



HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Land North of West Wantley Barn, Fryern Road, Storrington
DESCRIPTION:	Conversion, change of use and alterations and extensions to existing building to form 1no. detached self-build dwelling and associated works
REFERENCE:	DC-26-0357
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice / Objection / Withdrawal / Refusal
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:	
The proposed development is partially within the minimum buffer that is required around an area of designated Ancient Woodland (AW). I recommend that the application be withdrawn or substantively amended so that if acceptable in other planning terms the siting of new habitable buildings and associated habitable curtilage respect the minimum national requirements in this respect. Otherwise I recommend refusal on basis of foreseeable indirect impacts on the AW resource from intensification of residential development close to its boundaries.	
MAIN COMMENTS:	
The agricultural access land to the East of the proposed development site is bounded by a tributary of the river Stor that branches off via various ponds as it heads South to Water Lane where it becomes partially culverted beneath the roads within the urban area of Storrington. The watercourse forms the Western boundary of a section of Ancient Woodland (AW) of approximately 0.7Ha in size that along with a similar sized parcel of woodland bordering the stream to the South East is all that remains of the former wider woodland. Landscape connectivity to other woodland and naturalised landscape features within the rural setting are good. The species present are typical of the native woodlands remaining within the local landscape with oak predominating over coppiced hazel with associated understorey that includes wild garlic and bluebells prominently visible in the springtime.	

There are currently some introduced alien species, Dutch daffodil bulbs were observed (typical of nearby residential input) and the invasive Asian bamboo planted around the now ornamental lake of West Wantley House threatens its Southern boundary.

The proposed development is a change of use within the minimum recommended buffer to native AW, of 15m. The proposal is therefore in conflict with the NPPF and its ethos of protecting this irreplaceable landscape resource from intensification of residential development around it.

The impact of foreseeable residential and recreational pressures associated with intensification of development near AW has been afforded increased weight within development planning over the past two decades. There is no overriding justification/wholly exceptional circumstance for the minimum buffer requirement to be waived where either permitted development rights or prior approval for agricultural building conversions have been achieved. These approaches to planning do not include appropriate assessment of biodiversity impacts associated with full plans applications.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

N/A

NAME:	ANDY CLOUT – ASST. ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER
DEPARTMENT:	STRATEGIC PLANNING - SPECIALISTS
DATE:	01/04/26