BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

2To All Councillors,

You are summoned to a Meeting of Billingshurst Parish Council on **Wednesday 4 November 2026 at 7pm** at the Billingshurst Centre.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting and speak for a maximum of three minutes about an item on the agenda for this meeting during the Public Session at the discretion of the Chairman. They must give their name.

G.C. Burt
Clerk to the Council **28 October 2026**

Please note that all supporting papers can be found on the Councils' website.

AGENDA

1. Chairman's Announcements.
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. To Receive Declarations of Interest and consider any requests for a dispensation.

Adjournment for

4. Public Session (Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman). They must give their name.
5. Reports from:
    a. County & District Councillors
    b. Council Representatives on Outside Bodies.

Resume Meeting

6. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 September 2026. (Previously sent)
7. Clerk's Report.
8. To consider the future of trees at Willow Drive - Appendix **A.**
9. To receive an update on HDC Draft Local Plan - Appendix **B.**
10. To consider draft calendar of meetings 2027 - Appendix **C.**
11. To review appointments to Committees and outside bodies etc – Appendix **D.**
12. To receive Minutes as approved by the following Committees:
    a) Planning & Environment 1 September and 6 October 2026.
    b) F&GP 29 July and 30 September 2026.
    c) Property Committee 10 June 2026

Council Office: Billingshurst Centre
Roman Way, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9QW
Tel: 01403 782555 Email: council@billingshurst.gov.uk

d) Working Practices Committee 13 May 2026

(all previously circulated / on website.)

13. Neighbourhood Wardens - to receive Wardens' Reports for August and September previously circulated / on website.

14. Date of Next Meeting – 6 January 2027

Members of the public should be aware that being present at a meeting of the Council or one of its Committees or Sub-Committees will be deemed as the person having given consent to being recorded (photograph, film or audio recording) at the meeting, by any person present.

APPENDIX A

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2026

TREES AT WILLOW DRIVE

REPORT BY CLERK

FOR DECISION

On 5 November 2025, in pursuance of a further report on the issue of the Council's potential liability for damage to a nearby property allegedly caused by roots of two trees in the ownership of the Council, a decision was *deferred pending further information, i.e. root barriers, up to date engineer's report and a bat survey etc.* (Min 93/25 refers)

Subsequently we met with the insurers and the claim handler. They agreed to assist in finding consultants who could undertake a brand new full technical survey which the Council was willing to fund. Unbeknown to the Council, the insurer appointed a consultant accordingly (at their cost).

Unfortunately as I have not had confirmation at this time from the insurer to place the document in the public domain, I have circulated it to Councillors only under separate cover. (Conclusion on Page 16.)

Regrettably, this report, commissioned by our insurers, reaches the same conclusion as that reached by the claimant's original report several years ago, that the trees are causing damage.

In the meantime, the Council received the results of Ground Level Tree Assessment (of bat activity) undertaken on 9 June. Report attached. It recommended a full survey be undertaken and this has been commissioned for 24 May – 14 June 2027 (This is the accepted best *window* to undertake this within the bat season.)

Both trees had consent to fell from the planning authority: one consent expired in February this year and the other will expire on 18 December 2026.

The planning authority gave consent in May this year to sever roots of the two trees in the claimant's garden.

Work has since started on the repairing the claimant's property.

I hope to be able to confirm at the meeting our understanding that the insurer will fund the trees' removal, and the extent of the Council's potential future liability.

Council is now invited to consider the following recommendation:

That following receipt of the additional independent report that supports the felling of the two Oak trees at Willow Drive, the Council regrettably gives owner's consent to fell, subject to any mitigation measures required to satisfy any matters arising from the full bat survey next Spring.

[Note. To date the Council has spent:
Desktop review of the original report £650.00
First bat survey £539.00
Legal advice – awaiting details as invoices cover all matters looked at but it is not broken down.]

Elodie Noyes-Gouan BSc (Hons)
Consultant Ecologist
Email: elodienoyes-gouan@arbtech.co.uk
Arbtech Consulting Ltd
arbtech.co.uk

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Land at Willow Drive, Billinghurst, RH14 9TP

Client:

Billinghurst Parish Council

Survey date:

9th June 2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Horsham District Council. The proposal is described as:

'The felling of two oak trees'.

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion.

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: **PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.**

The site survey was undertaken by Elodie Noyes-Gouan BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist (Accredited Agent on Level 2 Natural England Bat Licence).					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
09/06/2026	15	87	75	1	Intermittent

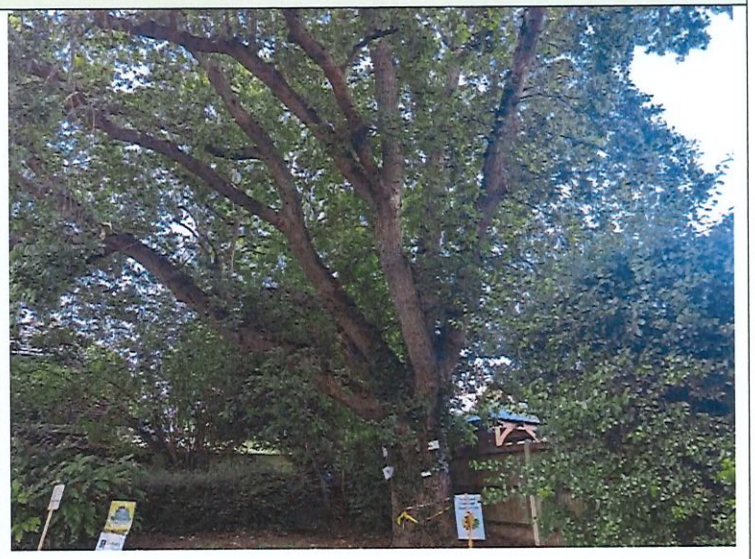
Executive summary	The trees to be impacted will require two bat emergence and re-entry surveys to be undertaken within the active season.
PRA Survey Factor	**Detailed using desk study and site survey. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.**
See PRA plan in Appendix 1 and location plan in Appendix 2	
Background and Site Location	
Summary of site location and surrounding habitats	**Grid ref:** TQ 09019 25693 **Size of survey area:** ~0.03ha **On site habitats:** The survey site is a small green, occupied a variety of trees, shrubs and scrub, surrounded by a maintained modified grassland. **Notable habitats (within 2km):** Patches of lowland mixed deciduous woodland (LMDW) are present locally, with the closest located ~100m west from the site. LMDW is classed as a priority habitat under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006. Further priority habitats are present within 2km of the site, including traditional orchards (~600m southwest) and ancient woodland (~900m south).

<table>
<tr>
<td>EPSL and bat roost records (2km radius)</td>
<td>
EPSL records (within 2km)
A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. No EPSLs are present within a 2km radius of the site. The closest EPSL is located ~2.3km west of the site, and described within the table below.
<table>
<tr><th>EPSL reference</th><th>Bat species affected</th><th>Distance from site</th><th>Impacts allowed by licence</th></tr>
<tr><td>2016-24415-EPS-MIT</td><td>Whiskered bat, common pipistrelle & soprano pipistrelles</td><td>~2.3km west</td><td>Destruction of a breeding place, damage of a resting place.</td></tr>
</table>
</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated sites</td>
<td>
Statutory designated sites
There are two statutory sites within 2km of the site. Details of the sites and reasons for their designations are listed below.

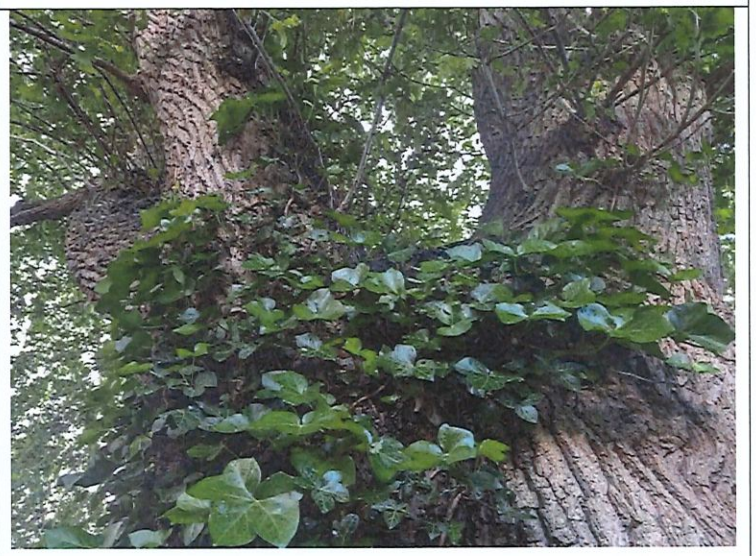
• <u>Coneyhurst Cutting SSSI – [~1.55km southeast]</u>
'At this site the western embankment of the A272 road cutting exposes the Paludina Limestone (BGS Bed 4) of the Lower Weald Clay Formation (Wealden). The limestone (0.43m thick) shows interesting diagenetic features and contains large Paludina (Viviparus) shells preserved in 3-D. This facies is rarely exposed now.'
</td>
</tr>
</table>

	The area is home to 211 species that have been recorded on international conservation lists (such as the European eel Anguilla anguilla) in addition to 1,052 local rare species (the hedgehog Erinaceus europaeus, yellowhammer Emberiza citronella, etc). • Upper Arun SSSI – [~2km west] *'The Upper Arun consists of a 13km length of the River Arun, flowing south across the weald clay and lower greensand between New Bridge, Billingshurst and Stopham Bridge, Pulborough. It supports an outstanding assemblage of breeding dragonflies including a number of rare species.'* **SAC designations** There is one Special Area of Conservation designated for bat related reasons within 10km of the site, as described below. • The Mens (SAC) [~5km west] Designated due to the presence of **1308** Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*.
Previous survey data	The surveyor is not aware of any previous survey data.
Limitations	The Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) was conducted in June, as such heavily vegetated limbs and ivy obstructed the view of the surveyor, this has been accounted for within the assessment.

Field survey results
Summary The trees are located within a vegetated area of land, at Willow Drive, Billinghurst. The proposal will see the removal of T2 & T3. A site visit was carried out to assess the trees for their habitat value to bats. Bats will use crevices within trees to roost, these can be formed by disease, decay, damage or association. Disease and decaying can lead to knot holes, tear outs, wounds or pruning cuts. Damage can be from weather, lifting bark, shearing cracks, or transverse snaps. Roosting features identified have been assessed below.

T2 description	***Photographs***
Summary T2 is a mature Oak located to the east of the land (TQ 09026 25698). The tree is very large in size (>90cm DBH) and estimated to be over 20m in height. Features identified on T2 during the survey are detailed below.	

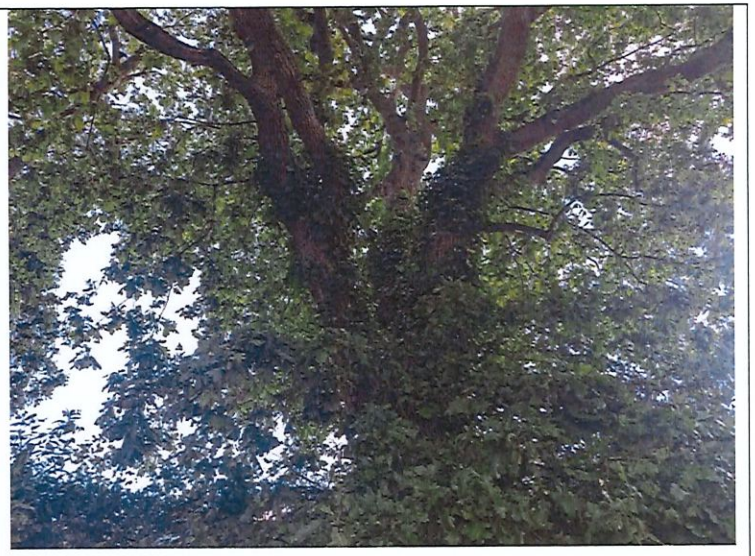
PRF ref	*Type of PRF*	*Condition/description/suitability*	*Photograph(s)*
PRF-1	4x rot holes	4x rot holes located approximately 7.5-12m from ground level on southern and western aspects of branch (south and west facing). Feature entrance measures approximately 750mm height by 100mm width. The knot holes were too high to inspect from ground level, and as such the depth of the features could not be determined. Therefore, the features require further investigation (i.e. **FAR**) to determine their suitability for roosting bats.	 

PRF-2	Lifted bark	Lifted bark is located around the tree. These gaps are considered suitable for only individual or low numbers of bats (i.e. **PRF-I**).	
PRF-3	Ivy	Ivy is located around the tree. These gaps under the stems are considered suitable for only individual or low numbers of bats (i.e. **PRF-I**).	
T3 description			***Photographs***

Summary

T3 is a mature Oak located to the east of the land (TQ 09037 25697). The tree is very large in size (>90cm DBH) and estimated to be over 20m in height.

Features identified on T3 during the survey are detailed below.



PRF ref	*Type of PRF*	*Condition/description/suitability*	*Photograph(s)*
PRF-1	Knot hole	2x rot holes located approximately 7.5-12m from ground level on southern and western aspects of branch (south and west facing). Feature entrance measures approximately 750mm height by 100mm width. The knot holes were too high to inspect from ground level, and as such the depth of the features could not be determined. Therefore, the features require further investigation (i.e. **FAR**) to determine their suitability for roosting bats.	 

PRF-2	Lifted bark & crack in stem	Lifted bark and a crack in the stem is located around the tree, with the crack located on an eastern facing limb approximately 7.5-10m high. The bark is considered suitable for only individual or low numbers of bats (i.e. **PRF-I**), however the crack in requires further investigation (i.e. **FAR**) to determine its suitability for roosting bats.	
PRF-3	Ivy	Ivy is located around the tree. These gaps under the stems are considered suitable for only individual or low numbers of bats (i.e. **PRF-I**).	

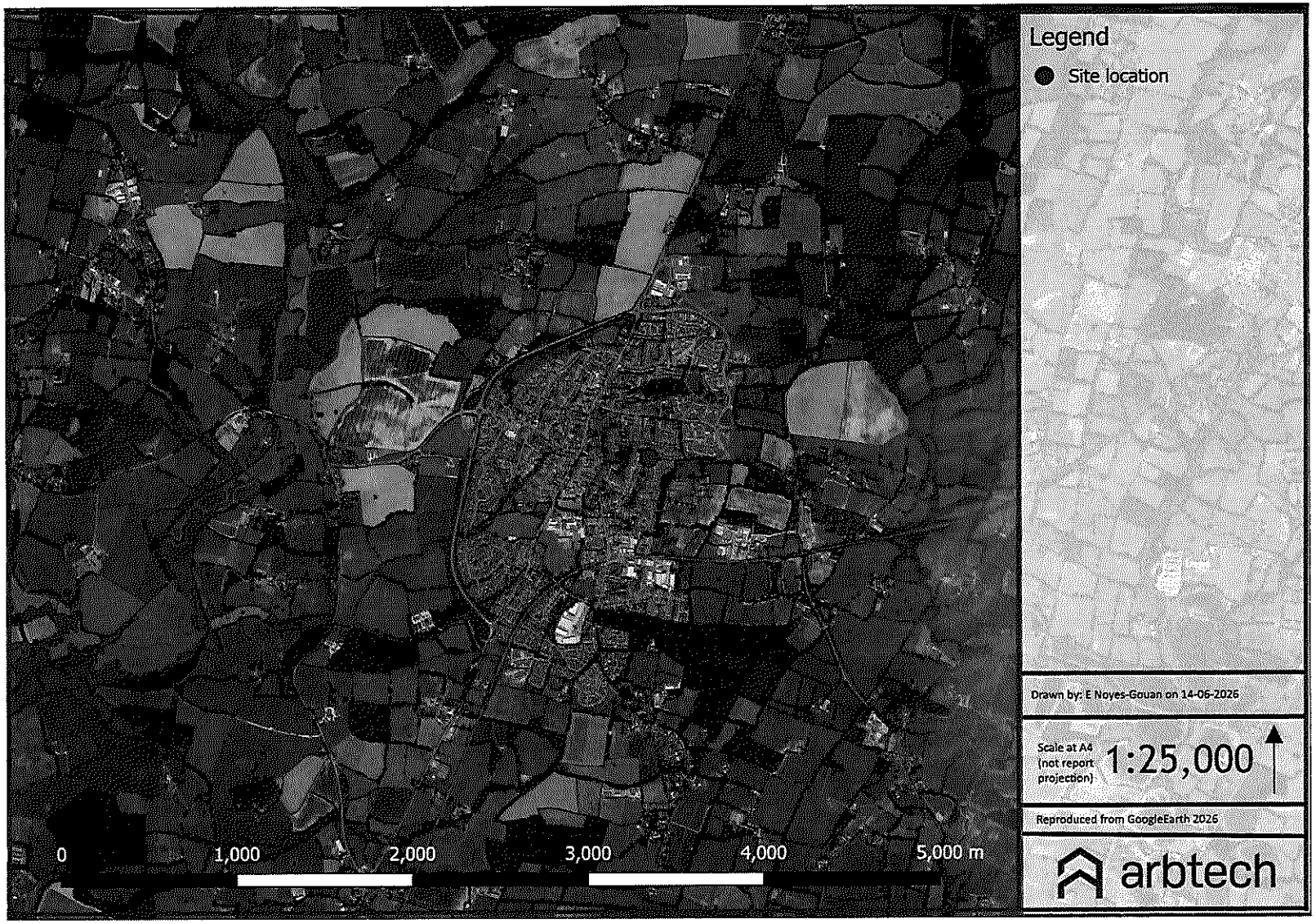
Foreseen Impacts	T2 & T3 will be felled to facilitate the development. This could result in destruction of any bat roosts present within the identified features and could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats.
Recommendations	Typically climbing a tree would be attempted to further inspect roosting features, however these trees possess numerous obstructing branches and ivy, rendering climbing unfeasible for this project. Instead, **two bat emergence and re-entry surveys** should be undertaken on T2 & T3 within the active bat season (May-September) to confirm presence/likely absence of bats roosting within. These survey visits should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive. The survey visits should be at least three weeks apart. Sub-optimal: early May and September. Would require greater justification of timing e.g., weather conditions, known local bat activity. Four surveyors total (2 to each tree) are required to provide full coverage of the building's elevations to look for emerging/re-entering bats. An infrared camera should also be employed as part of the survey to see where any specific roost locations are located. Lighting mitigation may be required based on the outcome of the night bat survey(s). If any bat roosts are confirmed from this survey schedule, a bat licence would be required to demolish the buildings as it would involve the destruction of roosts. This is applied for with the help of a class 2 licensed bat ecologist after planning permission is granted, but before commencement of works.

	No works to the trees that may block or remove potential roosting features should be carried out until the required surveys have been completed. Undertaking such work beforehand could unlawfully affect bats if present and may compromise the validity of the surveys and hinder the planning application process.
Nesting Birds	
Summary of Survey Findings	No bird nests were identified within the trees, shrubs and scrub on-site, however they all offer nesting opportunities and nest-building resources for birds.
Foreseen Impacts	The tree works could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.
Recommendations	The removal of T2 & T3 should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged. Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged.

Appendix 1: GLTA plan



Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed Plans

There are no proposed plans available.

Limitations and Copyright

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Version control			
Status	**Issue**	**Name**	**Date**
Draft	0.1	Elodie Noyes-Gouan BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist	14/06/2026
Review	0.2	Miriam Anderson BSc (Hons); Consultant Ecologist	25/06/2026
Final	1.0	Elodie Noyes-Gouan BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist	26/06/2026

APPENDIX B

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL

4 NOVEMBER 2026

DRAFT HORSHAM DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

REPORT BY CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

FOR INFORMATION

At the extraordinary meeting on 19 August Council considered in detail and agreed a draft letter of objection to the Proposed Main Modifications to Horsham District Council's Draft Local Plan.

This was subsequently submitted.

Officers attended the examination hearings into the plan's *soundness* in Horsham held earlier this month on three occasions. (Cllr Trevor Leonard also attended in a private capacity.)

The Council was subsequently invited by BigStand (an anti-South Adversane site allocation pressure group) to send a last minute joint submission with them and Pulborough and West Chiltington Parish Councils) to the hearing inspector.

We suggested the following inclusion.

Having attended the session on Adversane/Kingswood, we remain unconvinced by the responses that were given by the District Council and site promoters, most notably on

Kingswood's impact on the wider road system, the availability of public transport and active transport.

We believe that:

i. *No consideration has been given to the impact upon New Bridge on the A272 to the northwest of the site, a major artery for the whole area.*

ii. *No consideration has been given to the impact upon Billingshurst Railway Station (the nearest railhead) where there is no scope to improve car parking, or create a bus drop off/turnaround for the proposed shuttle from the new site. Mitigation measures are impossible at this location, so this development would have a disastrous impact upon south Billingshurst and the railway station area in particular.*

Kingswood's ability to attract investment for employment.

We believe that:

i. *There is no evidence that the site can attract employment investment, evidenced by the replacement with housing in the existing Billingshurst Trade & Business Park of a site originally earmarked for local businesses wishing to relocate and /or expand.*

ii. *Much of the Adversane site received consent for commercial use nearly 10 years ago when the economy was much healthier; this has of course never been built out.*

The role of the proposed secondary school.

We believe that:

The submissions of the County Councils' education representatives added confusion to their written statement. Who is the school to serve? School rolls are falling so that there will be capacity at the existing Weald School in a few years anyway. Thus, one of the sites raison d'être is nonexistent.

Sadly, the Inspector in his summing up on the final day announced that he was minded to leave all sites in the plan subject to minor modifications.

The cost of engaging NOVA Planning to draft our objection in just 3 weeks, attend our meeting on the 19 August and attend a further two online meetings was £3,500.

The Committee is invited to note this report.

APPENDIX C

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS
2027

Billingshurst Parish Council				
Calendar of Meetings etc 2027				
January				
6th	**Wednesday**	**Council and Trustee**	**7.00pm**	
12th	Tuesday	Planning and Enviroment Committee	7.00pm	
13th	Wednesday	Property Committee	7.00pm	
27th	Wednesday	Billingshurst Centre Committee	7.00pm	
27th	Wednesday	Finance and General Purposes Committee	7.00pm	
February				
2nd	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
24th	Wednesday	Billingshurst Centre Committee	7.00pm	
24th	Wednesday	Finance and General Purposes Committee	7.00pm	
March				
2nd	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
3rd	**Wednesday**	**Annual Parish Meeting of Electors**	**7.00pm**	**T.B.C**
10th	**Wednesday**	**Council and Trustee**	**7.00pm**	
17th	Wednesday	Working Practices Committee	7.00pm	
24th	Wednesday	Property Committee	7.00pm	
31st	Wednesday	Billingshurst Centre Committee	7.00pm	
31st	Wednesday	Finance and General Purposes Committee	7.00pm	
April				
6th	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
28th	Wednesday	Billingshurst Centre Committee	7.00pm	
28th	Wednesday	Finance and General Purposes Committee	7.00pm	
May				
4th	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
6th	Thursday	Parish & District Council elections		
12th	**Wednesday**	**Annual Council and Trustee**	**7.00pm**	
19th	Wednesday	Property Committee	7.00pm	
26th	Wednesday	Billingshurst Centre Committee	7.00pm	
26th	Wednesday	Finance and General Purposes Committee	7.00pm	
June				
1st	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
2nd	**Wednesday**	**Extraordinary Meeting of Parish Council (To approve a/cs)**	**6.30pm**	**PVN**
2nd	Wednesday	Working Practices Committee	7.00pm	
16th	Wednesday	Beacon Lighting @ Adversane / Sussex 1,550 anniversary	9.00pm	**All Councillors Welcome**
30th	Wednesday	Billingshurst Centre Committee	7.00pm	
30th	Wednesday	Finance and General Purposes Committee	7.00pm	
July				
6th	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
7th	**Wednesday**	**Council and Trustee**	**7.00pm**	
14th	Wednesday	Property Committee	7.00pm	
28th	Wednesday	Billingshurst Centre Committee	7.00pm	
28th	Wednesday	Finance and General Purposes Committee	7.00pm	
August				
3rd	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
7th	Saturday	Family Activity Day @ Jubilee Fields	Noon-4pm	
September				
1st	**Wednesday**	**Council and Trustee**	**7.00pm**	
7th	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
8th	Wednesday	Property Committee	7.00pm	
29th	Wednesday	Billingshurst Centre Committee	7.00pm	
29th	Wednesday	Finance and General Purposes Committee	7.00pm	
October				
5th	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
6th	Wednesday	Budget Workshop	7.00pm	
13th	Wednesday	Working Practices Committee	7.00pm	
27th	Wednesday	Billingshurst Centre Committee	7.00pm	
27th	Wednesday	Finance and General Purposes Committee	7.00pm	

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

2027

November				
2nd	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
3rd	**Wednesday**	**Council and Trustee**	7.00pm	
7th	Sunday	Remembrance Parade/Service		**All Councillors Welcome**
17th	Wednesday	Property Committee	7.00pm	
December				
4th	Saturday	Christmas Fayre @ Billingshurst Centre	10am-3pm	
7th	Tuesday	Planning and Environment Committee	7.00pm	
8th	Wednesday	Working Practices Committee	7.00pm	
15th	Wednesday	Billingshurst Centre Committee	7.00pm	
15th	Wednesday	Finance and General Purposes Committee	7.00pm	
Notes				
All meetings held in the Billingshurst Centre.				
All Committee meetings to		held in the Barnes Room, Stanley Room or Council Chamber 1 or 2		
All Council Meetings to be held in Council Chambers 1 and 2				Updated 20/10/2026

APPENDIX D

BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL	
COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES	
2026-27	
(The Council has set the max. membership for Committees to 10 members.)	
COMMITTEES	
Planning & Environment	**DW**, **FA**, AR, KR, DH, JH, MM
Property	**PD**, PB, SD, EB, **CJ**, DW, DH, JM
Finance & General Purposes	**PD**, **CJ**, AB, PB, EB, JH, TL, MM
Working Practices	**MM**, **JM**, DW, KR, AR, CJ, SD, PB
Billingshurst Centre	**CJ**, **PD**, AB, PB, SD, EB, JH, TL, MM
Complaints (5 members Max)	PB, SD, TL, AB, MM
Complaints Chairman	**SD**
WORKING PARTIES	
Neighbourhood Plan	In abeyance
Internal Audit	PD, MM
Traffic Calming	PB, JM, TL
Sustainable Energy Efficiency	PD, CJ
Mission & Vision	PD, CJ, PB

Bold *indicates Chairman/Vice Chairman*

REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES	
B'hurst Sports & Recn. Assn. (BSRA) x2	SD, CJ (To ensure that two can always attend) + Assistant Clerk
CPRE	DH
Friends of Station Road Gardens x1	CJ
HALC (H'ham Assn Local Councils) x2	SD, MM
N'hood Warden Steering Group x2	SD, KR
Parish and Neighbourhood Climate Action Network	PD
Rural Market Towns Group (RMTG)	SD
Better Billingshurst Fund (BIF) x3 + officer.	DW, CJ, FA (PD = RESERVE)
Trustee of Dauxwood Pre-School x1	PB
West Sussex Association Local Councils (WSALC) AGM x2	SD, MM
Community Partnership x1	KR
Youth liasion - all matters	AR

Updated 21/09/2026