

Design & Access Statement

**Design & Access Statement - Land South of Billingshurst Business Park
(Phase 3), Hilland Road, Billingshurst, West Sussex**

DUNMOORE 

DLA.2244.DAS.RPT02.V2

This document has been produced on behalf of



by Davies Landscape Architects for the sole purpose of planning for the project below:

Document Title

Design & Access Statement - Land South of Billingshurst Business Park (Phase 3) Hilland Road
Billingshurst West Sussex

Document Reference

DLA.2244.DAS.RPT02

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Document History

Rev	Purpose	Author	Rev'd	Auth'd	Date
V1	Draft for initial team comment	SH	RW	MD	02.04.26
V2	Planning	SH	RW	MD	07.2.04.26

Rev	Description of changes
V2	Design Team text changes

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DAVIESLANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS

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arp
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01 - Introduction

Purpose

Design & Access Statement

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by Davies Landscape Architects, on behalf of Dunmoore to accompany an outline application for Class E g (iii) B2/B8 commercial buildings including detailed permission for means of access.

The proposals form an update to the illustrative Units 17 and 18 to the south of 'Phase 2' land shown on the mixed use planning application currently being determined by HC (Ref: DC/25/1697. The site is located immediately beyond the BUAB, which wraps around this part of the site and Unit 19 has recently gained full planning consent, effectively enclosing the parcel to the north, west and south. Access to the site was also granted with Unit 19.

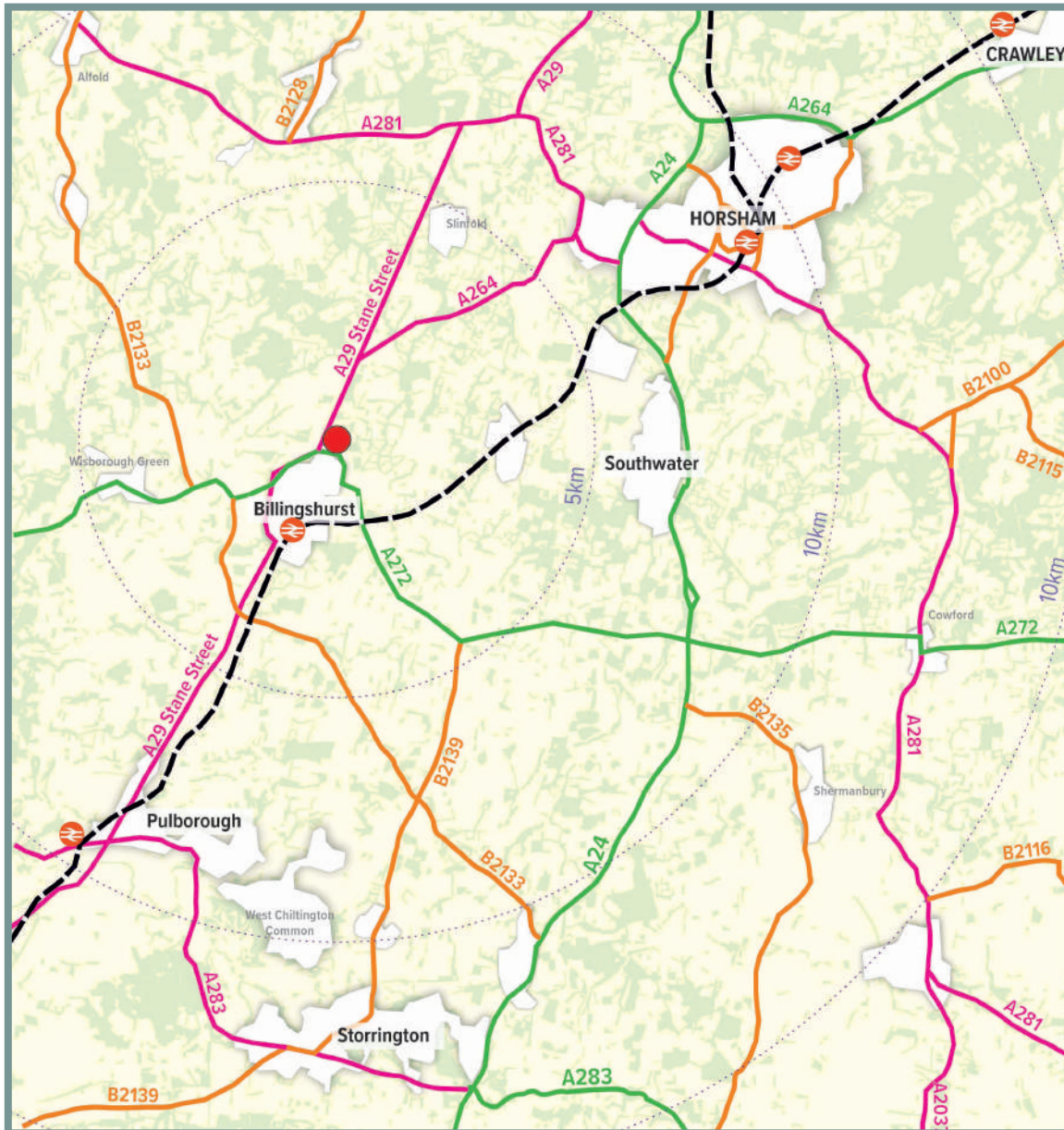
The DAS provides an analysis of the proposed development site and its context, bringing together the various inputs, key drivers and contributing factors that have evolved throughout the design process from the design team to result in a development that successfully responds to its part in settlement, part settlement edge location and the local context of the site.

Layout

As the application is being submitted in outline, the proposed masterplan and strategies illustrate, in principle, how the site could deliver the proposals. Detailed matters relating to layout, appearance, landscaping and the internal road layout will be reserved for future consideration. Plans within the DAS should therefore be considered for illustrative purposes only.

Illustrative Masterplan

Site Overview



Wider Context

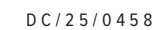
The 1.27ha site (including access) is located on the northern edge of the settlement of Billingshurst (OS reference centred TQ 09290 26695).

Billingshurst is a large settlement located approximately 10km southwest of Horsham and supports a wide range of community services and facilities. The settlement is connected to the north and south by the A29 - Stane Street.

The site forms the eastern aspect of the Billingshurst Trade and Business Park. The A29 Stane Street, directly west of the Business Park provides direct connections to north to Horsham and south to Pulborough and the south coast.

The site lies within the planning jurisdiction of Horsham District Council (HDC).

The site forms part of a wider site that was granted permission in June 2019 - DC/18/2122. There have been several variations to the final as built layout



The Brief

The applicants following extensive efforts to bring forward the positive development of their land at Billingshurst for employment, have, following careful consideration and informed by the refusal of 'The Range' application earlier this year (19 February 2025) and more long-standing issues around viability constraints have developed a new strategy for the Phase 2 and 3 land.

This includes taking on board factors relating to not only viability (fundamental to the delivery of a workable scheme) but also a major shift in national policy in particular in relation to housing requirements. This allied to the particular difficulties the Council is experiencing in keeping pace with minimum housing requirements, and maintaining a supply of high-quality, well located employment land makes for a compelling case in support of these proposals. That the Council have been unable to put in place a new Local Plan capable of meeting identified means that a plan led means of addressing future needs is not available. Therefore the submission of this planning application is the only route by which the considerable benefits of the application proposals can be realised.

Following positive pre-application engagement with officers we trust that the substantive and attractive package of planning benefits which the

proposals offer, warrant support. These include the following:

- The delivery of a viable, employment floorspace to meet future needs. Needs that will not be met unless a viable future can be secured for the site.
- Employment floorspace on the flatter and more suited Phase 3 land, which is less sensitive to development and can help screen the urbanising/ detracting effects of the electricity pylons, telephone mast and main road beyond which impact this part of the site.
- The swift delivery of a new employment premises which meets the specific site requirements of a successful local business.

The proposals when completed, alongside the jobs already delivered on the Business Park, will total 123 vital jobs and 26 for the EVM application.

The substantial economic and social benefits which can be realised through the construction of these major development projects, the jobs they will offer, with future opportunities down the line at the operational phase.

Further social and economic benefits will arise through the construction and future occupation of much needed market and affordable homes tailored to meet the latest evidence of needs. Needs which in Horsham are acute and which are the subject of a

separate application on the Phase 2 land HDC Ref. DC/25/1910

These substantial benefits can be achieved within the two applications, this one and the Phase 2 housing application to the north

02 - Place

Local Context

Access & Movement

The principal route through the area is the A29 - Stane Street, a 90km long Roman Road originally linking London to Chichester. The road now forms a direct route between the village of Pullborough (9km SW) and Clemsfold (7.6km NE). Stane Street runs along the entirety of the site's western boundary.

To the southwest of the site, Stane Street acts as a bypass around Billingshurst, before rejoining the original route immediately south of the town. The original route of Stane Street is now formed by the High Street within Billingshurst.

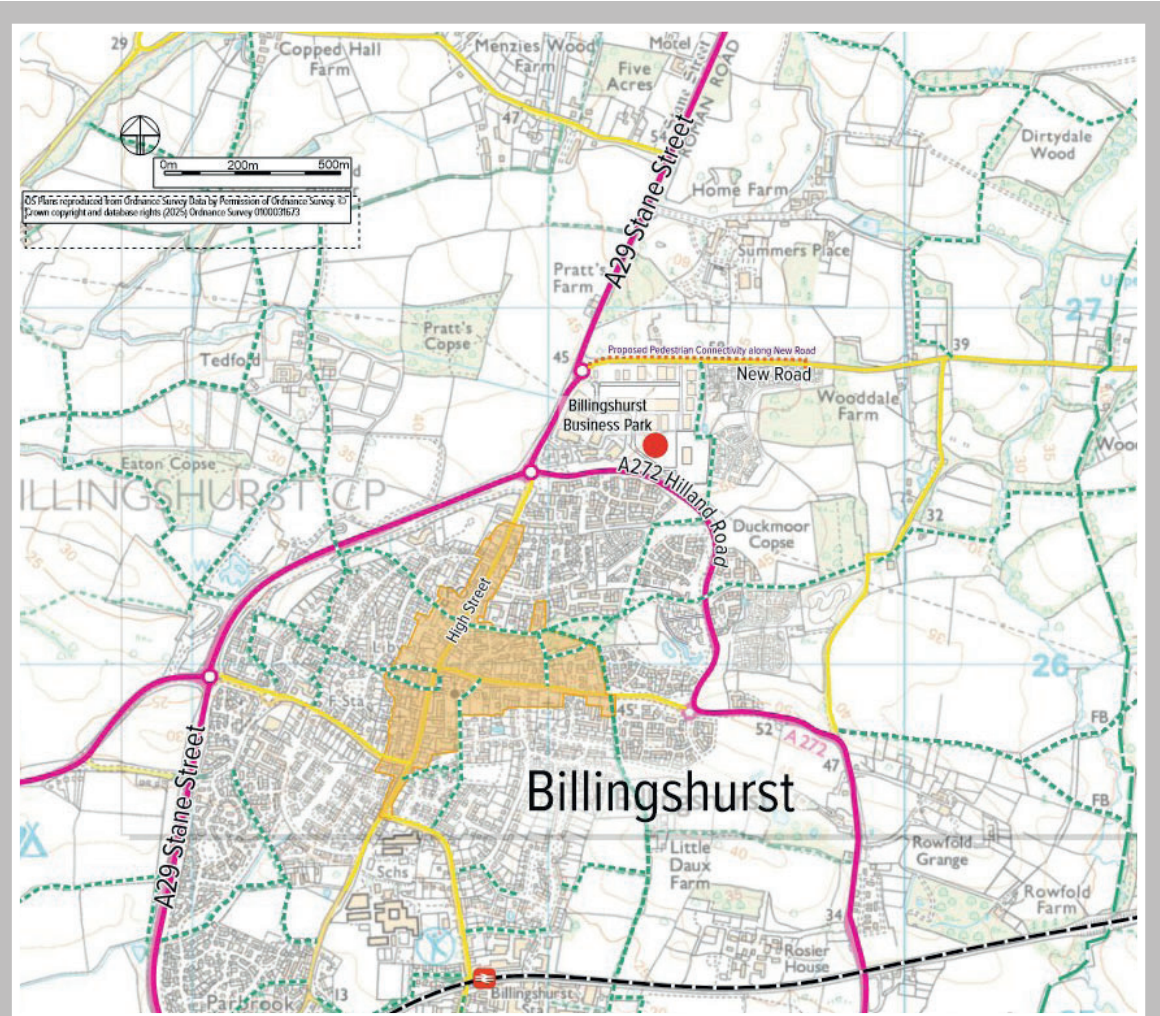
New Road runs along the northern boundary of the site and connects to Stane Street in the north-western corner. New Road is a small local lane providing access to a number of farmsteads and residential properties in the landscape to the east.

The nearest bus stop to the site is located on Stane Street, circa 220m from the site's western entrance.

Billingshurst Train Station lies to the south of the site and is an approximate 2km walk, cycle or car journey.

There is direct access to the town centre/High Street circa 850m south.

Public Footpath 1942 - This footpath runs along the inside of the site's eastern boundary from New Road and continues south towards Hilland Road.



Site Context Plan (showing permitted development)

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---|--|
|  | Site location |  | B road |
|  | Public footpath |  | Railway |
|  | Bridleway |  | Listed buildings within study area |
|  | A road |  | Conservation area including listed buildings |

Landscape

There are no national, regional or locally designated landscapes or protected features within or immediately adjoining the site.

The site lies within the following two relevant Landscape Character Areas (LCA's):

- The West Sussex County Council (WSCC) (October 2005) - Low Weald area- LW6 Central Low Weald; and
- Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment (October 2003) - Area G: Wooded Small Scale Farmlands, under G3: Slinfold & Five Oaks.

The extant permission will permanently change the character of the former wider site into built development however the LCA's identify the positive effects of mature vegetation and field boundaries within the landscape. The existing trees within the site and vegetation around the boundary will be key in mitigating the potential effects on the wider landscape and setting.

Note the LCA was commissioned before the expansion of the housing and new by pass to the south.

The enhancement of these features through improved connectivity, longevity and screening will form key drivers in the landscape and development strategy.

Ecology

There are no statutory or non-statutory designated sites within 1 km of the site.

The site is predominantly grassland with small

pockets of scrub, tall ruderal, a small number of trees, hedgerow and boundary fence.

The habitats on site are common, of generally low - moderate ecological value and are easy to replace.

Bat Activity Surveys of the site in 2018 recorded minimal activity on the north edge of the site, concluded to be in associated with the off site trees to the north. The only habitat that could be regarded as being of significant potential value i.e. the hedge and trees adjacent to the east boundary of the site, will be retained with a soft landscape buffer to the new buildings. Further surveys are therefore not required.

Heritage

The site and its boundaries are not considered to have any historical interest.

Whilst Stane street would suggest potential extensive archaeological investigations south of the

site did not identify any significant archaeological remains within a hundred metres of the site. Both geophysical survey and trial trenching ahead of recent development north-west of the site found nothing of interest either.

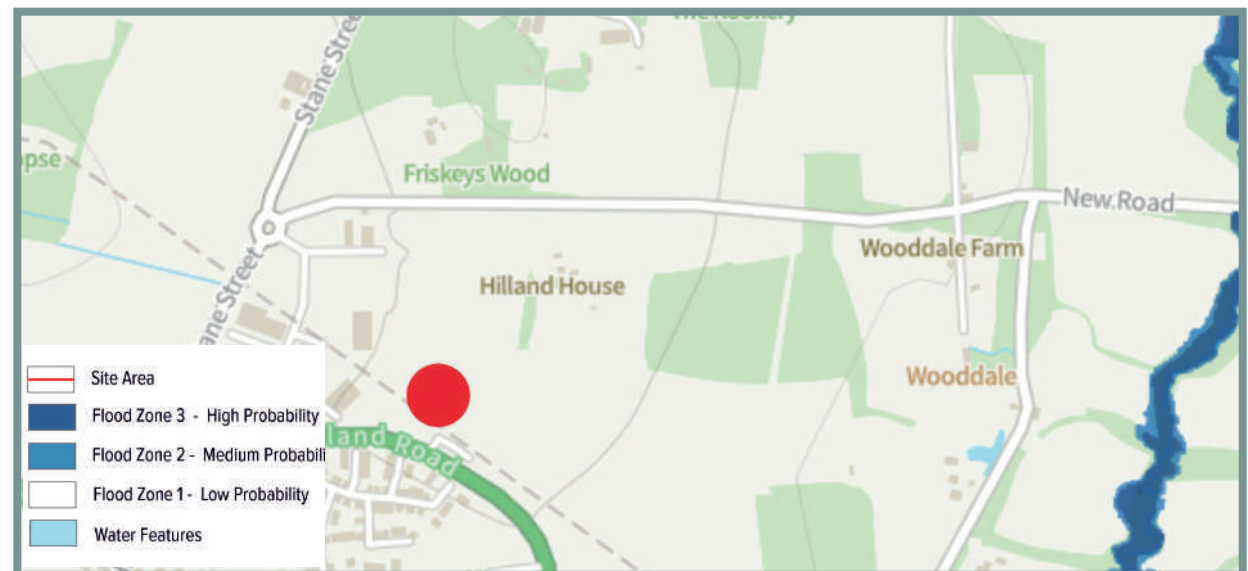
The nearest listed building is Summer Place to the north which lies within a Victorian 'parkscape'.

Views are screened from the site by woodland and the site was never part of the park. The permitted housing will further truncate any associations.

No further heritage assets were identified as having the potential to be affected by the proposals.

Hydrology

The Environment Agency Flood Map (<http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk/>) shows the proposed site as located entirely within Flood Zone 1, which is land at the lowest risk of fluvial flooding.



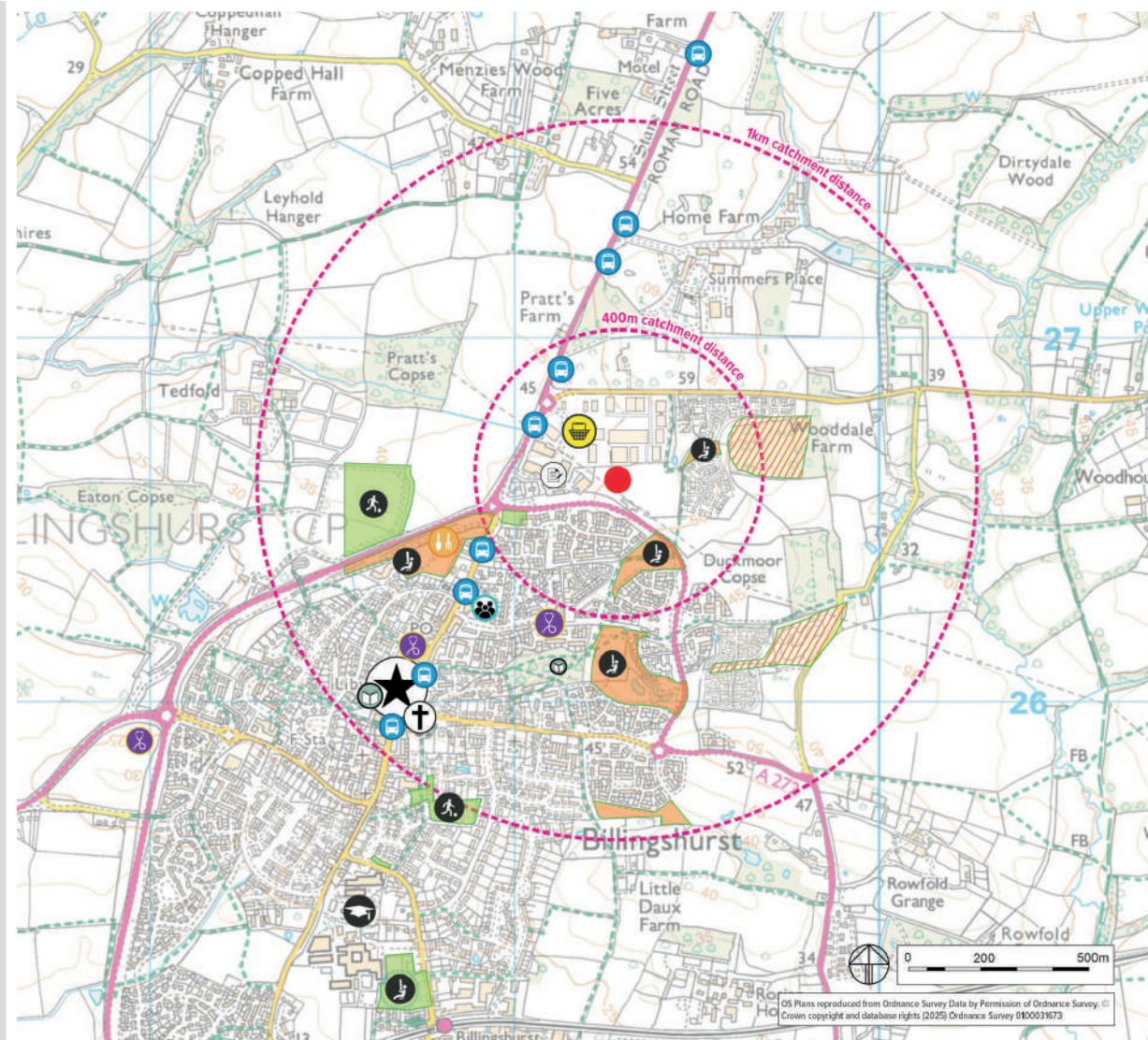
Local Community & Facilities

The site is very well located in relation to the facilities and services available in Billingshurst including primary schools, the Weald secondary school, dentist and doctor's surgeries, convenience and comparison shopping, leisure facilities, pubs and restaurants.

The centre of Billingshurst is around 850m to the south of the site. It is also well served by public transport with bus stops on either side of the A29 carriageway in close proximity to the site.

In addition, a mainline rail station is located in Billingshurst, 2.2km from the site providing direct services to Horsham, Gatwick Airport and London. Bus infrastructure improvements and a cycle/pedestrian link between the site and Billingshurst to the south have already been delivered as part of the works completed on-site (Phases 1 and 2).

A full list of the available facilities with walking and cycling distances is set out on the next page.



 Play Area	 St Mary's Church	 Billingshurst Primary Academy	 Bus Stops	 Employment
 Sports	 Village Core - Pub, Post Office & Shops	 Garage, Retail and Food	 Allotments	 Leisure and Recreation
 Natural POS	 Community Hall	 Surgery		

Local Facilities



Local retail outlets



Local supermarket



Town High Street



Neighbourhood Play Area



Billingshurst Community Centre



Billingshurst Surgery

Education	Distance	Walk Time	Cycle Time
Billingshurst Primary Academy	1,700 metres	20 minutes walk	7 minutes cycle
The Weald Community School	2,200 metres	26 minutes	9 minutes cycle
Health Care	Distance	Walk Time	Cycle Time
Billingshurst Surgery	1,200 metres	14 minutes walk	5 minutes cycle
Billingshurst Pharmacy	1,200 metres	14 minutes walk	5 minutes cycle
Arun Valley Pharmacy	2,200 metres	26 minutes walk	9 minutes cycle
Food Store	Distance	Walk Time	Cycle Time
Lidl	150 metres	2 minutes walk	1 minute cycle
Morrisons Daily (Trade Park)	150 metres	150 metres	1 minute cycle
Morrisons Daily (High Street)	1,100 metres	1,100 metres	5 minutes cycle
Coop Food	1,900 metres	23 minutes walk	8 minutes cycle
Tesco Express	2,300 metres	27 minutes walk	10 minutes cycle
Leisure and Recreation	Distance	Walk Time	Cycle Time
Park (north of Newman Way)	1,400 metres	17 minutes walk	6 minutes cycle
Billingshurst Library	1,400 metres	17 minutes walk	6 minutes cycle
Billingshurst Leisure Centre	2,200 metres	26 minutes walk	9 minutes cycle
Employment	Distance	Walk Time	Cycle Time
Billingshurst Trade Park	200 metres	2 minutes walk	1 minute cycle
Rosier Business Park	3,300 metres	39 minutes walk	14 minutes cycle
Food and Drink	Distance	Walk Time	Cycle Time
Costa	150 metres	2 minutes walk	1 minute cycle
Greggs	150 metres	2 minutes walk	1 minute cycle
The Kings Head Inn	1,100 metres	13 minutes walk	5 minutes cycle
Little Bean Café	1,100 metres	13 minutes walk	5 minutes cycle
The Kings Arms	1,300 metres	15 minutes walk	5 minutes cycle
The Railway Inn	2,200 metres	26 minutes walk	9 minutes cycle

Facilities Table - taken from T/A

03 - Site

Site Analysis

Features

The site has been subject to some earth movement and storage as part of the wider site development which has resulted in a low-quality landscape.

Retained features are limited to the northern west corner where 5 Cat B Oaks lie just outside of the red line. The oak within the road alignment is permitted to be removed as part of DC/25/0458 (Photo A).

The boundary to the east adjoining DC/25/0458 is currently undefined on site.

The southern boundary is currently open with vegetation being removed and managed within the pylon corridor which separates the site from the landscape buffer along Hilland Road. This forms a very low quality boundary and setting.

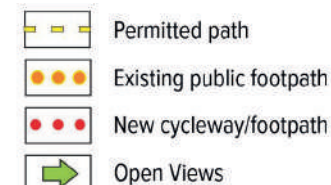
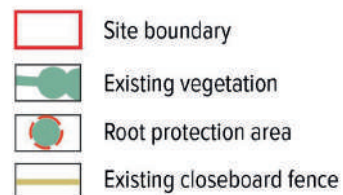
Whilst also currently undefined the western boundary will be formed by the permitted access road and landscape of DC/25/0458.

The site consists of low-quality grassland which is gradually developing areas of scrubby grassland and ruderal herb, in particular around the perimeters.

Built features are notably the pylons which aligns with the southern boundary and are notable features within the local landscape (see Photo B).



Site Analysis Plan



Views and Perceptual Qualities

The visual qualities of the site are currently influenced by the low quality landscape on its immediate surrounds. This will be further influenced and urbanised as the permitted developments come forward.

The landscape buffer along the transport corridor affords a degree of screening through earth mounding however the landscape planting is sparse and contributes to the perception of a low/moderate quality urban edge.

Once all of the permitted development is completed the site will only be experienced from the south and the development immediately west including the permitted access road approach.



Photo A-Pylons and warehouses to the south/southwest



Photo B-View from Hilland Road to the south of the site

Site Considerations

- 1 Mature oaks within the site and their Root Protection Areas.
- 2 The pylon corridor and required clearances.
- 3 Existing and permitted access routes.
- 4 Interface between residential and commercial.
- 5 Views of the development to the south which lies outside of the extant permissions.
- 6 Incorporation and consideration of views from FP1942.

-  Site boundary
-  Open views
-  Views screened
-  Transitional Edge
-  Root Protection Area
-  Area not covered by extant permissions



04 - Design Response

Development Strategy

GI Framework

Movement Strategy

Height Strategy

Built Form Strategy

Development Strategy

Key deliverables

- Up to 4558sqm of business floorspace (Classes E g (iii)/ B2/B8).
- Existing access off Stane Street utilising the approved access to Unit 19 (EMV).
- Retention and management of key landscape assets within public realm for continued contribution to local and wider character.
- The mixed use scheme includes the retention of Footpath 1942 within a strong landscape corridor providing an alternative pedestrian access route to Billingshurst.
- Enhancement and introduction of a range of habitat feature such as grassland, scrub, tree belts and species rich hedgerows with trees.
- The drainage strategy will align with the approved permission.
- The final design and materials strategy will align with the aspirations of Billingshurst Design Statement (BDS). The key fundamental principles have been included within the following strategies.
- Development outside of the RPA of adjacent Oak trees to the north.
- Reinforced planting to the southern boundary and southern elevations.

BDS - Billingshurst Design Strategy.

LCA - Landscape Character Area Strategy.



GI Framework

- Protection of the existing Oaks and their RPA's.(LCA/BDS).
- Increased Green infrastructure as a core element of the development framework providing setting, character, screening and increased connectivity of features and habitats.
- Increased species diversity to provide longevity, resilience to disease and climatic change (BDS).
- Interlinked open spaces providing opportunities for recreation and access to the wider landscape including via FP1942 (LCA/BDS).
- Enhance/reintroduce site boundaries and hedgerow trees where possible providing connectivity both within the site and features beyond its boundaries (LCA).



-  Site boundary
-  Existing Trees
-  Proposed Trees
-  Green infrastructure connection
-  Pylon corridor - low level landscape

Movement Strategy

Access to the residential area will be through an extension of the business park access road. Access to units 16, 17 and 18 will be through the proposed access to the EVM unit 19.

The Transport Assessment which accompanies the application considered the effects of the development on the local highway network taking into account committed development.

It finds that the development will not have a significant impact on flows of traffic in the area, the residual effects of which would not be considered 'severe' for the purposes of the NPPF, paragraph 116.

The site benefits from a sustainable location with good highway, pedestrian, cycle links and public transport links. As part of Phases 1 and 2, the well established four arm roundabout on Stane Street was installed along with the provision of a pedestrian/cycle link to the south of the site and bus stops adjacent to the site along the A29. These have been successfully in use in association with the commercial use of the site and mean that unlike alternative speculative schemes the high quality transport links which the site benefits are already in place, well known and capable of supporting the proposals.

In turn this means that the proposals can be brought forward more quickly than would otherwise be the case, with less disruption to the local highway network and enable the significant benefits of the proposals to be realised sooner. An important factor in addressing the Council's deficient housing land supply.

In terms of relevant NPPF footnote 9 policy considerations, paragraph 110 indicates that significant development should be focussed at locations which are or can be made sustainable. This is undoubtedly the case here, located at the edge of one of Horsham's largest settlements, accessible via a choice of transport modes, and within acceptable walking and cycle distance of a range of local amenities and services. With regard to paragraph 115 of the NPPF safe and suitable access from the local highway network is already in place and effects on the local highway network will be acceptable.

It is therefore considered that the proposals accord with the key transport policies of the NPPF and HDPF policies, in particular policies 40 and 41.



FP1942 will be retained along its current route.

Footpath/pedestrian routes within the site to provide a series of circular walks within the residential element as well as direct links to the movement network within the existing business park and beyond,

Easy access to adjoining cycle routes.

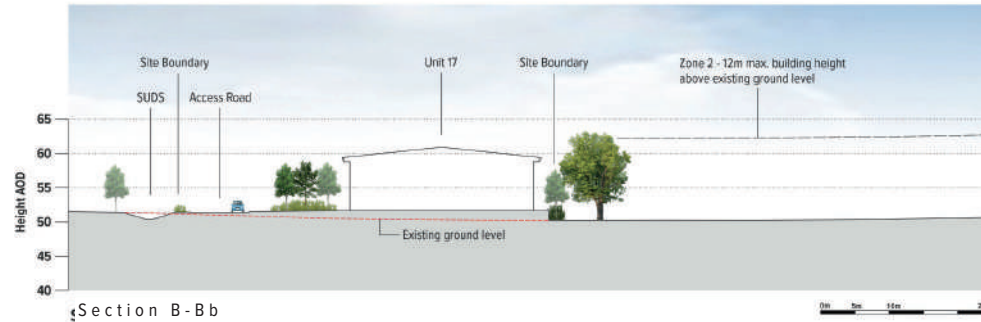
All routes to have natural surveillance and where possible be linked to landscape corridors.

Direct links to Bus stops along Stane Street.

Height Strategy

Heights will be sympathetic and responsive to their context and have been carefully considered in response to the existing landscape character, views and influence of the existing business park.

The outline consent for the phase 2 commercial development area established maximum building height zones in response to landscape sensitivity as shown opposite. In addition, the commercial buildings would require level plateaux which raised ground levels by +2m towards the west boundary resulting in a tall retaining wall on the boundary with Lidl.



Section Location Plan - NTS

Built Form Strategy

- All existing oak trees to the north are to be retained within landscape buffers.
- Impacts softened by buffer zones, planting and screening, landscape buffers between commercial and residential as well as Hilland Rd to the south (BDS).
- Easy accessibility to public transport and other pedestrian/cycle links (BDS).
- Avoid vast areas of paving (BDS).
- Green space should be encouraged between buildings (BDS).
- Should be sympathetic to the adjacent residential development through and architectural narrative and street furniture.
- Modern buildings with a design approach and finish consistent with that which has proved popular across the wider business site providing it with a coherent identity.
- Access and parking are proposed to meet relevant standards and cater for convenient and safe access for all anticipated vehicles.
- The main access routes and pathways will be designed in accordance with the County Councils Local Design Guide (BDS).



- Existing Trees
- Proposed Trees
- Screening - Landscape/GI buffers
- Architectural transition to residential
- Visible frontage from Hilland Road
- Vehicular Access
- Cycle/Pedestrian Access

Sustainability



Sustainable Transport

Promoting active and sustainable transport options

- Dedicated EV charging points.
- Easy access to cycle routes/links to the settlement core and facilities.
- Promote car share schemes such as West Sussex Car Share Scheme, LiftShare, 2Carshare and GoCarShare, the details of which will be included in the Travel Welcome Pack.
- Research opportunities to provide travel vouchers to incentivise travel via sustainable modes which could include season tickets for public transport use.



Health and Wellbeing

Buildings and public open spaces to promote healthy lives and life choices

- Links to open spaces and wider footpath/cycle network.
- Healthy buildings.



Environmental Net gain

Encouraging ecosystems to the application and its surrounding areas

- Improved Green Infrastructure and biodiversity.



Community & Social Benefits

Integration of the development into the surrounding community

- Provision of break out spaces.
- Links to the settlement core and community facilities.



Carbon Footprint

Ensuring the development is adaptable and resilient to climate and social changes

- Working towards net Zero.
- Renewable technologies (BDS).
- Sustainable water technologies including re-use of grey water and water butts (BDS).



Future Proofing

Ensuring the development is adaptable and resilient to climate and social changes

- Energy efficiency.
- Renewable technologies.

Summary

Planning

In summary these planned proposals offer an exciting opportunity to help address employment needs on an otherwise stalled site due to delays and viability. Benefits which can be achieved at a highly sustainable site with safe and suitable access already in place which will aid the speedy delivery of the site.

Any limited impacts which may arise are those relating to conflict with spatial policies which direct new development to within existing BUAB's. Phase 3 land remains beyond the BUAB, despite being surrounded on three sides by it, including to the north (Phase 2). It is therefore an entirely logical and otherwise unconstrained location for the expansion of Billingshurst. The appeal Inspector dealing with the previous appeal on the land accepted as much noting the urbanising effects of the pylons and telephone mast and finding any landscape harm to be limited. The spatial policies with which this aspect of the proposals would conflict are out of date.

Additionally, it is worth noting that the neighbouring residential scheme at Hilland House has recently been allowed on appeal and the EVM (Unit 19) which lies immediately adjacent to the east has full planning permission. The remaining phase 3 land will therefore be entirely surrounded by development.

Landscape

The immediate landscape character has further been eroded by recent planning consents at Hilland House and the EVM applications.

The remaining Phase 3 landscape has low value and low sensitivity and its development would not materially affect the wider landscape character.

The boundary to the north containing a number of oak trees will be protected and enhanced with native tree and scrub planting to create a continuous green corridor separation with Phase 2 land and managed for both species diversity and habitat gains.

A landscape scheme has already been submitted for the land lying to the south of the Phase 3 access road and this will be supplemented with additional native tree and shrub planting south of the units, which will further filter views from the south.

A native hedgerow interspersed with native trees will mark the east boundary, supplementing the approved EVM landscape proposals. The cumulative effect will further filter views from footpath 1942 to the east, in addition to the screening provided by the EVM unit itself.

Drainage

The proposals will tie in with the Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy for the wider Billingshurst Trade Park

Highways

The Transport Assessment concludes that the development will not have a significant impact on flows of traffic in the area.

The site benefits from a sustainable location with good highway, pedestrian, cycle links and public transport links. This includes the established four arm roundabout on Stane Street and a pedestrian/cycle link to the south of the site and bus stops adjacent to the site along the A29.

In turn this means that the proposals can be brought forward more quickly than would otherwise be the case, with less disruption to the local highway network and enable the significant benefits of the proposals to be realised sooner.

The location of the site on the edge of Horsham's largest settlements, provides a highly sustainable location, accessible via a choice of transport modes, and within acceptable walking and cycle distance of a range of local amenities and services.

It is therefore considered that the proposals accord with the key transport policies of the NPPF and HDPF policies, in particular policies 40 and 41.

Ecology

The site is predominantly grassland with small pockets of scrub, tall ruderal, a small number of trees, hedgerow and boundary fence.

The development will result in the loss of species-poor grassland, tall ruderal, small pockets of scrub and trees. Landscaping around the development has been proposed to help minimise habitat loss.

The site provides potential habitat for a range of fauna. The following require further consideration:

- Bats – There are no buildings or suitable roosting features in trees and so roosting bats are deemed to be absent. The site provides foraging habitat along hedgerows and the canopies of overhanging trees with a small number trees within grassland, scrub and tall ruderal vegetation providing some further limited value. No significant impact to bats is predicted as a result site clearance. A suitable lighting strategy should be implemented and there is potential for enhancements through roosting provision and landscape design.
- Other mammals – The site has potential to support various small mammals with opportunities for foraging and passing Badgers. No further surveys are required but precautionary methods of working to avoid trapping mammals have been suggested.
- Birds – The hedge, scrub and trees provide potential nesting opportunities for a range of common bird species. No further surveys at this time but any tree felling, clearance of scrub or maintenance of trees or hedges if required, should be undertaken outside the bird nesting season unless a pre-works survey confirms absence.

