



HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Hillybarn Farmhouse The Mount Ifield RH11 0LF
DESCRIPTION:	Creation of a two pitch settled gypsy accommodation site
REFERENCE:	DC/25/1901
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION: No concerns are raised regarding the principle of the proposed development subject to securing advance planting and landscape conditions. Please see detailed comments below.	
MAIN COMMENTS: 1. Proposals are unchanged from previously submitted under DC/20/1993, in part refused on landscape grounds. 2. Notwithstanding, we note within the dismissed appeal under DC/20/1993 that the inspector deemed that the development, <i>'would not unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area'</i>. However, this was subject to consideration of planting to <i>'add to the landscape value of the site'</i>, highlighting the following in particular: a. <i>'additional planting to the front of the site... would help reinforce the vegetated nature of the lane... would reduce its visual impact from the road'</i> b. <i>'The site would also be seen from a public footpath and adjacent fields to the rear... the provision of planting would help soften the visual impact of the new rear and side boundaries'</i> 3. Given the high degree of visibility afforded to the site in combination with the pastoral nature of the area, we concur that planting would help mitigate adverse visual effects and thus advance planting is expected to be provided to the eastern (rear) boundary and western boundary adjacent to Hillybarn Rd. Further planting is recommended to be secured via a landscape condition. <u>Considerations</u> 4. Detailed proposals should adhere to the planning and land management guidelines of the Local Landscape Character area (LCA) as defined by the Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment (2003). The site falls within K1 Upper Mole Farmlands LCA and as such, proposals should: a. Conserve the mostly rural character of the area. b. Conserve historic lanes with their ancient oaks and unimproved roadside verges.	

- c. Restore species-rich grassland and meadows.
 - d. Conserve and strengthen existing hedgerows.
5. Expansion of horse paddocks is a key sensitivity of the LCA, thus we would advise against any further future expansion.
 6. In order to mitigate adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity, and to comply with HDPF Policies 25, 26, 31 and 33 (6), existing vegetation must be protected, conserved and enhanced. As such, existing mature trees must be safeguarded by avoiding development within their root protection areas (RPAs) and detailed proposals must demonstrate compliance with BS 5837:2012 5.3.1.
 7. Hedgerow and shrub planting must therefore avoid the RPA of the mature tree belt alongside Hillybarn Rd in order avoid unnecessary disturbance and competition with existing roots.
 8. We note that the RPAs are highly likely to be concentrated within the existing paddock as a result of the ditch and the hard surfacing of the road to the west. Therefore, if planting within RPAs cannot be reasonably avoided, new plants must be 60-90cm whips or in pots smaller than 3lt, notch planted and locally adjusted to avoid tree roots. All planting should be undertaken by hand and using hand tools to ensure minimal to no root damage, leaving significant roots untouched and dug around.
 9. Close board fencing is not advised in this location and would also have an eroding effect on the rural landscape character. Boundary treatments are thus recommended to solely reflect hedgerow with post and rail or stock fencing if required.
 10. Given the rural location, the planting palette should reflect the K1 LCA. Please refer to the [HDC Landscape Character Planting Guide](#) (pages 7-8 for K1) for suitable species, noting that *Prunus laurocerasus* (Cherry laurel) is not supported in this location due to its invasiveness and urbanising appearance incongruous with the setting.
 11. Plants should be sourced from seed or stock from the Region of Provenance 40 in order to ensure resilience and therefore successful establishment. Where this is not possible, plants must be grown and sourced in the UK at minimum due to the countryside location and therefore greater risk in regard to biotic threats.
 12. Mature treelines are likely to deteriorate and can result in loss due to increasing levels of light pollution, therefore light spill must be considered sensitively so as not to cause potential adverse effects. Further, given the intrinsically rural setting, outside lighting should be restricted or absent in order to avoid light intrusion. If external lighting cannot be reasonably avoided, based on guidance from SDNP Dark Skies Technical Advice Note Version 2 and The Bat Conservation Trust guidance note 08/23, we recommend the following to mitigate adverse landscape effects in regard to external lighting in a countryside location:
 - a. 3000Kelvin or warmer
 - b. 500 Lumens or below
 - c. Where appropriate, use of motion/proximity sensors and set to as short a possible a timer as a risk assessment will allow. For most purposes, a 1 or 2 minute timer is appropriate.
 - d. Horizontally mounted luminaires with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.
 13. Hard surfacing materials should be both permeable and sympathetic to the rural surrounds.
 14. We expect a plan detailing existing and proposed services above and below ground, such as drainage, power, communications cables and pipelines, to demonstrate the proposals do not conflict with existing and proposed landscape features.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

Advanced Planting

Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition: No development above slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until areas of mitigation vegetation suitable for advance planting are identified, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning

Authority. These are likely to include enhancement planting along existing boundaries and along existing landscape features within the site. Confirmation of the delivery of these landscape works shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure identified adverse visual effects are satisfactorily mitigated, including during construction, and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Hard and Soft Landscape Scheme

Pre-Occupation Condition: Prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted, full details of all hard and soft landscaping works shall have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include plans and measures addressing the following:

- Details of all existing trees and planting to be retained and removed
- Planting and seeding plans, including a schedule specifying plant numbers, sizes, densities and species in Latin names
- Hard and soft written specifications (NBS compliant) including ground preparation, cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment
- Details of all hard surfacing materials and finishes, including layout, colour, size, texture, coursing and levels
- Details of all boundary treatments
- Details of minor artefacts and structures – such as bin stores and cycle stores – including location, size, colour and specification
- Proposed and existing services above and below ground, indicated in plan and coordinated with the landscape proposals – such as drainage, power, communications cables and pipelines – including lines, manholes, supports and other technical features
- Details of all external lighting

The approved landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details within the first planting season following the first occupation of any part of the development. Unless otherwise agreed as part of the approved landscaping, no trees or hedges on the site shall be wilfully damaged or uprooted, felled/removed, topped or lopped without the previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority until 5 years after completion of the development. Any proposed planting, which within a period of 5 years, 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 a satisfactory development that is sympathetic to the landscape and townscape character and built form of the surroundings, and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

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DATE:	26/02/2026
SIGNED OFF BY:	Inês Watson CMLI Specialists Team Leader (Landscape Architect)
DATE:	02/03/2026