

**TABLE OF RESPONSES FROM RESIDENTS/USER GROUPS  
REGARDING PROPOSAL FOR 5<sup>TH</sup> TENNIS COURT**

<b>COMMENTS</b>
<p>I fully support the idea of a new tennis court in Billingshurst. With the rapid extension of the village we will need the court sooner rather than later. The courts are used not just for tennis, fitness sessions are held on them too. Membership is extremely reasonable in all categories, and is without doubt one of the most, if not the most cost effective, inclusive sports in Billingshurst. The club is a family friendly venue. Where we develop young kids into great young adults. Given the space is massively underused, and for six months of the year is a wet bog, it makes sense to convert a small portion of that into much needed leisure space. Leaving plenty of space for the scouts, Billingshurst show, and dog walkers etc. What better time to give the village a boost by enhancing its leisure facilities.</p>
<p>I would like to vote in favour of the tennis club having their extra court built. I know that I'd very much like to use the club when things open up again and I would like my two children to be able to use the facilities too.</p>
<p>Please could I pass on to you my support for the 5th court proposal at Billingshurst Tennis Club. The club is a fantastic amenity in the town and its continued growth should be welcomed and supported by the Parish Council. It's an extremely well organised and affordable club which local residents can use for exercise and socialising. The fifth court will allow membership to be extended which given the predicted growth in population in Billingshurst must be welcomed by everyone. There is great access to all at the club and the fifth court development can be used to encourage disabled and special needs users. Please could I urge the council to back this plan and do all they can to help facilitate it.</p>
<p>As the village continues to grow it may be another court might be warranted. It would be an expensive project if we were to experience a pandemic each year as tennis seems to always be shut down for reasons I cannot see. However if a pandemic became a regular problem it would be a rather expensive item.</p>
<p>I would like to make my support known for the above project. The proposal looks to be well planned, and there is definitely the demand for extra capacity at the tennis club. It also looks as though there will be minimal impact on the green space at Lower Station Road Recreation Ground and the facility can easily be repurposed as required for other events through the year.</p>
<p>I fully support the attached proposal from the club. I have been a member for several years and the club has thrived under great leadership. The venue is the local jewel in Billingshurst's leisure facility crown. We desperately need an extra 5 th court to accommodate current demand let alone further demands placed upon us locally by having to meet Government planning targets for additional housing.</p>
<p>The BLTC has submitted a proposal regarding the construction of the 5th tennis court. I would like to express my full support about the proposed project that benefits the public especially the wheelchair users.</p>

I am writing to outline 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 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.

I understand that the parish council will be discussing the possibility of a 5th court at the tennis club. I have been a member of the club for many years and seen it change to keep up with the times under LTA rules. The club remains a small friendly club for members and families, but with the huge increase in the size of the village, I can see there needs to be room to expand the number of members to allow new people moving to the area access to this facility. There are already times when all four courts are in use, so the time seems right to consider a 5th court. I am in favour of this recommendation, and urge the council to give its backing. I am keeping my fingers crossed that Boris will allow tennis clubs to open shortly!

Hello, I would like to register my support for the proposed 5th tennis court at the Billingshurst Tennis Club. The courts seem to be always booked up due to the popularity of the club, and this makes it difficult for some people to find available slots to play. An impromptu match is rarely possible, which puts up barriers to children in particular getting involved. Also this would allow for another clay court, which reduces wear and tear on the joints and therefore injuries.

I wholeheartedly support the proposal from Billingshurst Tennis Club to expand their facilities by creating a 5th court. The expansion of the population of the village continues at an increasing pace and it is mandatory that leisure facilities keep up with demand. The undoubted benefits to society in general and the young in particular of sport and active leisure are well documented and are at the heart of a healthy, thriving community. The success of the tennis club in attracting and ever increasing membership, especially junior membership are to be applauded so it is important that this is able to continue and expand. The fact that the club propose to do this without the need for parish council funds makes the proposal even more attractive.

I write in support of a the proposed additional tennis court adjacent to and behind the existing clubhouse of Billingshurst Tennis Club. I have been a resident in Lower Station Road for nearly 40 years and believe additional recreational facilities can only be of benefit to the village which is rapidly increasing in size. However, I do feel that the newly constructed access road leading to the tennis club and scout hut from Lower Station Road should be better used, and available for limited visitor parking for users of these facilities. I think it is utterly ridiculous to have the access road permanently closed off with locked gates, and to be largely unused except for pedestrian access and for vehicles once a year to the annual Billingshurst Show held on the recreation ground. Parking is increasingly difficult and restricted in the road as it is. I hope common sense can prevail and any issues relating to allowing limited visitor parking in the new access road can be resolved, after nearly a year taken to install the improved driveway, and its associated cost.

I feel this court will be taking the only level ground away from the Billingshurst show. And access into the ground is tight enough for lorries and floats as it is. I will be against the court being built where it is. Also if the parish council allow this court. where will it stop? They could have built 2 courts in the far left where they have built the new one. However as with your discussion last night with the tennis club I feel that the club is not for the general public. And it

is only intended for members use. On the tennis club website booking page. Non members can book number 4 court only. £10 per hour and if you use the court only you are not allowed to play using the floodlights. So if you and I fancied a game of tennis one night after work during the winter months. We wouldn't be able to. Unless we play with torch light.. Scouts and guides. I'm quite sure the scouts and guides will be expressing their views. But being a former leader of Billingshurst. I feel that the ground is used frequently by them. And that area in particular is the only level area left to practice pitching tents and other outdoor activities on. Close to the scout hut. Perhaps the tennis club need to consult the scouts and guides and also local home owners on lower station road before bringing the plans to a parish Council meeting. I hope the council vote against this court application.

As RH14 residents, we would like to note our support for the Billingshurst Tennis Club's proposal to build a 5th court. We think it's a fantastic way to bring families across the community together - supporting physical well-being which will of course have a significantly positive impact on mental health too. The courts are always beautifully maintained and are often in full use (even in cold or inclement weather). It is also a joy to see younger children developing great physical skills on the court and groups across all age groups and abilities enjoying both the social, physical and competitive aspects of the game. With an increasing number of houses locally, this would be a fabulous way of offering the growing community an accessible activity in a great environment.

I agree an additional tennis court would be a very good idea.

I would like to communicate my full support for the continued development of Billingshurst Tennis Club, specifically the proposal for an additional court. I currently enjoy the facilities and recognise that the continued expansion of Billingshurst will bring additional pressures on the availability of club resources, so it makes complete sense to look to expand the number of courts.

I have no strong feelings either "for" nor "against". However, summarising for ease I hope, I consider that the scouts and guides may feel a little "hemmed in" and possibly constricted in their outdoor activities. I am pleased to see the location would facilitate disabled access but so would a path (somewhat cheaper!) to the current court available for public access. Is the increased "uptake" due to the country's current predicament and will this perhaps decrease as "opening up" occurs? Any new court will encroach into station road rec - as the last new court did. However, this proposed location would also affect the view of anyone glancing at the main entrance and make the vista somewhat more "built up". From memory, BPC solely met the cost of the new access. It seems a little unfair that one organisation hopes to benefit. Lastly, as a resident local to "the rec" I am often extremely cross to see people using the courts parking in the approach and ignoring the double yellow lines there. There are also cars pretty much abandoned rather than parked in lower station road. (I can only assume they are using the courts as they vacate their cars, racquet in hand!) In brief.....

- is this needed?
- if so, is this the correct location?
- And, if allowed, can the club please make an effort to address parking issues.

Please can I record the following objection and suggestion? I do not support the proposed plan to extend into the green space as it isn't necessary and is the cheapest and simplest solution to the club - however impacts the community space for schools, fetes, cubs, beavers, scouts, dog walkers any other recreational user. There is already 'dead space' in the corner by the railway line - if they reposition an existing court they can get the new court up into this space and the impact of the original proposal is less than half. Maybe they should think about a solution that benefits everyone not just the club? Maybe better planning at this stage will aid the future as they can bolt on more courts with less impact rather than just retrofitting as they can and where they easily can?

Further to your FaceBook post, I wish to submit the following comments and inform the council that I would be against the proposed development project at Billingshurst Tennis Club. The reasons for this are as follows:

- 1) The area for the proposed court would encroach into the recreation ground and the tennis club would become over developed. As such vehicular access is likely to become more difficult which may have a negative impact on the future possible uses of the recreation ground.
- 2) Adequacy of available parking. There is already a limited amount of parking and the introduction of an additional playing court will increase traffic, footfall, noise and disturbance along Lower Station Road. Ultimately this will have an impact on highway safety at the same time.
- 3) Possible noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties resulting from the use of an additional tennis court.

Billingshurst lawn tennis club is a great community where young children are increasingly getting into the sport and more people of all ages are beginning to join and play regularly in larger numbers, which stimulates the need for a 5th Court. The club plays a great role in a method of exercise and sport for all throughout the village and needs support to continue to grow and provide better facilities for the increasing numbers in it's society, I sincerely hope this is a consideration of significance for the council.

I support the decision to build an additional club. I am not a member of the tennis club but a member of the community who moved to the area in 2020. I can't see any negatives in building another court.

My only comment would be:

- To have access to a free court (maybe with a deposit) as in Horsham Park.

When growing up it was so good to be able to access this facility and we used it so much to develop skills and spend time as a family. It would mean it is accessible to all. £10, albeit I understand is not as much as you would pay for other leisure activities, but in the current climate is quite alot and will mean some people will miss out on using it. It is a good family activity for getting young (and old) active and into tennis.

The club and facilities provide a much needed resource for Billingshurst. I very much support the additional court particularly in light of the club's statement on inclusivity. It's even more important given what we've experienced over the last year that more people, particularly the young and disadvantaged, have this sort of activity available to them.

I feel that the plans as submitted for a new tennis court would have more of a negative impact than positive. The new court in the proposed position would take a large amount of space from a well used public playing field which is used by both members of the public and various groups such as the Scout and Guide groups and football training etc, to benefit only a few people (members of the tennis club and those who can afford to pay to hire courts). Currently the field is available to everyone at no cost. I am not against the expansion in principle just the plans as they stand, I don't know if there is space behind the current courts (ie the area furthest away from Station Road) for another one but feel maybe if there is then that would be a better option worth investigating.

I fully support the proposal for an additional tennis court in Lower Station Rd recreational ground. There are many concerns that infrastructure to support the demand for additional housing in Billingshurst is not enough and our sporting facilities are no exception. The club itself is a fantastic sports facility that provides a great social environment for the local community and is inclusive for everyone. The idea to locate the proposed court in such a position to enable disabled/wheelchair access demonstrates such a desire to make tennis accessible to everyone. This is a forward thinking community facility that everyone should be proud of.

I write to you regarding the club's proposal to extend with another court. As a club member, i agree, it would be nice to have another court, but as a parent, i completely oppose. I DO NOT WANT the tennis club to affect the little green place Billingshurst has for children and family activities!!!! NO WAY! Children (7+) are disadvantaged anyway, they have almost nothing to do in the village, and taking one of the only places they have run around is unacceptable!!!

I am writing regarding the proposal for the Tennis club to construct a new tennis court. I am in favour of a new tennis court but the location on the proposal outlined is not a suitable location. This would directly impact on many groups who also use the Recreational grounds. The Scouts use the area directly outside the Scout Hut every week, especially during these covid times. We try to be outside as much as possible. It is important to be close to the hut because we often use the lights and bring out other equipment. Also for events such as the Billingshurst show this would have a massive impact on the floats and the stalls in the Rec grounds. There are other areas that are much better suited to the new tennis court and this is why I think these need to be explored further and this initial proposal be refused.

I hear there is a proposal for a possible 5th tennis court for Billingshurst Tennis Club. Being a member i feel it will be a great opportunity for the club and will be able to accomodate more players from the new housing developments which are being built by mass.

Whilst I support the idea of adding an additional tennis court to the club at Lower Station Road, for me the proposed location is not an appropriate choice. The space proposed is regularly used by all parts of the Scout Group, along with other youth and sport groups. The proposed space would severely restrict access and direct vision of the entire field, which is important when running youth groups from the scout hut. We also run power and lighting onto the field, which would be much more difficult and time consuming with a court in the proposed location. I must confess that I find it strange that the tennis club didn't reach out to the Scouts to discuss the proposal. I strongly object to the current location, and would like to see a revised proposal with the court in a less intrusive location.

We are residents of lower station road, our garden backs onto the scout hut/tennis club. We have only just been made aware of proposals by the tennis club to build an extra court. Firstly, we would have expected some literature informing us of these proposals, as direct neighbours to the tennis club. We have received none. We have concerns mainly due to the fact that the tennis club floodlights shine extremely brightly into our garden and house. More courts would increase this infraction on our property. We feel that it will also adversely impact the Lower Station Road playing field, restricting all the activities that take place there such as cubs/scouts, family play, football training and the Billingshurst show. Finally, the increase in cars parked on Lower Station Road will impact residents and safety. It's generally a nightmare with parking under normal circumstances. The club plan shows only one suggestion to expand and there needs to be alternatives such as building in the unused corner of the field perhaps. This would have less impact on the playing field, but not necessarily the neighbours.

Whilst I think that extending the tennis club is a good idea, i think that they are looking to put it in completely the wrong place. Current plans show the new court near to the new turning circle. That area is used highly by the Scouts and Guides, and other children's groups, and is the main entrance to the Billingshurst show. Compromising the entrance to the green on what is already a small area is not a good idea. Emergency services would suffer. Vehicles getting onto the green would not have enough space. And it isn't really safe having that volume of people going through a smaller area with all the floats etc. Whilst covid is an ongoing virus, a lot more clubs are having to meet outside, so this grass area will definitely be utilised more. It is safer for the Scouts and Guides to be nearer their hut, where they normally use. Directly outside of the Scout and Guide hut, there has already been a lot of disruption with the new road and pipes being installed. It would be unfair for the children to have more of their world disrupted yet again should this court get built in the current plan. I believe a better idea would be to utilise the unused green space at the other end of the tennis courts. You could easily get another court in there by turning one of the existing courts perpendicular to what it currently is. There is also the tennis courts at the leisure centre that could be used. I would be happy to discuss my thoughts further if you have any queries.

I wanted to lodge support for the proposed additional tennis court at the Billingshurst tennis club. Having joined the club since moving to the village, it has been a wonderful and welcoming environment, extremely community minded. Both myself and my two daughters, currently in the local primary school, have been regulars at the club and participate in the well organised lessons and competitions arranged by the committee. The courts are always so well utilised and the addition of another court would be a great benefit, as well as the included improved access to the area for wheelchairs. With the proposed increase in property development in the village, the demand and interest in this excellent facility will increase beyond its current capacity, so the extra court would be a welcome addition. I hope this proposal is successful and I look forward to being able to return to the courts shortly,

I am writing to support the 5th court development proposal for Billingshurst tennis club. I am the club coach and I think the extra court would greatly benefit the club and the surrounding community! As currently in the summers the 4 courts are full a very high proportion of the time, especially when I will using them for groups and camps etc. This means with the current developments with roughly 6,000 more homes it would be greatly beneficial to have the extra court, to hopefully facilitate more members and the pay to play non member court is very frequently being used by non members being greatly beneficial to the community!

I'm just writing to mention what a wonderful tennis club billingshurst has and with the increase in housing and catchment in local areas I believe the club needs to increase its facilities to support the surge of new members due to the increase in housing development.



I am writing to express my concerns and objection to the Billingshurst Tennis club building an additional tennis court at the entrance to the playing field. I understand that the Tennis club serves the local community however the location of the new tennis court is at the entrance to 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 or even building in the unused corner of the field behind the tennis club so this doesn't block the entrance to the field. Although as I have said losing green space in our ever growing village is not ideal. Many thanks for reading my email and logging my objection to the proposed development.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the proposal for a new tennis court for Billingshurst Lawn Tennis Club. I am strongly in favour of the proposal for a number of reasons:

- I play at the club regularly and I am impressed with how busy it is, and it is only getting busier. With the new housing development in Billingshurst, a fifth court is much needed and will allow the club to bring in many new members and increase the fitness and public health across Billingshurst.
- The court will have the benefit of being available for use to the public, not just members, and providing wheelchair access for disabled players which is much needed. I am a journalist and have reported on tennis before for BBC World Service and the BBC website and I have seen the recent growth of wheelchair tennis, so for Billingshurst to be at the forefront of this would be great for our reputation as well as being the right thing to do.
- Tennis has been proven to be great not only for general health but also for mental health and wellbeing. We are currently witnessing a worrying rise in mental health problems for young people, accelerated by the pandemic, and Billingshurst is particularly well-known for its good junior programme. Bringing more young people into the sport can only be a good thing.
- I also regularly use the park for dog walking and running and a fifth court would not encroach on usable space, or overlook any properties. It is the perfect place for this.

A fifth tennis court will be welcomed by tennis players. Hopefully the full Council meeting on Wednesday will have in mind a solution to parking the cart as well as the horse! Each tennis court can mean three car park spaces are needed and one player may come by bicycle or walk, thus five tennis courts represent fifteen cars seeking parking spaces in Lower Station Road. The number can be greater when there is tennis coaching and/or the Scouts premises are in use. The shortage of parking needs to be addressed before constructing a fifth court. One suggestion: Use the new approach lane to BLTC and the Scouts premises, marking parking spaces diagonally to maximise parking.

Just a few comments regarding the proposal for building another Tennis Court at the Tennis Club.

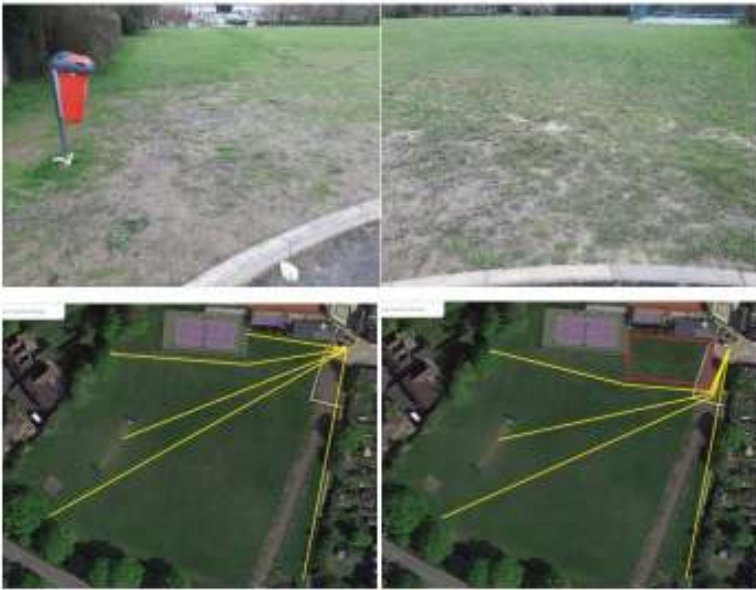
1. It doesn't seem like the Tennis Club have discussed their plans with the Scouts and Guides that also use the field. The area that the Tennis Club are proposing to use is the area that the Scout and Guide groups regularly use for outside activities, especially in the current times when they've only been allowed to meet outside (before Lockdown).
2. The plan shows 10m between the Tennis Court and the fence line/houses, for the Billingshurst Show this would make access to the field much tighter. Getting the floats which are usually tractors and trailers or lorries down the access road then a 90° bend down the side of the new tennis court would be difficult and probably dangerous with the amount of pedestrians. This also moves the whole show further down the field reducing the show site area.
3. It looks like the new tennis court will be built directly up against the dropped kerb on the new access road turning circle that took most of last year to build so that would need to be redone again to allow vehicle access on to the field.
4. They've only submitted one plan. From a simple Google maps screenshot, a better layout looks possible which would take up considerably less space on the field and use the area behind the current courts instead. Albeit it potentially more expensive solution it would definitely be a better solution for everyone.



We would like to raise some points to consider when you make your decision over the proposed additional tennis court at Lower Station Road recreational ground. Their proposal says the public court was used over 200 hours between May and October. So that is 6 months or 182 days therefore the court was used on average just over 1 hour per day by the public. From their proposal it says that flood lighting will not be required for the new court. The tennis club recently installed lights on the public court to enable tennis during the dark evenings therefore giving it a greater availability. If they move the public court to the proposed non-floodlit court it will reduce the time available to the public to use the court. The proposal says that 50% of the cost will be from Section 106 money but the proposal says it will be £30k out of a total cost of £46k, which is 66%. Currently there are various routes for people walking across the field which are spread out however it still gets quite muddy even though people can take different routes. With the proposed location of the 5th court, everyone will have to walk along the same grassed corridor before being able to fan out. This will result in an over trodden grass strip that will become very muddy. Making it difficult for vehicles (e.g. grass cutters) and people to access the field from this end. We would like to raise some points to consider when you make your decision over the proposed additional tennis court at Lower Station Road recreational ground. Their proposal says the public court was used over 200 hours between May and October. So that is 6 months or 182 days therefore the court was used on average just over 1 hour per day by the public.



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In this photo you can see how muddy it gets at the other narrow access point by Dauxwood preschool.

This plan will also require the moving of the newly installed dropped kerb on the new turning circle. It seems a shame to do this considering the substantial cost of the access road. We don't see that this could be done for £500 as they are suggesting.

Can we suggest that the following layout would be a better use of the land? Black box is current proposed location, red boxes are our proposed alternative layout.



The area of the proposed court will reduce the available space on the field for other users, as a scout leader the scouts often use that particular area of the field for activities as it is close to the scout hut enabling easy access for equipment and power for lighting, which we had to use quite a lot last year when we were unable to meet indoors and the nights were drawing in. Currently leaders are able to easily see if anyone attempts to access the hut while we are outside. The new court would force us further away and make this much more difficult. We don't object to the idea of a 5th court but feel the proposed location is not suitable and ill thought out

I suspect I am too late, but have been unwell. I just wanted to add my support to the club's above proposal, It is clear the population of Billingshurst is expanding rapidly and the commensurate community facilities are required. I have been genuinely impressed at the inclusivity and community based nature of BLTC. There is an absence of cliques and snobbery which I greatly welcome.

Whilst I would generally support additional facilities for local people I too have a few observations with respect to item 12: extension of the tennis club in the Recreation Ground, Lower Station Road. I visited the site at the weekend. In the meeting of the Property Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> February it was remarked that this would be the "last" such application. A new court has already been added to the club in recent years (shaded area "A" in the attached photo/diagram) for which presumably valuable public land was made available. I would like to know why it is stated there will be no need to extend the tennis club further in future. Is there a grand plan to relocate to a larger site in future or to establish a second club in the village? If so then why not initiate such a plan now? Our village continues to expand. Yet apart from the recently completed northern bypass (which is really more of an access road than a full bypass) I am not aware of significant new infrastructure since construction of the Pavillion at Jubilee Fields in 2006 and the Swimming Pool around the same time. I believe there was discussion of a possible cemetery during the incumbency of Revd Brian Pritchard at St Mary's but I don't know what came of that. We need to be maximising the opportunity of every new housing development for the provision of additional facilities to accommodate new residents, otherwise demand will continue to outstrip supply and increasingly there will be a scramble for existing resources. Could there be there any scope, for example, to incorporate a new tennis club within the proposed Platts Island development? If the requested extension of the club is to go ahead, I would like to know what alternative layouts have been considered. There would appear to be an alternative option which would encroach less on the precious land of the recreation ground (which will be lost for ever once

concrete has been laid down). There is an area relatively inaccessible to the public to the West of the existing site, next to the railway line. It would seem to me that by incorporating this space into the tennis club and a much more modest annexation of a strip to the South might accomplish a similar result with less loss. See shaded area "B" on the attached photo/diagram. Additional monies might be required to effect necessary reconfiguration of the existing recently added court to the South (shaded area "A") however this should be seen as an investment for the future and worth the effort of a fundraising appeal. I would also like to know if the Tennis club has any policy of outreach into the local community – for example the provision of free or heavily discounted coaching and use of facilities for disadvantaged people? Given the proximity of the club to the railway station I once enquired whether we might be able to make use of the Club House for a meeting of the West Sussex Rail Users Association however was told that facilities were available exclusively for members of the club. Are club facilities available to local schools? I hope these questions and observations will support a constructive analysis and consideration of the proposal

I strongly support this proposal, the club is a vibrant social environment, encouraging people to live a healthy and active lifestyle while developing new skills. Surely it is the responsibility of the parish to support community based clubs like this, the club is not for profit everything it makes goes back into developing its facility and providing a service to the public. Please support something positive and help a worthy cause develop and grow further.

I am writing to support the 5th court development proposal for Billingshurst tennis club. I am the club stringer and I believe that the addition of the 5th court would be an incredible benefit to the tennis club and the local community! With the numerous new developments, and the arrival of many new families into the local area we should feel obliged to continually improve develop and grow our leisure facilities to make our local community a wonderful place to live and spend time. The club is already incredibly busy and loved and this extra court would be an amazing addition!

I know I am a bit late sending this in to you but if you can add it to the list of "against" names please do so. I am in agreement with the others who object on the grounds that where will it stop if yet another court is added; it takes away the grass area that is really intended for the leisure and relaxation of all parishioners of Billingshurst, not just those who want to play tennis; it should be remembered that this playing field was originally gifted to the Parish for the reason previously stated; this area is the only one suitably sited for events needing a large space reasonably close to the centre of the village, such as the Billingshurst Show. This is a once a year event that involves the whole of the village in many different ways. Regarding the offer of the use of their courts by the Tennis Club to the Show committee, this is not really practical as the majority of items on the field need tents or gazebos pitched and hard courts do not lend themselves to this! With apologies for the lateness and I trust it makes clear that I do strongly object to the taking up of yet more green space that is used very regularly by many and varied members of our community!

My personal view is that the lower station road park is a much needed open area for children, families, dog walkers, teenagers and is easily accessible for the elderly and disabled. It is an area large enough for groups to meet, play football, rounders, cricket, frisbee and run as well as many dog walkers and those that come just to throw a ball for their dog. I think the need of space like this which is free to use is greater than the need for the tennis club to have a 5th court which will only be available to those that can afford it. I'm also sure there are currently

more people using the park than members and public using the tennis courts and these numbers will grow with the many family homes that are being built. If the tennis court goes ahead

1) the park area will not be as big and therefore chosen activities may not be able to happen due to lack of space on the day - there is no booking system for communal parks

2) when will the need for more tennis courts end will it be 6 then 7 etc

On another note, so far I have never had a problem booking a court.

## **Response to the proposal to construct an additional tennis court on the Recreation Ground from the Billingshurst Show Organising Committee 24th February 2021**

### **Introduction**

The Billingshurst Show has been held on the Recreation Ground each year since 1998, and although the current COVID restrictions mean that unfortunately we will be unable to stage the Show again this year, we are looking forward to resuming the show in June 2022. Over these years the Show has been a major focus of community life in the village, with thousands enjoying the event each year, and it has also enabled us to raise over £150,000 in funds for local charities. We are deeply concerned about the proposal from Billingshurst Tennis Club for the construction of an additional tennis court at the entrance to the Recreation Ground. Our concerns include a substantially increased risk of serious harm to people both during the Show and while setup activities are taking place at the Recreation Ground on the morning of the Show.



### **Safety Impact**

The picture below shows the proposed position of the new tennis court, as indicated in the Tennis Club's submission, together with the new entrance area, superimposed on a plan of the basic layout that we have used for the Billingshurst Show for a number of years. This layout is based on the principle of keeping vehicle traffic to a wide and straightforward route around the perimeter of the field, with good sight lines in all directions. Despite the crowds that attend the Show, this has worked well over the years, with no significant incidents being recorded. Even so, making sure that vehicle movements are marshalled correctly to avoid the possibility of injuries to pedestrians is a major undertaking, and we do not have the resources to cope with a substantial increase in marshalling requirements.





As can be seen from this picture, siting a new tennis court right at the entrance to the Recreation Ground would destroy this long-standing arrangement. All traffic would have to be routed through a narrow pinch point involving a sharp turn on entering and leaving the Recreation Ground, and a second sharp turn for any traffic that we would want to route along the northern edge of any replacement traffic route. Because of the wall and trees at the corner of the Recreation Ground by the entrance, vehicles at this point would be badly unsighted. Further, the new tennis court would block pedestrian access to the Recreation Ground except by going through this same pinch point, so putting them into the path of oncoming vehicles in either direction, with very poor sight lines for all concerned. Up to now we have always been able to keep pedestrian and vehicle traffic safely separated thanks to the very wide entrance onto the field that the Recreation Ground currently enjoys. Note that this loss of pedestrian access affects both people coming onto the field via the entrance and people moving between the field and the Scout Hut, this being a crucial route for us since the Scout Hut serves as our headquarters for the Show and there is a constant stream of people going to and fro along this route. Whilst this will create additional safety risks throughout the setup period, it will have a particularly severe impact on the most crucial period when the Carnival Procession arrives on the field. At this point we have to manage many large vehicles transporting hundreds of children on the various floats, as well as all the pedestrians who have been following the Carnival Procession along its route through the village. Having clear unobstructed access onto the field is therefore critical. We are also required to keep a clear route open on the field so that emergency vehicles can access the field during the Show without obstruction. Again this would be severely compromised since in case of a significant accident, any emergency vehicle that urgently needed to leave or gain access to the field might have to wait for a significant period of time for all pedestrians and vehicles to be cleared from the pinch point and the routes leading to it.

**Loss of Amenity** In recent years we have already suffered a significant loss of amenity on the Recreation Ground due to the construction of the fourth tennis court; a fifth tennis court – especially in such a prominent position – would constitute a further severe loss. To date we have been able to accommodate the attractions, stallholders and spectators for the Billingshurst Show on the Recreation Ground, but space is now very much at a premium. The loss of such a large central area would have a material effect upon our ability to put on the type of event to which the village has become accustomed and would therefore constitute a significant loss of amenity for the whole community. We note the suggestion in the Tennis Club's proposal that the proposed new court could be used as hard standing during the Billingshurst Show, but unfortunately this is not feasible since all our attractions and stalls rely upon being able to drive stakes into the grass so that tents, gazebos, equipment etc. are safely anchored. For this reason, we do not use any of

the existing hardstanding on the field for the Show. There would also be a significant impact upon the provision of our electricity supply for the Show – the Show as we know it would not be possible without access to electricity at several locations on the field. One of our major sources of electricity, and the only one that is fully within our control, is via a supply from the Scout Hut that we chase into the ground to avoid any tripping hazard. Since the new court is proposed to extend right to the edge of the turning circle at the entrance to the field, there is no safe route for such an electricity supply from the Scout Hut to the field. We also rely upon the provision of electricity and water supplies by arrangement with the owners of properties on Lower Station Road that back onto the field - this is why we have sited all the food and drink facilities (refreshments, bar, barbecue, etc.) along this side of the field. The proposed new court would force us to use this area for the main traffic route. Whilst we could chase in an electricity supply across this new traffic route, we could not do this for the water supply.

**Alternative Arrangements** There is a substantial area of effectively dead space on the field, to the side of and behind the existing tennis courts. We suggest that the Tennis Club should consider reconfiguring their existing layout to make better use of this space, since it seems probable that an extra court could then be fitted into this area with relatively little loss of amenity, and entirely avoiding the safety issues which are our primary concern. This might involve the need to resite the fourth tennis court, but it would seem to be a far better solution for all concerned.

### **RESPONSE FROM BILLINGSHURST SCOUTS & GUIDES**

The first the Scouts and Guides heard of the Tennis Clubs proposed extension was at the Property Committee meeting held by the Parish Council which is unfortunate as we thought they may have discussed this with their nearest neighbour.

While this is admirable that the membership is growing it will adversely impact the Lower Station Road playing field and we **strongly object** to the current proposal. There are numerous activities that take place on the recreation ground that will be restricted by the current proposed extension that include

- Scout, Cub and Beaver activities
- Guide, Brownie and Rainbows
- Additionally
  - Family play and activities
  - Football training and playing, currently the younger age groups.
  - The Billingshurst fete which delivers funding to numerous village clubs for children

Also

- There is very limited street parking in Lower Station Road and additional activity will cause further congestion
- If the proposal for west of Billingshurst is granted by HDC this includes LTA standard tennis courts.

The club has only one suggestion to expand and there needs to be alternatives such as utilising the Weald or building in the unused corner of the field, while not ideal it would prevent the loss of more green playing field