

## WSCC TREE OFFICER response to planning consultation

**Application reference number:** WSCC/041/19

**Location:** Kilmarnock Farm, Charlwood Road, Ifield, RH11 0JY

**Proposal:** Proposed Concrete Crushing and Soil Recycling Facility

**District:** Horsham

**Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019

**Summary response:** no objection subject to appropriately worded condition to secure a detailed landscaping scheme together with a long-term maintenance and management plan.

**Response:** It is appreciated that the proposed tree removals along the road frontage are required to provide the access road and visibility splays and that most are category C trees. However, there is no specific reference to protected species (other than reference to BS3998, which covers this at paragraph 5.3) and some of these trees are likely to be suitable nesting / roosting habitat so must be very carefully assessed before any removal. The submitted arboricultural method statement must be implemented in full.

### Landscape proposals

These are outline and require details to be submitted such as site preparation, soil amelioration / improvement, species, planting stock sizes, planting spacing, tree pits, planting method, provision for on-going maintenance / aftercare through an appropriately worded condition. As the surrounding landscape is largely flat, a substantial shelterbelt will be required on the eastern and northern boundaries of the site to screen the operations and stockpiling; not only in a wider context but from public footpath 1511 to the east and to attempt integration into the wider landscape, characterised by '*scattered tree cover, isolated woodlands and copses*' and '*a variable density of hedgerows*' [extract from Northern Vales, WSCC Land Management Guidelines].

The LVIA document proposes new planting as mitigation to reduce visual effects and emphasises improved connectivity between adjacent habitats. However, the proposed planting on the eastern edge is largely a 'standalone' feature. Since the applicant has control of surrounding land, connectivity would be significantly improved by planting E-W hedgerows from the proposed planting to the woodland further east. These could be along the current fences from the NE and SE corners of the site.

It will not be necessary for all planting stock to be large to provide an 'instant' effect, although a small percentage of the mix can be standards. With thorough site preparation, planting stock sourced from a reputable supplier with biosecurity policies, careful planting, mulching and good aftercare, transplants will respond very well and often outgrow larger planting stock.

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