

TECHNICAL NOTE

PROJECT: Land South of Billingshurst Business Park (Phase 3) – Representation on behalf of Northgate Properties

REPORT: 2532/TN/03 – Technical Note

DATE: April 2026

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1. This Technical Note is prepared by Highgate Transportation Ltd (HTp) on behalf of Northgate Properties with regard to the outline planning application (DC/26/0033) to Horsham District Council (HDC) for the erection of buildings for Eg(iii)/B2/B8 use with associated yard areas, vehicle parking and access on land south of Billingshurst Business Park (Phase 3) Hilland Road, Billingshurst, West Sussex.
 2. The need for the applicant under application DC/26/0033 to connect the proposed development site to Public Right of Way (PRoW) FP1942 and enable access for all pedestrians will be set out in this Technical Note. The connection is required to enhance permeability including for future residents of the approved site DC/24/0749, thereby enabling future employees at the site to access the proposed development by foot and cycle, and therefore not be reliant on the private car.
 3. It will also be suggested that suitable surfacing along the FP1942 within the application's blue line boundary is provided to enable pedestrian access throughout the year, thereby ensuring the route is accessible for all, including wheelers e.g. pedestrians with pushchairs and wheelchair users. It is also considered that permissive rights for cycling should be given for the section of FP1942, which is within the land under the applicant's control, to allow cycle use.
 4. It will be demonstrated in this Technical Note how good masterplanning practice would dictate that footpaths, which connect separate parcels of development, should be uniform in their delivery, i.e. should provide access for pedestrians and cyclists via a 3.0 metre surfaced path which connects to the wider network.
 5. PRoW FP1942 lies within the applicant's ownership, as indicated by the blue line of the Site Location Plan, provided at **Figure 1**, and therefore the applicant is in a position to carry out or contribute towards surfacing of the existing footpath, as well as provide permissive rights to cyclists, as has been carried out elsewhere within Billingshurst, including at the recently approved site DC/24/0749.

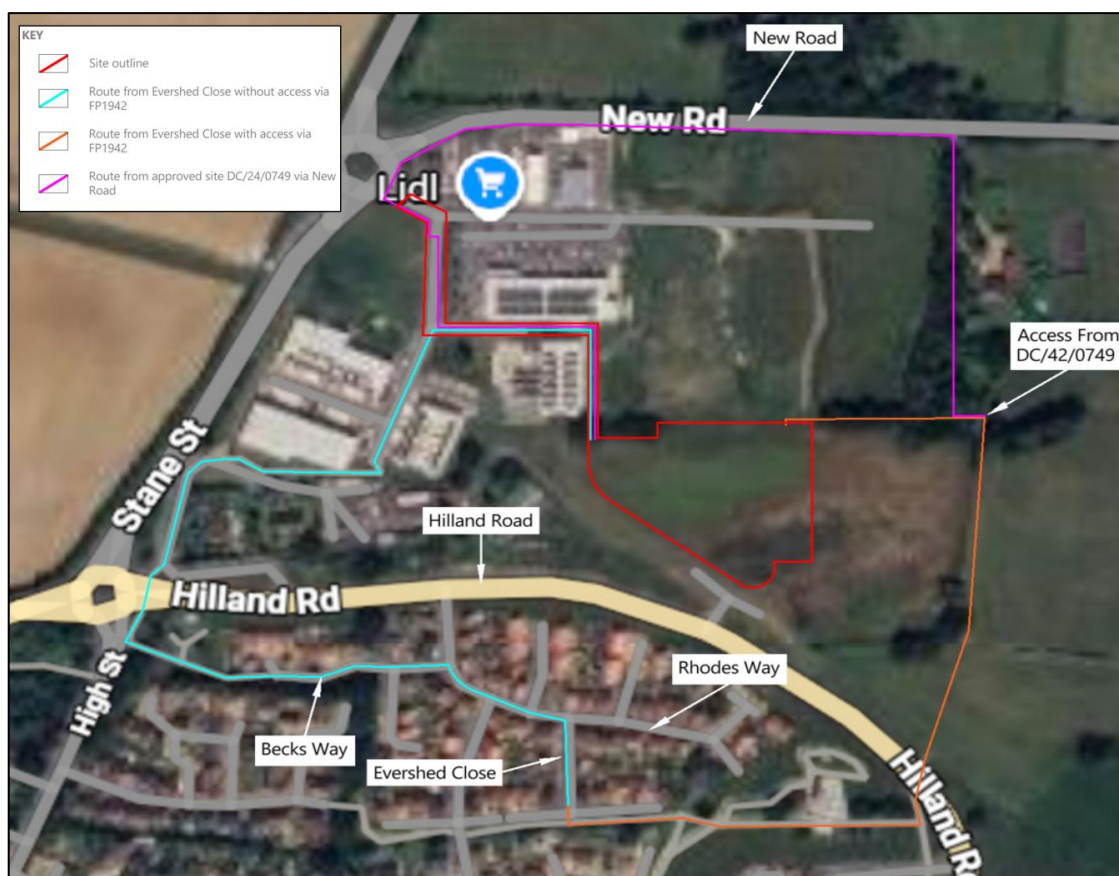
Figure 1 – Application DC/26/0033 – Site Location Plan

6. It is noted that the Transport Assessment and Design and Access Statement submitted under planning application DC/26/0033 refers to a mixed use development for 102 residential development and employment use, and therefore it appears that the documents are for application DC/25/1697. This Technical Note provides comments in response to the erection of buildings for Eg(iii)/B2/B8 use with associated yard areas, vehicle parking and access on land south of Billingshurst Business Park (Phase 3) Hilland Road. The Technical Note also includes suggested conditions which should be imposed on all (or any which are granted) of DC/25/1910, DC/25/1697 and DC/26/0033.
7. Comments have been received from the West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Highway officer stating that PRoW FP1942 is in proximity of the site, and the officer has requested that confirmation is provided as to whether the development proposes to connect into the footpath.
8. It is considered that connecting to the PRoW footpath (FP1942) is important for good masterplanning to enable future employees to be able to access the site directly from the south and east, including from the recently approved site DC/24/0749.
9. An annotated extract of the site layout for planning application DC/24/0749 is provided in **Figure 2**, which shows where future residents of the approved application could access PRoW 1942 to continue to the employment at the proposed site.

Figure 2 – Annotated extract of site layout from approved application DC/24/0749



10. If the application site does not provide access to PRoW FP1942, future employees who may live in the approved site or on New Road, would need to travel along the footway on New Road (provided under the approved application DC/24/0749), which would be a circa 835 metre walk (10 minute walk) from the site (starting from the access from the site to PRoW 1942, as indicated on **Figure 2**), onto FP1942 and north to New Road to the New Road/Stane Street roundabout and through the Billingshurst Business Park.
11. Furthermore, future employees who live to the south of the A272 Hilland Road, i.e. on Evershed Close, would be required to walk circa 825 metres (10 minute walk) via Rhodes Way and Becks Way, across Hilland Road and through the Billingshurst Business Park.
12. Access to the application site from Evershed Close, via the existing surfaced paths to the east of the residential area and across Hilland Road to FP1942 would be circa 630 metres (8 minute walk).
13. The routes to the application site are shown in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3 – Routes to application site DC/26/0033

14. By restricting permeability and restricting neighbouring areas to access the future employment via a direct route from PRoW FP1942, the proposals are contrary to Paragraph 117(a) of the NPPF, which states *"give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use"*.
15. Additionally, NPPF paragraph 115(b) states *"it should be ensured that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users"*. If access is not provided to the site via FP1942, it is considered that the proposed development is contrary to paragraph 115(b) due to access to the site not being direct
16. Furthermore, it is considered that the applicant should be required to contribute to or provide suitable surfacing along the section of FP1942 within the applicant's site boundary, and to provide a 3.0 metre wide path, to ensure that access to the employment use is available for all throughout the year, ensuring that the proposals are in accordance with NPPF paragraph 115(b). It is also considered that permissive rights for cycling should be given along this section of FP1942, which is within land under the applicant's control to allow cycle use.

17. By surfacing FP1942 within the applicant's ownership, this would enable connectivity and integration between the application site and the approved site (DC/24/0749) as well as the surfaced network of routes to the south of Hilland Road. Enabling good masterplanning between sites is in accordance with Active Travel England Guidance for Pavements and Footpaths recommending that footpaths should be direct, logical and intuitive to understand, and pavements and footways should link to other routes and facilities as part of a holistic, connected network.
18. It is considered that the surfacing of FP1942 should be a compacted limestone, i.e. WSCC's bridleway specification, to allow pedestrians and wheelers, as well as cyclists, to use the footpath throughout the year and connect to the wider network, including the surfaced paths provided within the approved site (DC/24/0749), as shown on the annotated plan contained in **Appendix 1**, as well as the surfaced section of FP1942 to the north and south of the A272 Hilland Road. It is further considered that the surfacing of FP1942 should be conditioned, with suggested condition wording at the end of this Technical Note.
19. Existing features along FP1942, such as stiles, could be removed, or replaced with suitable gates enabling access for cyclists and other wheelers to utilise the footpath and connect to the existing network of paths. This would ensure the development was in accordance with NPPF paragraph 115(b).
20. In addition to the NPPF, the restriction of access to the existing residents of New Road, as well as the wider public, and future residents of approved application DC/24/0749 is contrary to the following local policies:
 - i. Policy 40 of Horsham District Planning Framework (November 2015)
 - ii. Policy BILL 12: Protection and Enhancement of Key Movement Routes, Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031 (May 2021)
21. The two policies, including a summary as to why application DC/26/0033 does not accord with the policies is set out below.

Policy 40 of Horsham District Planning Framework

22. Policy 40 refers to Sustainable Transport. It is considered that the application site (DC/26/0033) does not accord with the following points of Policy 40, with how the application site does not accord with the policy in green:

There is commitment to developing an integrated community connected by a sustainable transport system. In order to manage the anticipated growth in demand for travel, development proposals which promote an improved and integrated transport network, with a re-balancing in favour of non-car modes as a means of access to jobs, homes, services and facilities, will be encouraged and supported.

Development will be supported if it:

3. Is integrated with the wider network of routes, including public rights of way and cycle paths

It is not clear whether the development proposes to connect into FP1942. If the proposals do not include a connection into the PRow, the proposals do not accord with Policy 40.

6. Minimises the distance people need to travel and minimises conflicts between traffic, cyclists and pedestrians.

As set out in **paragraphs 10 and 11**, without access via FP1942, future employees of the site would be required to travel an extra circa two minutes than via the footpath, which would not be the most direct route from the local area.

Furthermore, without access to the site via FP1942, pedestrians and cyclists would access the site via footways adjacent to the carriageway, rather than footpaths segregated from the carriageway, and therefore there could be an increase in conflict between pedestrians/cyclists and traffic. Via FP1942, with permissive rights for cyclists, the likelihood of conflict between pedestrians/cyclists and traffic would be reduced.

9. Provides safe and suitable access for all vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, horses riders, public transport and the delivery of goods.

It is considered that providing access to the site via PRow FP1942 would result in a safe and suitable access for pedestrians and cyclists, and by not providing a link via the PRow, access for pedestrians and cyclists is therefore not as safe and suitable.

Furthermore, by not providing permissive rights for cyclists along the section of FP1942 within the applicant's boundary, access is prevented for cyclists who may have already travelled along the section of FP1942 that will have permissive cycle rights from within the approved application site DC/24/0749.

23. It has therefore been demonstrated that the proposals under application DC/26/0033 do not accord with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework, and therefore planning application DC/26/0033 should not be permitted without safeguarding access from the site to PRow FP1942 to ensure permeability for future employees to walk, wheel and cycle from the wider area including those from approved application DC/24/0749.
24. Furthermore, it is strongly suggested that suitable surfacing is provided along the section of FP1942 within the applicant's site boundary, to provide a 3.0 metre wide path, to ensure that pedestrian and wheeler access is available for all throughout the year. It is also considered that permissive rights for cycling should be given for the section of FP1942, which is within the land under the applicant's control, to allow cycle use, and provide a continuous link from the section of FP1942 within the adjacent site DC/24/0749.

Policy BILL 12: Protection and Enhancement of Key Movement Routes, Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031 (May 2021)

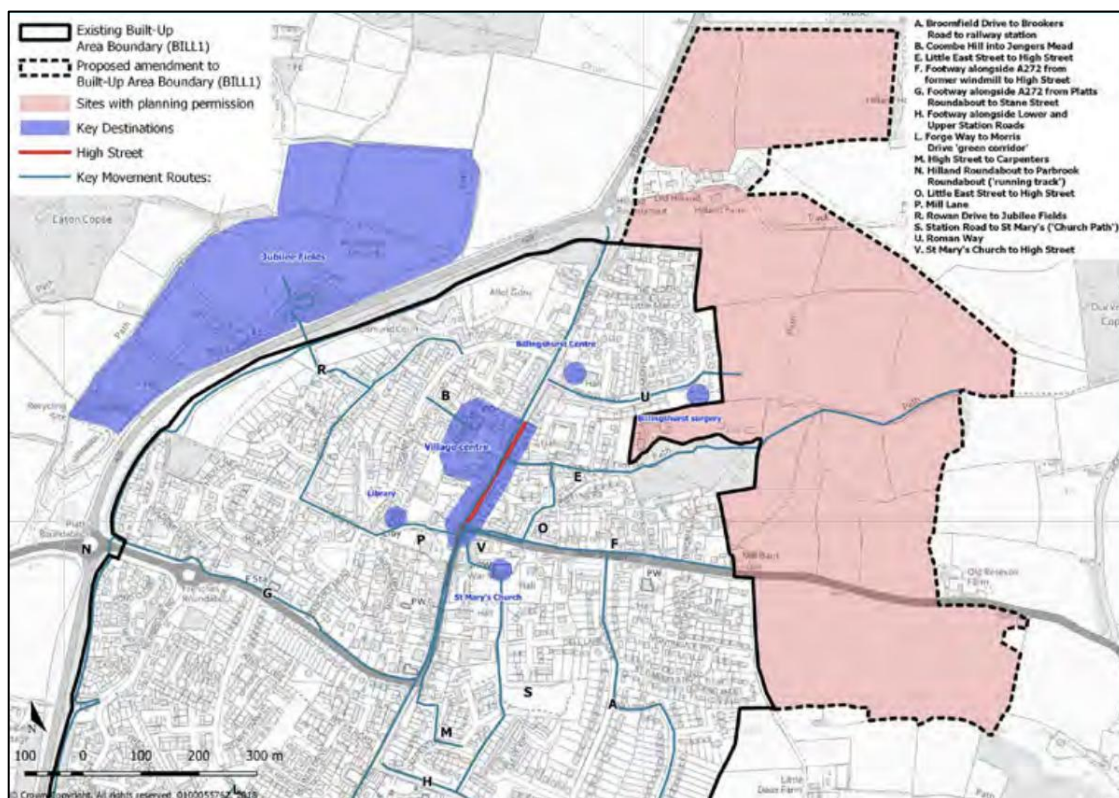
25. It is considered that the application site (DC/26/0033) does not accord with the following points of Policy BILL 12 with how the application site (DC/26/0033) does not accord with the policy set out in **green**:
 - A. *Development proposals to improve cycling and walking will be supported. In particular, provision of cycle and pedestrian routes that are physically separated from vehicular traffic and from one another will be strongly supported. Such routes should also ensure that access by disabled users and users of mobility scooters is secured, which could include the provision of wider pavements, dropped kerbs and widened entrance ways.*

By not providing a connection to PRow 1942, the proposals are not improving cycling and walking to/from the site. Furthermore, by providing a segregated and surfaced route along PRow 1942, this ensures disabled users and users of mobility scooters is secured.

- B. As appropriate to their scale and nature, new development proposals should provide safe pedestrian and cycle access. Where it is practicable to do so, the pedestrian and cycle access provided should link up with existing footways and cycleways that, in turn, directly serve the Key Movement Routes shown on the Policies Map in Section 12.*

*Policy BILL 12 B sets out that the pedestrian and cycle access provided should link up with existing footways and cycleways which directly connect to the Key Movement Routes shown on the Policies Map. An extract of the Key Movement Routes – north is provided in **Figure 4**.*

Figure 4 – Extract of Key Movements Route - north



The existing PRoW 1942 connects into the footways to the south of A272 Hilland Road, which in turn connects to the Key Movement Route on Roman Way and the Key Movement Route along PRoW 1941.

By not providing access from the application site to FP1942, the proposals do not support Policy BILL 12 B which states that new footpaths should connect to existing paths.

*Furthermore, given that permissive rights are given to cyclists within approved site DC/24/0749, and the applicants of this site are required to seek permissive cycle rights along the 75 metre long section of FP1942 to the south of the approved site (see **Appendix 1**), it is considered that by not providing permissive cycling rights along the section of FP1942 within the applicant's site, cyclists would be restricted from accessing Billingshurst Business Park. As such, cyclists would be required to take a longer route, on-road.*

It is clear that a cycle route segregated from traffic in this location would not only provide shorter cycle times, but be likely to attract more cycling trips to access the proposed employment development, reducing trips made by the private car, in line with current local and national policy.

26. It has therefore been demonstrated that the proposals under application DC/26/0033 do not accord with Policy BILL 12 of the Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan. As such, planning application DC/26/0033 should not be permitted without safeguarding permeability for future pedestrians and wheelers, including cyclists, for both the residents of the development as well as the wider area, including from approved application DC/24/0749.
27. The Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan sets out that it intends to ensure that new development is integrated into and well connected to the local infrastructure network. By enabling pedestrians and wheelers, including cyclists, to access the application site from a surfaced FP1942, this provides an integrated site in line with good masterplanning practice.

Summary

28. In summary, HTp on behalf of Northgate Properties it is considered that to avoid conflicting with local and national policy, and in the interest of masterplanning to provide integration between sites for pedestrians and wheelers, including cyclists, planning application DC/26/0033 should not be permitted without safeguarding permeability for future employees.
29. It is clear that if the officer is minded to recommend the application for approval this should be on the basis that a pre-commencement condition is included. This condition should obligate the development to connect to as well as contribute to, or provide suitable surfacing along the section of FP1942 to provide a 3.0 metre wide path within the applicant's site boundary to ensure that pedestrian access is available for all throughout the year. It is also considered that permissive rights for cycling should be given for the section of FP1942 which is within the land under the applicant's control to allow cycle use.

30. Suggested text for conditions is provided as follows:

"No part of the development shall commence until all sections of PROW 1942 within land shown edged blue on drawing TP-SLP-01 have been re-surfaced (and provided a form of gate or stile suitable for usage by pedestrians and cyclists) to a width of 3m and to West Sussex County Council bridleway specification in accordance with a scheme of works to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in consultation with the local highway authority"

And

"No part of the development shall commence until a permanent link between the development and PROW 1942 has been provided and are available for use to enable pedestrian and cycle access between the development and the public right of way in accordance with a scheme of works to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in consultation with the local highway authority and thereafter said links shall be retained and kept open and passable for the lifetime of the development (if not/until dedicated as highway)"

[To be combined with a s106 obligation to grant cycle rights/allow cycle usage over the sections on their land, namely here the short section of PROW 1942 to be re-surfaced]

Appendix 1

Annotated Extract of Plan of Approved Site DC/24/0749

