

COMMENTS RECEIVED REGARDING DISPOSAL OF LAND

1	<p>We are residents of the properties next to the railway and close to the tennis courts. Please confirm the following:</p> <p>If the proposed area is planned to be floodlit?</p> <p>The comparable height of the floor compared to the existing court that the proposal adjoins?</p> <p>Why has this now moved locations to the original plan?</p> <p>What hours are proposed for this to be in use?</p> <p>Is the use just for additional open air court space, what drainage plans are in place?</p> <p>Our garden is extremely close to the courts and currently we can see the players at a distance but want to have the answers to the above in respect of this new addition that is even closer to our boundary.</p>
2	<p>I am writing once again to express my concerns and objection to the Billingshurst Tennis club building an additional tennis court at the playing field. I understand that the Tennis club serves the local community however the location of the new tennis court is in the middle of the field and will take away more green space where the Scouts and Guides play and have activities. Obviously this part of the field is also used for the Billingshurst Show, which delivers funding to numerous village clubs for children and adults. The field is also used for Family play and activities, Football training and playing, Beaver, Cub, Scout and Explorer activities as well as Guide, Brownie and Rainbows activities. In my opinion the Scouts and Guides offer much more community support to our village and if Billingshurst feels it has surplus green space perhaps instead we need to offer this to the scouts as an all weather outdoor activities area. I also have concerns over parking in station road. Currently there is very little street parking for the tennis club and parents of scouts and Guides to use- this will only be made worse by further growth of the tennis club. Perhaps the council should consider parking for both these facilities before expanding further. The new turning circle and access road is great but isn't used for drop off at scouts so doesn't help with congestion/parking. I believe that the Tennis club should look at further options- a new site with the new building by the recycling centre? or utilising The Weald site. Many thanks for reading my email and logging my objection to the proposed development.</p>
3	<p>I fully support the proposal for a new court at Billingshurst Tennis Club.</p>
4	<p>I am writing to express my objection to the proposed expansion of Billingshurst tennis club, by the addition of an additional court. The club has already expanded into this publically shared space. I don't believe that any one club or group should monopolise this area as it is used by so many. This is a vital community green space and is used by dog walkers, families, children and young adults. Scouting, Cubs, Beavers, Rainbows, Brownies and Guides. It is also the central location for the Billingshurst Summer Fete, this is an enjoyable and essential fund raising day for many different groups and gives the growing community the opportunity to come together. If this space available is reduced, it could mean that the fete is limited in the what can be offered, as the space will be vastly consumed by this additional court. I also believe that the environment impact and effects on drainage will also be an issue. The tennis club users also increase the parking issues around Lower Station Road and Chestnut Rd. Having lived in Chestnut Rd for over 15yrs I have had my drive blocked or the space outside my house taken by players from the tennis club. Please consider the environment, parking, increased traffic and social impact of allowing the tennis club to expand even more.</p>
5	<p>We would like to comment on the proposed extension to the tennis club with an additional court. We would submit our objection to this due to the loss of public space. We would also comment that the proposed location of this court would have a detrimental impact on the recreational grounds especially with regards to the successful annual Billingshurst Show which raises money for many local charities. Surely the experiences of the pandemic over the last year has proven the value of free accessible green spaces and the need to support local charity fundraising to support those in need.</p>
6	<p>We would both like to register our support for the 5th tennis court proposal at Billingshurst. As frequent users of the facilities and the recreation ground we think it would really be fantastic for all concerned. It would be a superb community amenity and would not impact on other clubs or users of the space. Please add our 100% support!</p>

7	We support the proposed fifth court at the Billingshurst Tennis Club
8	Just to confirm I am in full support of the new tennis court. I use that ground regularly for dog walking and the new location will not impact on either dog walkers or the scouts / guides. I know the show committee are in favour as well.
9	I would just like to object to a fifth tennis court being built. Four is surely enough plus there are some at the Weald school that could be used. You would be building on recreation space that is needed for activities such as Billingshurst Show and the Scouts and Guide groups use the space for sports etc (I personally have grandsons that attend Beavers and Scouts and I know this will cause more unnecessary disruption)This is free green space and would be a shame to lose more and then who's to say another court wouldn't be asked for later? From a Billingshurst resident who fears the village is getting too big .
10	SERIOUSLY? Another unused tennis court for a tennis club that is always advertising for new members? I have lived alongside the so called recreation FIELD for over 50 years and seen any amount of BUILDINGS appear. First, Dauxwood Playgroup hut, then an extension of the two existing swings (okay, I get that) then a skate park, then another tennis court just appeared out of nowhere which is hardly ever used and now you want us to stare at another tennis court??? A huge tarmac driveway has also been installed for no-one and nothing in particular other than the lawn mower man because the gate is always locked to other traffic. A path was there before, which ran to the Scout hut, and was perfectly adequate, so WHY the road? So that more houses or buildings may be built on our beloved field?? Perhaps a Road behind our homes even? Anything, as long as it's not green? What is wrong with everybody? Don't you like grass??
11	We would like to put our names behind proposals for a 5 th court at Billingshurst Tennis Club. The benefits to the local area would be huge. We all know the importance of exercise and social mixing both to our physical and mental health which tennis can provide, I joined the club when I moved to the area and have enjoyed playing tennis and my husband has since joined We have made new friends to play with and socialise with. With the amount of new housing being built in the area it is important to provide leisure opportunities.
12	Myself and my family evolved our relationship with Billingshurst through the tennis club since our arrival here 9 years ago. The club retains the intimacy of a small locality whilst the town expands. We have all enjoyed the benefits of an active sport in a friendly, well organised atmosphere. The addition of a court will only share these benefits with more people, enriching the lives of both newcomers and current residents alike.
13	I am writing in support of the 5th, much needed, tennis court. As a member, i have faced inability to book a court and enjoy my membership. Please consider the high demand and the necessity for exercise for a healthy life.
14	Delighted to have read that the parish council had supported the proposal to add a 5th court to the Billingshurst tennis club. The club is a valuable community asset and with the planned increase in housing to the area, the club will need to expand to accommodate demand as the village expands. Since moving to Billingshurst, I've found the tennis club to be a well run facility that whole families can enjoy. I would welcome this expansion of o allow the club to grow and develop with the community.
15	I would like to email to show my support for an additional court at Billingshurst tennis club on the recreation area of Lower Station Road.
16	I have just been informed that the 5th tennis coirt for billingshurst has been approved. This is absolutely fantastic news for the club and the local community.
17	I am writing to confirm my support for the additional tennis court to support the tennis clubs expansion. It is essential that the club future proofs against the growing population of Billingshurst and the surrounding areas. It is my experience as a current member that it is already difficult at times to obtain a court booking so for my mind continued expansion of such an important local facility is essential.
18	I would like to register my support for the planned additional tennis court at Billingshurst Lawn Tennis Club. This will help future-proof the club and be a benefit to the growing Billingshurst population.

I have objections to the Billingshurst Parish Council leasing more of its land for formal activities. Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan (BNP) states in its **OBJECTIVE 6** - Protect green spaces of value to the community. Residents were asked which Green Spaces they valued at consultations on the BNP, which are now in the "made" plan passed at Referendum last week – 6th May 2021. Less than one week later, the Parish Council seeks to dispose of part of one of the valued public open spaces. Lower Station Road Rec (LSR) has seen land available for children's' formal play area including the skate park, the Dauxwood Playgroup, Tennis Club, tennis courts and now a further demand on this public open space. Disposing of the land, albeit by granting a lease or varying an existing one without appropriate independent valuation of the land does not demonstrate that the Parish Council is securing the best consideration possible. At Annual Full Council the vote was to grant landlord's consent without demonstrating this. I may be wrong but, is that not what it says in Section 127 of the Local Government Act 1972 – disposal subject to the best consideration possible. The Parish Council resolved without any consideration. *On the proposal of Cllr Paul Berry seconded by Cllr Sarah Wilson RESOLVED the Council grant landlord's consent for the provision of a fifth tennis court by the Tennis Club in the revised location as shown.*

The NPPF 2019 – Paragraph 99 - says the designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and **protect** green areas of particular importance to them.

The NPPF 2019 – Paragraph 100 - gives the three reasons for the designation of Local Green Space, all of which apply to Lower Station Road Recreational Ground.

- a. Close proximity to the community it serves
- b. Special local significance as a playing field. (This is especially true for informal open space)
- c. Local in character and not an extensive tract of land

There has been much development in the area around Marringdean Road, and in applications developers did not need to have play areas on their developments because of the closeness of LSR Recreation ground; contributions were made to other open space areas. New, as well as existing residents should have those facilities available to them that have free access. At a meeting of the Parish Council, a local organisation sought to continue their drop-in football for young adults at Station Road Gardens. It was advised that the group locate to Lower Station Road Recreation ground as ball playing at SRG was against the Council's byelaws. The byelaws were going to be reviewed by the Parish Council; they seemed to be contrary to the Land Registry Deeds, and the group were allowed to continue. It is obvious that LSR Recreation ground fulfils a need for informal open space for the growing community. At the start of the lockdown of the pandemic, all formal recreation areas closed – clubs, gyms, swimming pools, skate parks, children's' play areas. The informal recreation ground was still available for all; for any members of the public to walk around and family groups to kick a ball around. There is increasing recognition that local green spaces offer great mental health benefits. When the previous court was allowed, the spoil from the excavation was not removed from the site; just spread towards the trees. On the Billingshurst Tennis Club website, is a demonstration of how within minutes of severe and heavy rain the clay courts are ready to play on. The courts must have some kind of subsurface drainage, but I would ask where does the run-off flow? The distance is too far to dispose into the Par Brook so with Weald clay under the court, is the drainage flowing into the field? If another court is allowed where will the run-off for this drain? Will this impair enjoyment for the public using the open green space? When the new entrance was constructed at LSR Rec, the Parish Council had to apply to the Environment Agency to dispose of surface water into the Par Brook. The parking in Lower Station Road has still not been improved, even with the new entrance and parking spaces. It would appear the Billingshurst Tennis Club also cater for "out of area" members with eligibility of more than 25 miles from RH14 9SU, who would also need parking spaces. The informal Local Green Space at Lower Station Road Recreation Ground should not be eroded further. Local green spaces have real economic value to the surrounding area, in addition to supporting healthy lifestyles and community-wellbeing.

20	Please can I register my objection again to the recent plans for the tennis club to expand. I see they have located the new court to the south o the existing ratyer than the east - the point is still the same - expansion impacts the community space for schools, fetes, cubs, beavers, scouts, dog walkers any other recreational user. Giving public land that anyone can use to a club that only a select few can use is not in the public interest. As my below diagram shows they could easily fit in another court with less impact on the public space - applying some thought and consideration rather than just expanding without considering impact on others.
21	We are members of Billingshurst Tennis Club and are writing to you in support of the proposed new court. We live in Ifold, are retired and play weekly, twice-weekly in summer. Tennis at the club is an essential part of our regular fitness regime. Improved access to courts would be wonderful. As the popularity of tennis increases and the population of Billingshurst grows, the new court will enable more people to enjoy tennis as much as we do. Tennis is increasingly being played by older people as it is a sport that can be enjoyed by all ages with varying mobility issues. We started playing as children and are now 73 and 60. Making tennis easily available for all Billingshurst residents, young and old, long-standing locals and new residents, should be an essential part of the Neighbourhood Plan for the future community. Thank you for your support and that of the Parish Council.
22	I understand that there are proposals to create an additional tennis court on the recreation ground in Lower Station Rd close to the Scout Hut. This area is used regularly by the Scouting movement for healthy outdoor activities and the wider community and annually for the Billingshurst Show. Please reject this application in the interests of the wider community.
23	I want to register my support for the tennis club's proposed 5 th court. The club provides low cost tennis to the community both for members and pay as you play and is an important facility for people of all ages whatever their background.
24	I am writing to you, as the 1 st Billingshurst Group Scout Leader and village resident, to strongly object to the planned development of the Tennis courts on Lower Station Road. The space that will be lost to the not only the 130+ young people of 1 st Billingshurst Scout Group, but also the whole community is unacceptable – this field is used by all members of the village especially so in the last year when the only thing acceptable was to be outside, to minimise the available space for the village cannot happen. Only a small percentage of the village can afford to / or want to use the tennis courts. There mut already be space within the village that could be used. Perhaps improve the courts at The Weald school for the tennis member to use. I am also concerned about the need for more parking for the tennis club members, as it appears that parking across the new green gates has become a parking choice for many. Which is not only illegal due to the double yellow lines, but also a safety hazard by restricting/blocking access for emergency vehicles. On a personal note, it saddens me that the tennis club proposed these plans without any thought or communication with their direct neighbours, the 1 st Billingshurst Scout Group & 2 nd Billingshurst Guides. Therefore, I would like to formally object to any development that removes any green space within the field on lower station road.
25	I've seen the recent advert for varying the lease to allow the Tennis Club to extend further over the Recreation ground. As I remember we recently voted on the Neighbourhood plan that mentioned this open green space. I don't see that immediately allowing someone to acquire, concrete over and enclose this open space is useful to the local area or in the spirit of the recent vote. Very few locals will actually use this court and will remove the open space from general availability and community use permanently. Once gone the green space will not return.
26	With regard to the proposed 5th tennis court. We are STRONGLY opposed to this development, we live in lower station road and back onto the recreation grounds. This lovely open green space, rare in Billingshurst, is used all year round by all members of the public both young and old. We see various different groups of Children and Adults using this space whether it be for organised or un-organised events .The tennis courts are under-used as they are, and only benefit a small minority .To take away more of this open space would be an injustice

27	<p>To whom it may concern, I would like to express my concerns in regards to the proposed expansion of the Tennis Club into the green space at the Lower Station Road Recreation Grounds. As a resident of Lower Station Road, we have already had to ensure a long and delayed period of development and groundwork to the entrance to this area which was both noisy and unsightly. Traffic on this road is already excessive and dangerous, parking is at a premium as we have to cope with parking for the tennis club, scouts hut, tesco and the train station. Increased capacity at the Tennis Club increases the demand for parking. The layby outside the entrance is often blocked by cars parking, turning and dropping people off. The green space in our immediate vicinity is already very limited and if the potential development at Little Daux Farm goes ahead it is going to become significantly worse. Taking away another chunk of green space that the 'masses' use compared to another court for the 'few' seems unreasonable. As there is limited information on why this development is happening, the benefits it may bring and how it may give back to the community or grassroots tennis. We feel our worries outweigh any positive impact.</p>
28	<p>I have no strong “for or against” feelings but I would like to make the following comments. The Scouts/Guides/etc will have to move their outdoor activities further from the Scout hut and may feel a little hemmed in. The proposed site rather “sticks out like a sore thumb” and I wonder if it could be better positioned. It would increase the appearance, arising from the last “new” court, of things being “tacked on”. I hope consideration has been given to the new road into the rec and who would pay for any damage arising during any construction. I question the amount of use of the courts, except for the tennis club’s event days as I very rarely see all of the existing courts in use. If, however, sufficient use is proven, parking (or, rather, lack of it) in Lower Station Road will cause more problems than already arise. On that latter point. Parents are very happy to stop, unload child(ren), racquets, etc on the single side of the road available. Users of the courts are also very often parked, on the double yellow lines at the entrance to the rec. Whether the new court is approved or not, I believe users of LS Road would welcome the Tennis Club addressing these issues.</p>
29	<p>I write in favour of the proposed additional tennis court at the Lower Station Road recreation ground (Billingshurst Tennis Club). I believe the additional court will enhance existing tennis provision in the ever-growing village, and would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the existing recreation field or local residents. I speak as a member of the tennis club, and also as a resident of Lower Station Road</p>
30	<p>As the village continues to grow it will be necessary for the new court as there are times when the Club can be very busy. Please assist them in every way.</p>
31	<p>I am a resident of XX Lower Station Road. I am writing to you with concerns about the proposal to add an additional tennis court. In my opinion there is a clear alternative that has not been looked into. Currently there is an unused corner behind the current tennis courts. I would propose a better solution for both the tennis club, residence and uses of the recreational ground would be too to move the current club house to the unused west corner plot, then Square off and build an additional court where the current clubhouses is. This would minimise the impact to others. I do understand this would be at additional cost to the club however I believe that this is a reasonable compromise. The current proposal adversely affect the use of the the recreational ground for others and I strongly object to the current proposal.</p>
32	<p>I would like to inform of my opposition to the building of an additional tennis court as proposed by Billingshurst Tennis Club based on the following impact of access::</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family play and activities, especially post Covid. 2. Football training and playing. 3. Billingshurst Show which delivers funding to numerous clubs for children and adults. 4. Are there any alternative facilities that can be used e.g. The Weald? 5. Can they not build in the unused corner of the field to reduce the impact of their expansion due to increased membership.
33	<p>I would like to add my support to Billingshurst Tennis Club in their plans to add a firth court which I feel will be much needed in the future.</p>

34	<p>Whilst I have already made my feelings known about the above, I am formally writing to protest the plan before the deadline of June 3rd for the following reasons:</p> <p>The continuing erosion of an area of public land is to the detriment of local residents This is a public green space and must not be seen as a source of leasing income for the parish council. There is so little space left now.</p> <p>An additional tennis court is unnecessary because the current courts are underused There are unanswered concerns about increased traffic and the impact on an already congested road which has become progressively dangerous due to the substantial additions to the residential developments in the area</p> <p>In addition, I would like to ask the following questions. What is the purpose of the area of tarmac with parking spaces? These spaces are never used as this is always gated. Is this part of a larger plan that we are not currently aware of? Leasing of this public land for the variety of uses will have generated an income for the parish. Can the council provide details of how this additional income has benefited the residents, particularly the local residents, of Billingshurst? I note from the minutes of the Parish meeting, a councillor congratulated the Tennis Club for amending their original plans. Could the council be more specific about why the second plan is any better for local residents than the original? Exactly why does the Tennis Club want an additional court? The inadequate reasons already given do not explain why an already underused club should want to expand. I am also curious about why the club representatives could not comment on the lack of use during the week.</p>
35	<p>As a relatively new resident of Billingshurst one of the things that has struck me very noticeably is the almost complete lack of open leisure space that will remain within the immediate vicinity of the town as the next stages of building get under way. I get the very strong feeling that little consideration has been given to this in the past, almost certainly because for a very long time what was a small town was surrounded by fields and woods. This is already no longer true as Billingshurst can no longer be called a small town as it is rapidly being swamped by new housing, but this should not mean that every remaining piece of grass should be at risk of being covered in asphalt and concrete.</p> <p>The main questions that have to be asked are: Is the facility open for use by anyone, subject to booking and hire fees ? If the genuine answer to this is no, only open to members, then your response to the request for an additional court should without doubt be No Can it be shown that there is a definite need and desire for a fifth tennis hard court ? I believe that the answer to this is most probably : no. Your responsibility now is to examine very carefully the normal and genuine usage of the existing facility (not just the numbers in the week or two around Wimbledon) to prove, one way or the other, whether proven regular usage warrants the construction of an additional court. As a lifelong participant in various sports I am always very keen to support the improvement of facilities where needed, but I do seriously wonder whether this proposal is truly necessary and viable, or whether it is something of a white elephant that would never truly justify its existence.</p>
36	<p>I am writing to say that I do not think the proposed tennis court plan is a good idea and is a waste of useable space. If the plan needs to happen then they should turn the court 180 degrees and put it in the gap between the other court's and the railway line as they have made that a unusable area by the way the last court was built.</p>
37	<p>I object to the agreement for a fifth tennis court at Billingshurst Recreational Ground. Whenever I walk in that area the courts are never in use by the general public. Therefore this extra court is purely for the Tennis Club and not necessary. It is merely giving preferential treatment to a small minority of the Billingshurst population</p>
38	<p>A further tennis court at the club would be good use of just a small part of the recreation ground. The tennis club has a thriving membership and is a very friendly club. I also think that with all the proposed house building in the area it would be a much needed and much used facility. We should also remember that tennis is a good physical workout and keeping fit and healthy is important and for young people playing tennis it is also a lesson in good manners and respect for each other.</p>

39	<p>We write to state our disagreement of the proposed disposal of Council land at the above location in respect of the extension of the tennis club to include a fifth court. As neighbouring residents we do not see that the existing courts are fully utilised to any kind of maximum capacity (ie all courts continually in use) and therefore dismiss any idea of extra demand. The recreation ground is available for everyone, every day of the year and in all weathers. It is key to those living alone who have social contact by using the area for meeting others. The fifth court is for a small minority in comparison and there is no parking available either which also affects local residents. It proposes to take away a large and central space in such a key location within the village and should be protected for all residents across all groups now and in the future. The recreation ground is within an area deemed to be at high risk from surface water flooding. This is supported by environmental searches of the area. Any erosion of green space would in turn increase this risk further and increase pressure on the Par Brook waterway. We have seen in recent times significant flooding in Natts Lane and the land already takes time for water to drain. We are already impacted by floodlights, noise and tennis balls. The proposed location is closer and adjacent to our living space and this court would significantly and negatively impact the current situation. The tennis club have no consideration for its neighbours as they have not attempted to notify anyone which leads to a belief of their lack of transparency and general courtesy towards their wider stakeholder group. In summary we strongly oppose the release of this precious PUBLIC green space which is for the majority all year round and not to support the minority's wish who do not fully utilise what is already in place.</p>
40	<p>This proposal to grant yet another large chunk of precious green space at Billingshurst Recreation Ground to Billingshurst Tennis Club must rank as one of the most egregious and unjust proposals in the history of rural England. Despite there already being 4 hard courts consuming a substantial acreage of the heritage of Billingshurst people, the Council proposes that the interest of 99% of the local population should be waived to further the interests of the remaining 1%. Yet as we all know these courts are empty for half of the year and only used sporadically when the weather allows. No effort was made to quantify the numbers of the general public who will suffer if this grotesque plan goes ahead. It is wholly unjust for the Council, who have a duty to represent the interests of the whole community of Billingshurst, to favour such a small percentage and to such obvious disadvantage of the vast majority. No proper steps were taken to assess the usage of this space by the public all the year round and no adequate consultation extended to the general public. This is evidenced by the fact that even the Scouts and the Guides next door to the Tennis Club, who use this green space all year round, knew nothing of this proposal until the last moment. A multitude of people of all ages and backgrounds use the Recreation Ground for all manner of reasons all the year round, many of whom have no green space of their own. This development in the interests of a tiny minority proposes to take from the general public arguably one of our most precious assets in Billingshurst without ever having made a proper audit of the balance of interest and usage involved. I urge Billingshurst Council to think again or this decision of theirs will go down in infamy.</p>
41	<p>I'm writing to express my objection to the plan to build another tennis court on the recreation ground. I understand the desire to have bigger facilities as perhaps other tennis clubs do, but I strongly feel the recreation ground is not the right place to expand it. It's very important to have that green space in the recreation ground - yes, every last bit of it - for the enjoyment of the many people to enjoy, not just those who play tennis. While I understand the argument that everyone is welcome to play tennis, the numbers that don't and simply want to enjoy the green space for a host of other reasons must far outweigh the number of tennis players. The green space is crucial to the happiness and wellbeing of thousands of people, whether used for sport, dog walking, picnics, or any other reason - even just for looking at, as the benefits for mental and emotional health and wellbeing of just being around green space are proven.</p>

42 I wish to object to the Parish Council releasing further parts of the Lower Station Road recreation ground to the Tennis Club This should not be allowed for the reasons below

- 1) This greatly diminishes the available space for the residents to utilise
- 2) From my understanding the current recreation ground space was declared as part of the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan. The plan was developed to ensure that green space should be maintained, this was not for purely limiting housing development. So as soon as it was approved by referendum the PC is already releasing available parish land for development.
- 3) The opportunity to engage with the Weald school to utilise a court during the evening has been ignored by all. The new leadership team are very community focussed and would be approachable especially if the tennis club proposed refurbishing a court to a higher standard.
- 4) Perhaps a site visualisation would be appropriate to see the diminished size of the ground
- 5) Also there would now be a considerable amount of the ground that is unusable,
 - a) behind court 4
 - b) Along side the proposed development,
- 6) As the village is growing considerably surely the residents need to maintain their public open spaces?

43 Good morning the position of the new proposed court will take away Billingshurst show space. If Billingshurst parish Council still want the Billingshurst show to take place they will not grant the lease. Also as this is parish Council land and not tennis clubs. A new lease for the land should be offered. Not joined onto an existing lease as it says in the proposal. As with the first proposed court a few months ago. The argument is still the same. These courts are not for public use for Billingshurst residents and are only for members of the club. Players travel in from outside of Billingshurst as has been mentioned in meetings. And the land is supposed to be used for Billingshurst residents only. I would be against the court proposal. Also as I am aware there has still been no consultation between the tennis club and Billingshurst scouts and guides as they are strongly against the proposed court. As it will take away vital space for them to carry out the activities... Billingshurst scouts and guides give huge opportunity to young children in Billingshurst. Billingshurst parish Council should not grant the permission of the new tennis court. Please also see the attached photo from the village tweet backing up my argument to not being able to play under floodlights if you are not a member of the club.



44

We are writing to express our **objection** to the proposed disposal of land at Lower Station Road recreation ground to enable the construction of a 5th tennis court. Lower Station Road recreation ground is free for the public to use whenever they wish. It is used by individuals, groups and families for walks, picnics, to sit and chat in the fresh air, play football, throw balls and frisbees to each other, kite flying, running around, exercise and bike riding just to name a few activities. Lots of dog walkers use it for walking their dogs and there is enough room to throw a ball so their dogs can run and play fetch. Many of these activities need a good amount of space which the recreation ground currently offers and enables people to enjoy themselves without disturbing others. The proposed disposal of land and location of the new court will take over a large amount of this open space, which will be lost forever. Reducing the space freely available to the public will force existing users closer together, which could limit what people can do without interfering with other users. The village has just voted on the neighbourhood plan, which lists Lower Station Road recreation ground as an important green space. It also says 'Development proposals within the designated local green spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances.' We don't feel a 5th court for the benefit of about 250 members, classes as a very special circumstance. How can the parish council encourage planners to pay attention to the neighbourhood plan when they are disposing of our green space so easily. The current courts are under used and it seems wrong to have a large portion of the field fenced off and empty for the majority of the day, just because there is a couple of hours a day when all courts are in use.

Court 1 is only used ~49% of the day

Court 2 is only used ~46% of the day

Court 3 is only used ~34% of the day

Court 4 is only used ~32% of the day

One of the tennis clubs original reasons for the extra court was "to enable disabled wheelchair access for public bookers. This currently cannot be achieved using the current public court." The proposed new court does not provide a suitable access path for a wheelchair. They don't even show where access to the new court will be.

Another reason was "to enable easy access from hard standing to public bookers. Public bookers currently only have access by walking across an unpathed recreation ground." The location of the new court does not resolve either of these issues. If a member of the public wanted to use the courts for any reason they would have to book and pay. Currently they have free access to the recreation ground, which they can use at any time for a wide variety of activities and sports. We would also like to add that the public court is one of the most expensive in the area to hire. It costs £10 per hour, whereas Barns green is £4 per hour, West Chiltoningon is £8 per hour and Horsham park is £6.25 per hour. The proposed location is very close to the football goals already in the recreation ground. This will mean that balls could easily be kicked at the courts fence or into the court, resulting in people trying to gain access to the court to retrieve their football. There is already a large area of land between court 4 and the railway line that is isolated and not really usable by the public. If the new court was built it would create an even larger area of unusable space. The current bench over the far side of the recreation ground already attracts antisocial behaviour in the evenings, if the new court is built it will make that area even more secluded and probably attract even more antisocial behaviour. We hope you take our views into careful consideration and reverse your decision for this disposal of green space and leave it for everyone to enjoy.

45	<p>I would like to object to plans to build a fifth tennis court on the Lower Station Road recreation ground. My objections are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) The 4 tennis courts already there are under used. 2.) The recreation ground is an inclusive space used by all ages for sport and leisure in all weathers. 3.) The recreation ground is an important public resource serving the growing community at this end of the village and its loss will have a negative impact on local residents. 4.) This development only benefits a small minority many of whom are not residents of Billingshurst. <p>I ask the council to reconsider their decision and take a more democratic and inclusive view of the proposal.</p>
46	<p>I would like to object to plans to build a fifth tennis court on the Lower Station Road recreation ground. My objections are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) The 4 tennis courts already there are under used. 2.) The recreation ground is an inclusive space used by all ages for sport and leisure in all weathers. 3.) The recreation ground is an important public resource serving the growing community at this end of the village and its loss will have a negative impact on local residents. 4.) This development only benefits a small minority many of whom are not residents of Billingshurst. <p>I ask the council to reconsider their decision and take a more democratic and inclusive view of the proposal.</p>
47	<p>I would like to register my objection to a further tennis court being built on the Lower Station Road recreation ground. My objections are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) There are already 4 tennis courts available for the public and the tennis club members. As a regular user of the recreation ground, it is rare to see them all in use at the same time. 2.) The recreation ground is an inclusive space used by all ages for sport, both organised - football sessions, scouts and guides etc., and casual - basketball and kickabouts. 3.) The recreation ground is an important open space serving a growing community at this end of the village for exercising dogs, kite flying, meeting friends for picnics etc. 4.) The recreation ground is the location for the annual Billingshurst Fete when every inch of the field is needed and losing so much land to the tennis club would have a significant impact. 5.) Ultimately this is public land available to be enjoyed by all, a private tennis club is exclusive, expensive and only benefits a small minority many of whom are not residents of Billingshurst. <p>I would impress upon the council to reconsider their decision and take a more democratic and inclusive view of the proposal.</p>
48	<p>I would like to register my family's objection to the proposal to extend the amount of land leased to Billingshurst Tennis Club on Lower Station Road Recreation Ground. Whilst we recognise the merits, the amount of time that the tennis courts stand deserted throughout the week hardly justify the need for an additional court. The new village Neighbourhood Plan identifies the Recreation Ground as a key green space within the village. I would imagine that the new residents of Marringdean Road will come to rely on it in years to come along with the people who will live in the houses that will inevitably be built between Daux Road and the A272. Redeveloping the courts at the Weald School seems a much better option and these could be administered by the Leisure Centre making sure it is a properly public offering. These courts also have excellent disabled access which I believe was a cornerstone of the tennis club application. And finally with the village growing, the Scouts and Guides will grow too and taking away this green space will impact their excellent provision for the young people of our village.</p>
49	<p>I am against the building of a 5th tennis court in the lower station road park. Green space is needed for people's mental health & wellbeing. Many times while walking my dog I notice empty tennis courts while the park is in full use. In fact it is on rare occasions I have seen all the courts being used. I think this park is the only one in a safe built up area which is large enough to kick a football around. It is frequently used by all ages..</p> <p>Kids playing football Adults walking their dogs Teenagers & young adults sitting alone or together passing the time of day Families walking and playing games together Beavers / Cubs Runners. Please save the few green areas we still have.</p>

Dear Sir

I wish to express my complete objection to the Parish Council's resolution to grant landlord's consent for the provision of a fifth tennis court by the Tennis Club. I write as a local resident and very regular (twice daily) user of the park and I would to emphasise the following points.

Loss of precious public open space

Public open space in Billingshurst is at a premium. The extraordinary levels of building witnessed by the village over recent years has made the Lower Station Road Recreation Park even more precious. The park has already seen significant erosion over the years with development of the Daux Wood Nursery as well as the previous extension to the tennis club. A further tennis court, with its substantial footprint, would have a significant negative impact on the majority of the users of the park who do not play tennis.

Lack of Demand

As a regular user of the park, it is clear that there is little demand for a fifth court. It is rare to see more than one court used at a time and a casual glance at the club's own website will show how little the fourth (public) court is actually used. I note from the minutes of the last Parish Council meeting that the club did not answer the direct question about weekly use but rather said that demand is higher at the weekends. It would be surprising if this were not the case of course but the peak use is still clearly well within available capacity.

Negative Impact on local residents

Notwithstanding the previous point, one must assume that the club's business case must indicate a belief that the demand for the courts will significantly increase over time. If this were to be the case, there would clearly be an increased volume of traffic to Lower Station Road, a road all ready under significant stress due to the increased traffic flows caused by new building developments and local industrial estates. Parking in the road is at a premium. Club members often park selfishly and frequently block the disabled bay directly outside the club. Whilst this has been reported, little change has been seen in this behaviour.

The recent development to the park's entrance contains a number of parking spaces. These are never used as the gates are always locked. What is the point of these? The club argues that they may be able to use the local industrial estate for weekend parking. Whilst this is yet to be formally agreed, it evidently will not change pressures on traffic flows during the week and experience suggests that people are still inclined to park as near to their chosen destination as they can (unless prevented) so local traffic will still be increased.

Further, I would also like it made clear, either via the minutes of a future parish council discussion or by reply to my email, how it is planned that the increased income from the extended lease to the tennis club will benefit the wider Billingshurst community rather than just the very small proportion that choose to play tennis. Moreover, what are the council's plans should the tennis club close in the future? How is the council working to mitigate that risk and how might they fund the maintenance of the courts or the repurposing of the land should such an eventuality present itself in the future. With the extraordinarily low use of the facilities currently I would imagine that the council would have considered this prior to reviewing the business case presented by the tennis club.

It is important that local residents have this opportunity to communicate their concerns to the council and I am grateful for the time councillors will spend in considering the points made in this letter. The voice of the Billingshurst Show committee is important of course, but as a user of the park for just one day per year I do hope that proportionate consideration is given to more regular users of this public space including the Scout group and local residents.

51 As a leader in the Billingshurst Scout Group I should like to my objection to the proposed land disposal to the Tennis Club to be noted. The addition of another Tennis Court would take away a large section of available open green space. If appropriate the area is often used by the young people in Billingshurst Scout and Guide Group. They can safely use the open space close to the HQ - with an additional court in place to obtain a wider area for activities it would require moving further away from the HQ, necessitating even locking up. We can currently use the outside area and still leave plenty of space for other members of the public to walk/exercise the dog. This would be severely restricted by another court and make the area almost overpowered & intimidating with high fences. I am also not certain why another court is required - the current public court is hardly used so why build another one? Another factor that I am particularly concerned about is what would happen when the construction was taking place. Work has recently been completed on a wider, smooth path to the HQ and Tennis courts, plus the tarmac drive. It would be a great shame for this to be spoilt so quickly by contractors vehicles. There was severe disruption to access when this was being done and we would not want this to be repeated. Where would any building materials be stored in preparation and what would happen to any earth that had to be removed from the area? More space would be taken up and if wet, a muddy area created again. I sincerely hope that should any of the new ground works be damaged by contractors, they would be made to put it right at their cost, not more funds by the Parish Council? At a time when any available green area around Billingshurst is destined to be covered in housing, any current open play space should be left as large as possible for ALL to enjoy. The proposed tennis court would cover a large section of this green area and only be used by a few people for a few hours a week, if at all. I trust the above will be taken into consideration when deciding about the disposal of the land.

52 As a resident in the parish of Billingshurst I wish to register a strong objection to the disposal of yet more land for the tennis club for another tennis court in Lower Station Road recreation ground, which in part technically belongs to me with the Parish Council as landlord! My reasons are ~

There has already been too much of this area for recreation given away to organisations. I obviously do not know if there are any charges due from the organisations using parts of this green space but I do know that any further disposal of such land must be checked for the best consideration that can be obtained. Has the Council researched this and advised the Tennis Club of potential charges? Neither party should assume the *status quo* remains.

At the recent referendum the Neighbourhood Plan for Billingshurst was voted in ~ to the delight of the Parish Council according to the Village Tweet. This included the Lower Station Recreation Ground as a favoured green space. Now in a very short space of time the Council has voted to dispose of a large chunk of said green space. Does this really reflect well bearing in mind the time and cost of drawing up the plan, in addition it may be that the public will feel let down knowing that a popular and favoured green space will be drastically reduced and with Council approval?

We are currently told that green areas are vital to the mental wellbeing of the nation as a whole. So many of the green spaces in and around Billingshurst are being taken over by development. We have a lovely area to the south of the "village" that local people want (and need) for their relaxation. This means relaxation and a variety of leisure pursuits by any parishioner ~ family play, sitting quietly, exercising the dog, meeting up for a stroll, etc ~ not just to enjoy a locked up area to play tennis, particularly as there is already an abundance of courts given over to this. It should also be noted that in the housing developments in the Marringdean Road area the developers have indicated that there are no play areas allocated for families as there is "*a green space area that is accessible to all who care to use it.*" Surely this means an increase of residents who will wish to use it, especially with a young family, so why remove another large chunk for a niche pursuit.

There are other options that the Tennis Club could pursue if there really is a desperate need for another court. Have they approached the Weald School, who would I am sure be more than happy to increase their community involvement?

As I have stated, it is as a resident that I am raising my objections to this proposal on the grounds listed above and I trust the Parish Council will seriously consider the position, not just based on numbers for or against, but bearing in mind the overall outcome of permanently disposing another part of our much needed green areas.

SCANNED COPIES OF LETTERS RECEIVED IN THE OFFICE

53.

23 May 2021

26 MAY 2021

The Clerk to the Council
Billingshurst Centre
Roman Way
Billingshurst
West Sussex RH14 9QW

Land at Lower Station Road Recreation Ground, Billingshurst

Dear Mr Burt,

I am appalled that the Council is proposing to grant/vary an existing lease to Billingshurst Tennis Club for a further tennis court.

I am against this proposal for the following reasons :-

- 1) The existing tennis courts are under- used and already taken up a large are of the public space, a further court would make it worse.
- 2) If granted where would you site the Annual Fun Day, which is held on the recreation ground. The Jubilee field is not an option, being too far away from the village centre.
- 3) This public area must be kept as it is, to allow the use of all the people free access for all the activities, which it is at present used for and not for the benefit of a small minority. Bearing in mind that the Tennis Club has already been granted permission for an additional court earlier, which encroached on the general area of the recreation ground.

54.

2 June 2021

The Clerk to the Council
Billingshurst Centre
Roman Way
Billingshurst
West Sussex
RH14 9QW

Dear Sir

I note from an announcement in the Village Tweet that the Parish Council plans to grant more land to the Tennis Club in Lower Station Road Recreation Ground.

I would like to add my name to the list of objections to this as I feel the tennis club has plenty of land and tennis courts already and we need all the green space we have for leisure for more residents. We use this area when we are in that part of the village for giving our dog a run and we often see others with their dogs or just families letting the children play. I therefore ask that this remains the case and you reconsider your decision.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

Clerk to the Council.

I believe Billingshurst cannot lose any green space in the village centre this development will have a negative impact on local Residents for the following reasons

- 1/ We must conserve this public land for future generations
- 2/ The Rec is used every day in all weather by every age group.
- 3/ This development only benefits a small minority.
- 4/ The existing tennis courts are under-used and have already eroded the public space.

56.

G.C Burt Esq.
Parish council
Billingshurst Centre
Billingshurst
West Sussex RH14 9QW

2nd June 2021

Dear Mr. Burt,

I was most interested to read the current edition of the local TWEET, not because of the publication of your approval, but by an advertisement by the Billingshurst Tennis Club. This does not change my opinion to my support of the council's decision to the building of the 5th Tennis court, but is an aspect of which I had not realised.

I am not a legal expert, so perhaps you could advise me. Is the recreation land a public space or is it owned by the Parish council, and thus deemed by them to be public? i.e. one cannot lease land if one does not own it. Did the council install the hard surface or did the tennis club do it? Hence charging for its use and upkeep, seems not unreasonable.

The implication is that if the land is not owned by the council, one needs swift and very discrete action to change the wording of the 'lease' to the effect that the charge is not for making any profit but to recover expenses.

Approval to the council's decision to the building of a 5th Tennis court

Dear Sir,

Firstly, I received the enclosed anonymous petition, to which I have deleted the objection and added numbers to bullet points. The latter are of not the slightest use on a hard copy document; cutting and pasting a reference subject is only possible on computer document. I well understand neither postal address nor telephone number being given, to prevent any callers, as with election manifestos. In this modern age, it is not possible to identify even the continent from e-mails which terminate with .com or .org.

The reasons for an objection are given as "... lose any further green space ...". The implication is that if it was to be a grass court, properly netted, there would be no objection. I am a local resident - the development does not have any negative impact (neither do the existing courts).

Taking the five points generally 1) and 4) do not relate to the application, 2) and 3) are untrue. 5) could be true.

Specifically:

- 1) It is a lease, not a sale
- 2) Untrue. I am a local resident (whose house is one of two, both of whose outlines are out of date, immediately to the North of the approach road). "...every day every age group." Does that mean that over '70s, over '80s, and over '90s, do not count?
- 3) The tennis courts cannot be under-used as there was an application to build a 5th court. They are part of the public space; the public have access. It is by virtue of them being hard courts that permit use in all weathers
- 4) There is no suggestion of the area not being part of the public resource.
- 5) Rather than none what so ever.

Fortunately the parish council realise that any objection received as a result of the petition, can be safely ignored.

SAVE BILLINGSHURST RECREATION GROUND!	
<p style="text-align: center;">BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL Local Government Act 1972 s 127</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Land at Lower Station Road Recreation Ground, Billingshurst</p> <p>Billingshurst Parish Council (the Council) proposes to grant/vary an existing lease to Billingshurst Tennis Club of land at Lower Station Road, Billingshurst RH14 9EZ.</p> <p>A plan of the land can be viewed on the external notice board at the Billingshurst Centre or online at www.billingshurst.gov.uk</p> <p>Any representations concerning the proposed disposal must be made in writing by no later than 3 June 2021 to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Clerk to the Council Billingshurst Centre Roman Way Billingshurst West Sussex RH14 9QW</p> <p>Or by e-mail: clerk@billingshurst.gov.uk</p> <p style="text-align: center;">G C Burt Clerk to the Council 13 May 2021</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LOWER STATION ROAD RECREATION GROUND</p> <p>KEY <input type="checkbox"/> Courts open to the public (Billingshurst Tennis Club) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All other courts not open to the public (Billingshurst Tennis Club)</p>
<p>The Parish Council has agreed to the building of a fifth hard tennis course on Billingshurst Recreation Ground - unless sufficient opposition is voiced by Thursday June 3rd.</p> <p>WE BELIEVE THAT BILLINGSHURST CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE ANY FURTHER GREEN SPACE IN THE VILLAGE CENTRE AND THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON LOCAL RESIDENTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 • We must conserve this public land for future generations 2 • The Rec is used every day in all weathers by every age group 3 • The existing tennis courts are under-used and have already eroded the public space 4 • Once lost, this precious public resource has gone forever 5 • This development only benefits a small minority <p>We ask you to write or email the Clerk to the Council at the address above by June 3rd to make your views known.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	

- 3 JUN 2021

The Clerk to the Council
 Billingshurst Centre
 Billingshurst
 RH14 9QW

1 June 2021

Dear Mr (I) G C Bart,

It has come to my attention that there is a plan to build a fifth hard tennis court on Billingshurst Recreation Ground.

Whilst the population of our village is exploding, I believe that the game of Tennis is a minority sport. It appears to many households in Billingshurst have a canine companion or two as part of their family. As a resident of eight years and a wider of Bromland Drive which is opposite the Recreation Ground, I have greatly appreciated that wonderful portion of green grass.

Now, the main part of that green is excellent for generally exercising a dog or a puppy, especially for playing "fetch" with a ball (always dutifully picking up behind them, of course). Also, however, there is that special part, which

I believe in the place in which it is
the plan to build a fifth tennis court.
The fact that that portion of the
field is more "rough" or "rustic" does
not mean that it has to be developed
into an area for an official game.
It is an alarming concept,
that concrete should be permitted to
continue to encroach upon our natural
freedom.

We dog owners do not always
have the will or the means to jump
into a vehicle with our dogs to
artificially escort them to a place
in which we can then "take them
for a walk."

Billinghurst has been a farming
community for centuries, and surrounded
by beautiful green grass and big
trees. As a sufferer of a mental health
disorder for all of my life, yet now
recovering, I will fight to defend
"my" corner of the West Sunset countryside.
Because it is widely known that
trees, plants, bird song and fresh air
are helpful to maintain mental good health.
The difficulty with this is that
one has to have a lot of money
in order to be surrounded by greenery,
and if one lives in a simple street
such as I do, where I have found
is that brick, concrete and tarmac
spring up all around, and it is difficult
to remain buoyant.

Yours Sincerely