications Report, SJA Trees 2026). The certainty of retention in their current condition cannot be guaranteed. It is therefore advised to seek comment from the HDC Arboricultural Officer regarding their retention. There is also the likely additional impact of increased artificial illumination of the boundary vegetation from garden lighting and light spill from dwellings. As such, it is requested that the layout be modified to respect the boundary tree RPAs (including a min. 1.5m buffer from hedgerows) and further planting along the boundary is implemented to mitigate impacts of artificial lighting (alongside those listed in Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Survey Report, Arbtech 2026).

2.1 Further enhancements on-site in accordance with the recommendations within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment (Arbtech, 2025) are requested. This includes grassland enhancement and wildflower planting which will benefit the local invertebrate assemblage, and creation of native scrub which will benefit multiple protected and priority species. This is in greater accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy and will provide for locally recorded species. Creation of ecotones from the boundary vegetation (i.e., from hedgerow/woodland to scrub to grassland) will provide a great benefit to biodiversity. This would be complementary to the proposed layout amendment advised in point 2.0. The retention/creation of an area of modified grassland for recreational use is supported.

2.2 It is noted that the Indicative Landscape Plan (OSP Architecture, 2026) and the BNG Post-Development Habitat Plan (Appendix 2 in the BNG Assessment, Arbtech 2026) do not match regarding their habitat creation and enhancement proposals. Please can these be updated so that they are consistent with each other.

#### Strategic significance

3.0 The south of the site partially falls within the Wilder Horsham District Nature Recovery Network, and therefore all habitats with a biodiversity value greater than zero at baseline and post-intervention within the southern portion of the site should be assigned as having a medium strategic significance as per HDC guidance which can be found on the HDC BNG webpage. However, please note that the West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy is due for publication in Summer 2026, and therefore strategic significance associated with the LNRS will supersede HDC guidance. The LNRS strategic significance will apply to all applications which have not yet had their deemed biodiversity gain pre-commencement condition discharged, and thus it is advised to refer to the West Sussex LNRS website prior to submission of the Biodiversity Gain Plan.

#### HMMP

4.0 No draft HMMP has been provided, however as the on-site enhancements are not considered significant and currently propose easily achievable habitats, a full HMMP has been requested to be secured by condition. It is advised to review Natural England's HMMP checklist, template and companion document for advised content. The planting palette and their composition within habitats will be required in the HMMP, with the expectation that some of the plants selected provide for the protected species groups identified in the PEA (Arbtech, 2025) and are of native and local provenance.

**ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:**

If minded to approve:

*Informative*

Scenario 1: BNG Required

*Condition***Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP)****Pre-Commencement Condition:**

The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:

- (a) a non-technical summary;
- (b) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan, together with a timetable for its provision;
- (c) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan from the completion of development; and
- (d) management responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP

has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

The created and/or enhanced habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP. Any proposed or retained planting, which within a period of 5 years after the completion of development, dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

**Reason:** To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

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| <b>NAME:</b>       | Linsey King<br>Ecology Officer (Planning) |
| <b>DEPARTMENT:</b> | Strategic Planning - Specialists          |
| <b>DATE:</b>       | 29/05/2026                                |