



HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	St Johns Farm, Trout Lane, Brooks Green
DESCRIPTION:	Demolition of existing buildings. Erection of 4no dwelling houses with associated parking and landscaping
REFERENCE:	DC-26-0703
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice / Objection / Withdrawal/Refusal
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:	
The proposed change of use and new development is partially within the minimum recommended buffer to the immediately adjacent "Madgeland Wood". The woodland is designated as Ancient Woodland (AW) and thus recognised as an irreplaceable landscape resource requiring planning/design of all new development to conserve and enhance the habitat it provides. The provision of new habitable dwellings in very close proximity to the woodland edge, with associated amenity areas within the minimum recommended buffer zone (15m) to the woodland edge, is contrary to local and national planning policy recommendations for design of new development. If the site is to be re-developed for habitable purpose a scheme of landscape conservation/enhancement that accompanies a design/layout that respects the minimum buffer requirements of the AW constraint should accompany any revised submission.	
MAIN COMMENTS:	
The landscape setting of the site is dominated by the presence of the remainder of the Low Weald woodland that wraps around the Northern and Western edges of the property. "Madgelend" Ancient Wood is a block of remnant woodland of circa 14.5Ha in area. It has relatively good hedgerow/landscape connectivity to other longstanding woodland in the area. The larger "Marlpot" Ancient Woodland, located 400m to the East, provides continuous lateral woodland habitat right upto the edge of the current Southwater settlement boundary circa 2.25km East from the subject site. This is a relatively large and very significant continuously wooded area.	

The woodland has a variety of habitats with predominant indigenous oak over hazel understorey, combined with some introduced softwood forestry species. Woodland edge species include the locally synonymous Wild Service trees, indicators of longstanding woodland/hedgerow habitat.

The historic use of the site has led to a denudation of the woodland edge over time. More recent activity has included dumping of materials and appliances within the edge, with enrichment of the soil and introduction of both nutrient and associated non-indigenous species in the affected areas.

The proposal involves the siting of new residential dwellings within very close proximity to the woodland edge and includes change of use for residential use entirely within the minimum recommended buffer for such new development. The dwellings would be inappropriately close to the edge trees and associated habitat placing them under significant future pressure from urbanising effects/impacts.

New proposals for residential development within the countryside must respect the key landscape constraints and comply as a minimum, with the recommendations of the NPPF for the conservation and enhancement of Ancient Woodland and the habitats it provides.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

N/A

NAME:	ANDY CLOUT – ASST. ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER
DEPARTMENT:	STRATEGIC PLANNING - SPECIALISTS
DATE:	24/06/26