HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	RM Area 11 (Moathouse) Moathouse Farm Rusper Road Horsham
DESCRIPTION:	Application for approval of Reserved Matters (layout, scale, appearance, means of internal access and landscaping) pursuant to Condition 5 of Outline Planning Permission reference DC/16/1677 for RM Area 11 comprising demolition of existing garage and outbuilding and provision of 11 residential (C3) units, including single storey side extension to existing dwelling and conversion into 2 residential units and car and cycle parking, drainage, internal roads, landscaping and associated infrastructure.
REFERENCE:	DC/26/1323
RECOMMENDATION:	Holding Objection / Modification

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The justification for the loss of the proposed community use is not considered fully substantiated. In particular, it is disagreed that the use would compete with the neighbouring Community Centre rather than complement it, as previously envisaged. It is also unclear how the proposals maximise 'linkages between the application site and surrounding area' or 'provide opportunities for walking and cycling', as required by the Design Principles in Section 5.1 of the DAS.

In any case, should the principle of residential use be found acceptable, it is deemed that proposals are not in keeping with the historic use of the house and moated site. The dense layout, excess of built form and contemporary planting palette in proximity to the historic farmhouse is not considered to be sensitive to its countryside setting.

Please see details below.

MAIN COMMENTS:

Context

1. The RM11 Area sits within the 'Local Centre' as identified under the S106 (Plan 15). As per the Open Space and Recreation Strategy (Design and Landscape Strategy (DLS) approved under DISC/20/0179), its purpose is to provide a *distinctive and vibrant community focus* in proximity to the village centre and *an opportunity for the provision of a new community facility*.
2. It is highlighted as a Key Destination within the Movement Strategy, described as *a key link in the connection of green spaces to the east and the west*.
3. It goes on to state that the existing moat should be, '*retained and enhanced with potential for the provision of two new pedestrian links to adjacent public spaces'*.
4. While cognisant that the Moathouse itself has been delisted due to the loss of surrounding agricultural land, it remains a non-designated heritage asset, thus its landscape setting must be considered sensitively.

Principle & Use

5. The provision of 11no. dwellings is not considered to fit the description of a strategic destination in the Local Centre of Phase 1 and proposals do not provide a new community facility. Given that it was approved in tandem with the Community Centre, is not concurred with that community provision would compete with the Community Centre to the east, but rather compliment it as a key portion of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy.
6. It is also disagreed that the proposed residential use has a more limited impact on its landscape setting than consented plans. The latter, while illustrative in nature, suggested minimal built form, conserving its countryside setting, typical of its historic landscape character.
7. Proposals are not considered to follow the approved Principles of The Moathouse (DLS). Consideration of community use notwithstanding, these included but were not limited to:
    a. *Propose design responses to the site which respect the heritage and age of the property*

    The scale of the buildings are not considered to create subservience, and the Moathouse is no longer the focal building. This is on account of the proposed layout and density, which extends too far north of T250, encroaching on the open setting of the historic farmhouse.



1830s-1880s 1888-1915 1949-1975

    See details on landscape proposals under point 11.

    b. *Create clear links to adjacent public spaces*

    Pedestrian access is available from the south, albeit in the context of the road as opposed to being a dedicated pedestrian link. The second, northern link has been removed, isolating the area further. This is disappointing not least in reducing the area's permeability but also in removing the bridge, which is considered to be an opportunity for interaction with landscape setting.

Actions

8. Proposals must adhere to the principles set out within the DLS and as such:
    a. The bridge must be replaced, providing a secondary pedestrian link to the north.
    b. Further consideration should be made to the southern link to better define pedestrian connectivity, as per the Design and Access Statement (DAS). This could include a continuation of hedgerow along the footpath or attractive tree and shrub planting. Please amend
9. If the principle of residential use is considered acceptable, a reduction of dwellings and amendments to layout are recommended in order to retain The Moathouse building as the focal point and key landmark of RM11 in combination with greater provision of its associated undeveloped, open space. This could be achieved by:
    a. Removing built form in the northern parcel of the scheme (plots 3, 4, & 11) as per the historic layout.
    b. Altering the footprint of plots 5-9.
10. Concerns raised by HDC Arboriculture are echoed in full. Given the undeveloped nature of the site:
    a. The layout should be amended to avoid development within RPAs and justification provided where this is unavoidable.

b. The layout should be amended to avoid undesirable relationships between proposed dwellings and existing, mature trees, including where RPAs comprise a substantial portion of private gardens.

c. Drainage runs should be adjusted to avoid the RPA of T250, given the above in combination with the limited rooting medium available. The retention of T250 must be demonstrated.



[LEFT] Drainage Layout, [MIDDLE] TPP, [RIGHT] Satellite Imagery

Detailed Landscape Proposals – can be secured via condition

11. The DAS states that the selection of plants considers the local context and species found locally. However, the palette is deemed to be suburban in nature; Betula Utilis var. Jacquemontii and Lonicera nitida, for example, are typical of contemporary design as opposed to species that reflect the existing landscape character. Nonetheless, particular species to reflect the landscape context can be secured via condition.
12. Please ensure all light fittings are specified as 2700K. This can be secured via condition.
13. Uplighters are specified, however do not appear in plan. These create unnecessary light spill, thus should be removed from the scheme. This can be secured via condition.
14. As previously discussed, it is strongly recommended that chemical fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides including glyphosate are not to be applied at any time, except for Schedule 9 species. The Landscape Specification is expected to be amended, however this can be secured via condition.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

If you're minded to recommend the application for approval without the concerns addressed above please get in touch as specific conditions will be required.

NAME:	Elly Hazael Trainee Landscape Architect (Planning)
DEPARTMENT:	Specialists Team - Strategic Planning
DATE:	12/10/2026
SIGNED OFF BY:	Inês Watson CMLI Specialists Team Leader (Landscape Architect)
DATE:	15/10/2026