



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0454

Land South of Billingshurst Business Park (Phase 3), Hilland Road, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9HN

DESCRIPTION:

Engineering operation to create attenuation basins and swale.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

The site is subject to an extensive planning history. The following represents the most relevant to the site's development.

Application site and adjoining 'Phase 2' land

DC/25/1697	Hybrid application comprising: Mixed use development, including detailed permission for means of access and 1,338 sqm business floorspace with the remainder of the development in outline, comprising up to 102no. homes and up to 5,605 sqm of business floorspace (Classes E g (iii)/B2/B8).	Application remains outstanding pending completion of the legal agreement – committee resolution to approve
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Application site 'Phase 3' land only

DC/26/0033	Outline permission for erection of buildings for Eg(iii)/B2/B8 use with associated yard areas, vehicle parking and access. All matters except access	Pending
DC/25/1937	Removal of Condition 9, 11, 15, 21, 31 of previously approved application DC/25/0458 (Workshop, storage building with associated vehicular parking, yard area and access) relating to water neutrality	Application Permitted on 08.01.2026
DC/25/0458	Workshop, storage building with associated vehicular parking, yard area and access.	Application Permitted on 24.04.2025
DC/24/1452	Erection of a single storey building (3,110 sq.m gross floorspace) with ancillary external storage/sales area to accommodate either: 1. employment (E(g(iii)/B2/B8); or 2. retail warehouse use E(a); with associated customer/staff car park, landscaping and two adjoining access roads.	Application Refused on 19.02.2025
DC/23/1174	Earthworks and soft landscaping to create raised landscaped bunds at the site boundaries.	Application Permitted on 13.12.2023
DC/21/0748	Outline Application for up to 9,825m2 of Class E	Application Refused

(Industrial Processes), B2, and B8 use floorspace with all matters reserved except for access.

on 24.09.2021 –
Appeal Dismissed
14.02.2023

Adjoining 'Phase 2' land only

DC/25/1910	Outline planning permission for up to 125 homes and associated infrastructure / green space with all matters reserved apart from access	Application remains outstanding pending completion of the legal agreement – committee resolution to approve
DC/24/1452	Erection of a single storey building (3,110 sq.m gross floorspace) with ancillary external storage/sales area to accommodate either: 1. employment (E(g(iii)/B2/B8); or 2. retail warehouse use E(a); with associated customer/staff car park, landscaping and two adjoining access roads.	Application Refused on 19.02.2024
DC/24/0726	Variation of Condition 1 and Condition 65 of previously approved application DC/21/1107 (itself a variation of DC/21/1209, DC/20/0171, and DC/19/1365 of the originally approved Hybrid planning application DC/18/2122 for Detailed planning permission for up to 4,998sqm of B1c,B2 and B8 use floorspace, roundabout access junction from the A29, access, parking, servicing areas and associated landscaping [phase 1]. Outline planning permission for up to 14,075sqm of B1c, B2 B8 use floorspace, petrol filling station with ancillary retail offer and drive through coffee unit, with all matters reserved except for access (phase 2)]. Relating to approved plans and planning uses.	Application Refused on 07.08.2024
DC/21/0321	Erection of a foodstore (Use Class E) with customer car park, servicing area and associated landscaping	Application Permitted on 08.07.2021
DC/21/1107	Variation of Conditions 1, 56, 57 and 60 of previously approved application DC/21/1209 which varied applications DC/20/0171 and DC/19/1365 which were themselves variations of the originally approved Hybrid planning application DC/18/2122 (Detailed planning permission for up to 4,998sqm of B1c,B2 and B8 use floorspace, roundabout access junction from the A29, access, parking, servicing areas and associated landscaping [phase 1]. Outline planning permission for up to 14,075sqm of B1c, B2 B8 use floorspace, petrol filling station with ancillary retail offer and drive through coffee unit, with all matters reserved except for access [phase 2)]. Amendments to the approved parameter plans, building zones and restriction on mezzanine floors.	Application Permitted on 11.03.2022

Adjacent whole site 'Phase 1 and Phase 2'

DC/19/1365	Variation of Condition 1 and 36 to previously approved application DC/18/2122 (A Hybrid Planning application comprising: Detailed planning permission for up to 4,998sqm of B1c,B2 and B8 use floorspace, roundabout access junction from the A29, access, parking, servicing areas and associated landscaping (phase 1). Outline planning permission for up to	Application Permitted on 03.10.2019
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14,075sqm of B1c, B2 B8 use floorspace, petrol filling station with ancillary retail offer and drive through coffee unit, with all matters reserved except for access (phase 2)) Amendments to Phase 1 units 6-9 to combine units 6 & 7, add a mezzanine level to new unit 6, and alterations to elevations.

DC/18/2122

A Hybrid Planning application comprising: Detailed planning permission for up to 4,998sqm of B1c,B2 and B8 use floorspace, roundabout access junction from the A29, access, parking, servicing areas and associated landscaping (phase 1). Outline planning permission for up to 14,075sqm of B1c, B2 B8 use floorspace, petrol filling station with ancillary retail offer and drive through coffee unit, with all matters reserved except for access (phase 2)

Application Permitted on 10.06.2019

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site comprises a small parcel of undeveloped land measuring approximately 951 square metres situated to the south-western edge of Billingshurst Business Park (Phase 3), accessed from Hilland Road and located south of Stane Street, Billingshurst.

The site forms part of the wider employment development known as Billingshurst Business Park and lies adjacent to recently approved and constructed commercial development. To the north and east are employment uses associated with the business park, whilst the land to the south and west is characterised by areas of landscaping, vegetation and open land. A public footpath is located to the east of the site boundary. Existing trees and retained scrub vegetation are present around the site margins.

The site currently comprises unused land which forms part of the wider strategic landscaping and drainage infrastructure associated with the business park development. The application area lies outside but immediately adjoining the developed employment plots and is intended to provide surface water attenuation and biodiversity enhancements associated with the wider development.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

This application seeks planning permission for an engineering operation to create attenuation basins and swale in land south of Billingshurst Business Park (Phase 3), Hilland Road, Billingshurst.

The proposal would utilise an area of currently undeveloped land on the south-western edge of Billingshurst Business Park Phase 3 to create sustainable drainage infrastructure comprising attenuation basins and a swale to manage surface water runoff from the wider employment development.

The submitted Soft Landscape Proposals identify the creation of wetland meadow habitat, neutral grassland, native scrub planting and additional tree planting alongside the drainage features. Proposed tree species include Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*), together with native scrub species such as Dogwood, Hazel, Spindle, Blackthorn and Guelder Rose.

The attenuation features form part of the wider sustainable drainage strategy for Billingshurst Business Park Phase 3 and will provide temporary storage and controlled release of surface water with associated landscaping. A drainage maintenance plan has been submitted which sets out long-term management arrangements for the drainage network, attenuation basins and swales.

No buildings, hardstanding or operational development are proposed as part of this application. The development is limited to engineering operations and associated soft landscaping works.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 2015):

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
Policy 7 - Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
Policy 9 - Employment Development
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 39 - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan (2021):

Policy BILL 1 – Billingshurst Built Up Area Boundary
Policy BILL 3 - Energy efficiency and design
Policy BILL 15 - Multi-value sustainable drainage systems
Policy BILL 17 – Views to St Mary's Church

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):

Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Strategic Policy 3: Settlement Expansion
Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change
Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Strategic Policy 10: Flooding
Strategic Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Strategic Policy 12: Air Quality
Strategic Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Strategic Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 18: Local Green Space
Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality
Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles
Strategic Policy 23: Infrastructure Provision
Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Strategic Policy 27: Inclusive Communities, Health and Wellbeing

Parish Design Statement:

Design Statement for the Parish of Billingshurst

Planning Advice Notes:

Shaping Development in Horsham District (Sept 2025)

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure (Oct 2022)

REPRESENTATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES

Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk

Consultations:

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

HDC Arboricultural officer: Comment (15.05.2026) [Summary]

The application has not supported by any tree protection measures for the mature oak located to the north of the S.U.D.S. basin. The tree's key rooting area has already been heavily constrained by the new development to the north and, additionally, by the proposed access road to the east.

The S.U.D.S. basin, as proposed (see below), is sited directly on the edge of the tree's Root Protection Area (RPA). This arrangement does not allow for an appropriate level of spatial separation between the excavation area and the tree, nor does it provide sufficient working space to complete the works, particularly if undertaken from the north of the basin.

As such, consideration should be given to relocating the basin 3m to the south to ensure that the tree in question's key rooting area is not further adversely impacted by the works at the site. Appropriate tree and ground protection measures will also be required, with the aim of preserving the tree's RPA from the foreseeable negative impacts of the construction process associated with the formation of the basin.

If minded to approve, with the above concerns not addressed, please secure an Arboricultural Method Statement, including tree protection measures, by condition.

HDC Drainage Engineer: Initial Comment (21.04.2026) [Summary]

HDC Drainage note that no drainage information has been submitted as part of this application.

HDC Drainage request More Information to support this application:

- The applicant should provide evidence of BRE365 Infiltration testing at the location and depth of the
- proposed SuDS.
- The applicant must provide evidence of measures to prevent pollution of groundwater.
- Maintenance and Management Plans must be provided.

HDC Drainage Engineer: Final Comment – No objection (23.07.2026) [Summary]

The Drainage Engineer advises that insufficient drainage information has been submitted within the current application to enable a full technical assessment. However, reference is made to drainage information submitted under application DISC/26/0085 and the corresponding response from the Lead Local Flood Authority, which appears to satisfactorily address a number of the drainage matters relevant to the site.

Whilst no objection is raised, the Drainage Engineer recommends that further details be secured by condition, including:

- Confirmation of how the proposed attenuation basins and swale connect into the wider drainage network.
- Details of any groundwater presence within the proposed drainage features and anticipated groundwater levels.
- Demonstration that the basins provide sufficient attenuation capacity for storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 45% climate change event, including adequate freeboard.
- Details of exceedance flow routing for events exceeding the design capacity.

- Consideration of the recommendations made by the Council's Arboricultural Officer to ensure the protection of existing trees.

A pre-commencement drainage condition is recommended requiring the submission and approval of a detailed surface water drainage strategy

HDC Landscape Architect: Comment (29.04.2026) [Summary]

There are no concerns with the principle of development and proposed landscaping for the various basins. Notwithstanding, details such as depths of the proposed SuDS and management and maintenance plans have not been provided and this is also requested by the drainage engineer. Therefore, should the design and landscape proposals of the attenuation basins change as result of further drainage information, please reconsult.

Place Services (Ecology Consultant) No Objection (03.09.2026) [Summary]

Place Services Essex County Council, acting as the Council's ecological adviser, has reviewed the application and raises no ecological objection subject to conditions. The consultee is satisfied that sufficient ecological information is available to enable determination of the application and advises that biodiversity net gain matters are assessed separately by the Local Planning Authority.

The site lies within the consultation zones associated with The Mens Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ebernoe Common Special Area of Conservation (SAC). However, having reviewed the proposal and noting the retention and protection of existing trees, the ecology consultant concludes that the development would not result in the severance of bat commuting or foraging routes and would maintain habitat connectivity across the site. As such, it is advised that the proposal would not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the SACs. The Local Planning Authority is advised to prepare a project-level Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report to record this conclusion.

The ecology consultant notes that no ecological surveys have been submitted with the application. Nevertheless, given the limited nature of the proposals and the availability of ecological information, it is considered that the likely impacts can be appropriately managed through precautionary mitigation. As the works involve ground disturbance and the use of construction machinery, a condition is recommended requiring the submission of a Precautionary Biodiversity Method Statement to provide protection for protected and Priority species, including bats, badger, reptiles and hedgehogs, during the construction phase. Subject to this condition, no ecological objections are raised.

WSSC Archaeology: No Objection (11.09.2026) [Summary]

The main part of the access road along which the attenuation basins are located has been subject to previous archaeological investigations by Thames Valley Archaeological Services. Although significant archaeology was recorded to the east of the access road, a trench located within the road itself did not contain any archaeological features and so, as there is no indication that significant archaeological remains will be present, I have no archaeological concerns regarding these proposals.

WSSC Lead Local Flood Authority: No Objection (17.04.2026) [Summary]

This is a full application for the engineering operation to create attenuation basins and a swale. Please note this is a minor application for which we are not a statutory consultee, however we have reviewed the proposals as submitted as it affects a parcel of land for which we are being consulted on other matters.

As the redline boundary only incorporates the proposed excavated areas designed for attenuation of surface water, we have no concern regarding increased flood risk in the vicinity.

No drainage details have been provided and we have only reviewed what has been submitted for this application. It is important to note that within this application we are not able to comment on the efficacy of the design in relation to any wider development it will serve.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS:

Representations:

No letters of Objection or Support have been received.

Billingshurst Parish Council: No Objection (08.04.2026)

At the Planning and Environment Committee meeting of 7 April 2026, the committee resolved to a NEUTRAL response to this application, in that they saw no cause for objection to the plans as submitted.

Member Comments:

None received

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY:

The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the same Act, which sets out their rights in respect to private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposal would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles.

The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In this case, the proposal is not anticipated to have any potential impact from an equality perspective.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development:

Policy 1 of the HDPF promotes sustainable development, whilst Policies 35 and 38 support measures which assist in climate change adaptation and sustainable drainage. Likewise, the NPPF encourages developments to incorporate sustainable drainage systems and effective management of surface water runoff.

The application site forms part of the wider Billingshurst Business Park development and the proposed works are intended to provide surface water attenuation and drainage functions associated with that wider development. The submitted information demonstrates that the attenuation basins and swale would be integrated with a landscaping scheme comprising wetland meadow, grassland, native scrub planting and additional tree planting.

The principle of creating SuDS infrastructure in this location is therefore considered acceptable in land use terms, subject to consideration of the detailed impacts of the proposal.

Accordingly, the principle of the development is considered acceptable and accords with Policies 1, 35 and 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework and the objectives of the NPPF.

Landscape Character and Visual Impacts:

Policy 25 of the HDPF requires development to protect and where possible enhance landscape character, whilst Policy 31 seeks opportunities to strengthen green infrastructure and biodiversity. Similar objectives are contained within the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan and Chapter 19 of the NPPF (2026).

The proposed development comprises predominantly soft-engineered drainage features in the form of attenuation basins and a swale, together with associated habitat creation and planting. The submitted landscape proposal includes approximately 844sqm of wetland meadow planting, areas of grassland, native scrub planting and the introduction of additional native tree species. These measures would reinforce the green infrastructure function of the site and provide an attractive landscaped edge to the commercial development immediately to the north.

The Council's Landscape Architect raises no objection to the principle of the development or the proposed landscaping arrangements. Whilst further information regarding the detailed depths and operation of the attenuation features was requested by the Drainage Engineer, no adverse landscape impacts have been identified. The Landscape Architect advises only that further consultation may be required should the drainage design materially change following submission of additional information.

The Council's Arboricultural Officer notes concerns regarding the proximity of the proposed SuDS basin to a mature oak tree located to the north of the application site. The Officer advises that the basin is currently positioned adjacent to the tree's Root Protection Area (RPA) and that excavation works have the potential to affect the tree's rooting environment. The Officer recommends either relocation of the basin further south or the submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement and tree protection measures to safeguard the tree during construction.

Whilst these concerns are acknowledged, the Arboricultural Officer has not raised an objection to the development itself and confirms that the matter could be addressed through the submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement secured by planning condition. Subject to the imposition of an appropriately worded condition requiring tree protection measures and arboricultural supervision where necessary, it is considered that the proposal would safeguard existing trees and would not result in unacceptable harm to landscape character.

The Council's Landscape Architect raises no objection to the principle of the development or the proposed soft landscaping. It is noted that detailed engineering information relating to the attenuation basins has not been submitted and, should amendments to the basin design arise through the discharge of drainage conditions, further consultation with the Landscape Architect may be required to ensure the landscape impacts remain acceptable. No objection is otherwise raised to the submitted landscape proposals.

Overall, the proposed attenuation basins and swale would appear as landscaped features within the wider green infrastructure network and would enhance rather than detract from the visual appearance of the site. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policies 25 and 31 of the HDPF, the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Policy 33 of the HDPF seeks to ensure that development does not result in unacceptable impacts upon the amenities of existing or future occupiers.

The application site is located on land associated with the wider business park and is separated from nearby residential properties by distance, landscaping and intervening development. The proposed works are limited to engineering operations required to form attenuation basins and a swale together with associated soft landscaping.

No buildings, lighting, plant, machinery or commercial operations are proposed as part of the application. Once completed, the development would comprise landscaped drainage features which would remain passive in character and would not generate noise, disturbance, overlooking, loss of privacy or overshadowing.

No representations have been received from neighbouring occupiers objecting to the proposal, and Officers have identified no material amenity impacts arising from the development.

Consequently, it is considered that the proposal would preserve the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and would accord with Policy 33 of the HDPF.

Impact on the Archaeological Notification Area

Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) seeks to ensure that development conserves and, where appropriate, records and investigates archaeological remains where they may be affected by development.

The application site lies within Archaeological Notification Area DWS8539 (Multi-Period Site to the East of Billingshurst). The County Archaeologist was consulted given the excavation works proposed as part of the attenuation basins and swale. It is noted that the main part of the access road, along which the attenuation basins are proposed, has previously been subject to archaeological investigation undertaken by Thames Valley Archaeological Services. Whilst significant archaeological remains were identified to the east of the access road, investigations within the road corridor itself did not identify any archaeological features.

On the basis of the previous investigations and the available evidence, the County Archaeologist advises that there is no indication that significant archaeological remains are likely to be present within the application site and therefore raises no archaeological concerns regarding the proposal.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in archaeological terms and accords with Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Impact on Ecology

Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) seeks to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity and ecological networks. This approach is supported by Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026), which requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural environment, including minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains where appropriate.

Place Services, acting as the Council's ecological adviser, has reviewed the application and raises no objection to the proposal subject to conditions. The site lies within consultation zones associated with The Mens SAC and Ebernoe Common SAC; however, it is concluded that the proposed engineering works would not result in the loss of habitat connectivity or severance of bat commuting and foraging routes. Consequently, the ecology consultant advises that the proposal would not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the European designated sites.

The proposal involves ground disturbance associated with the creation of attenuation basins and a swale. Whilst no specific ecological surveys have accompanied the application, the ecological consultant is satisfied that the potential risks to protected and Priority species can be appropriately addressed through the implementation of precautionary mitigation measures during construction. To secure these measures, a condition is recommended requiring the submission and approval of a Precautionary Biodiversity Method Statement prior to the commencement of development.

Subject to the recommended condition, the proposal is considered acceptable in ecological terms and accords with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and the biodiversity objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026).

Impact on the Public Highway and Rights of Way

The application relates solely to the formation of attenuation basins and a swale and does not propose any alterations to the public highway network, access arrangements or parking provision serving Billingshurst Business Park.

The development would not generate additional vehicle movements during the operational phase and, once completed, would not result in any highway safety implications. The proposal is therefore considered to have a neutral impact on the local highway network.

A public footpath is shown within close proximity to the site boundary; however, the proposed works are confined within the application site and there is no evidence before the Local Planning Authority that the development would obstruct, divert or adversely affect the use of any Public Right of Way.

In the absence of any objection from statutory consultees and having regard to the nature of the proposal, it is considered that the development would have no adverse impact on highway safety, accessibility or the operation of nearby Public Rights of Way. The proposal therefore accords with the objectives of the NPPF and the relevant transport policies of the HDPF.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework seeks to ensure that development appropriately manages surface water runoff and flood risk through the incorporation of sustainable drainage measures. Policy 35 further requires development to respond positively to the impacts of climate change. These objectives are consistent with Chapter 18 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which supports the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and requires development not to increase flood risk elsewhere.

The proposal comprises the formation of attenuation basins and a swale to provide surface water attenuation as part of the wider drainage infrastructure serving Billingshurst Business Park Phase 3. The submitted information demonstrates that the works are intended to form part of a Sustainable Drainage System and will be accompanied by long-term maintenance and management arrangements. A Drainage Maintenance Plan has been submitted setting out inspection, vegetation management, sediment removal and maintenance requirements for the attenuation basins, swales and associated drainage infrastructure throughout the lifetime of the development.

The Lead Local Flood Authority raises no objection to the proposal and advises that, based on the information submitted, the creation of the attenuation features would not increase flood risk within the vicinity of the site. The LLFA notes that it has not assessed the detailed functionality of the wider drainage strategy but raises no concerns regarding the engineering operations proposed within the application site.

The Council's Drainage Engineer reviewed the proposal and notes that limited drainage information has been submitted as part of the application. However, reference is made to additional drainage information considered under the associated discharge of condition process and the subsequent response from the LLFA. Whilst further clarification is sought in relation to matters including groundwater levels, attenuation capacity, exceedance routing and integration with the wider drainage network, the Drainage Engineer advises that these matters can be addressed through the submission of additional information pursuant to a planning condition.

Given the absence of any objection from either the LLFA or the Council's Drainage Engineer, and noting that the outstanding matters can be satisfactorily addressed through a pre-commencement condition requiring detailed drainage design information, it is considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on flood risk or drainage. The development would contribute positively towards sustainable surface water management and climate change adaptation through the provision of SuDS infrastructure.

Subject to the imposition of an appropriately worded drainage condition, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies 35 and 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework and the provisions of Chapter 18 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters:

Climate Change:

Policy 35 of the Horsham District Planning Framework seeks to ensure that development contributes towards mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change. Paragraphs within Chapter 18 of the NPPF similarly support development which responds to climate change, including through the use of sustainable drainage systems and the management of flood risk.

The proposed development comprises the creation of attenuation basins and a swale as part of a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS). The proposal will provide additional capacity for the management and attenuation of surface water runoff and will assist in reducing flood risk associated with periods of intense rainfall, which are forecast to become more frequent as a result of climate change.

The proposed wetland meadow, native scrub planting and additional tree planting would also contribute positively towards biodiversity enhancement and green infrastructure provision, helping to improve the site's environmental resilience.

Whilst the proposal would not directly contribute to reducing carbon emissions, it represents an important climate change adaptation measure through the provision of sustainable drainage infrastructure and associated habitat creation. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy 35 of the HDPF and the objectives of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) mandates that every development must achieve at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) (unless the development qualifies as exempt under the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024) and that every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that development must not be begun unless a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority and the planning authority has approved the Plan.

The Biodiversity Gain Plan must show how the development will achieve the required minimum 10% BNG using the statutory biodiversity metric tool, and must demonstrate how the habitats will be managed and maintained for 30 years, starting from the date the development is completed. Off-site gains (on unregistered sites) and significant on-site enhancements will be secured over this period by way of a Legal Agreement.

The application is accompanied by a Small Sites Biodiversity Metric prepared using the statutory Small Sites Metric (Version 1.2.3). The metric identifies the application site as comprising 951sqm of modified grassland in the existing condition, generating a baseline value of 0.3804 habitat units. The proposed development, comprising sustainable drainage features, wetland meadow planting, native scrub planting and additional trees, would generate 0.41945 habitat units, resulting in a biodiversity net gain of approximately 10.27%. The submitted metric confirms that the statutory 10% biodiversity net gain requirement and associated trading rules are satisfied.

Whilst separate pre-development and post-development habitat plans have not been submitted, the application is supported by a detailed Soft Landscape Proposals drawing which identifies the extent and nature of the proposed habitats to be established across the site. Given the small scale of the application site, the simple habitat baseline comprising modified grassland, and the clear correlation between the metric inputs and the submitted landscape proposals, officers are satisfied that sufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that the development would achieve the biodiversity gains identified within the metric.

Accordingly, subject to the implementation of the approved landscaping scheme and ongoing management of the site, the proposal is considered to satisfy the statutory biodiversity net gain requirements and accords with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework and the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

The application seeks permission for engineering operations to create attenuation basins and a swale on land adjoining Billingshurst Business Park Phase 3. The development would not introduce any built form and would deliver sustainable drainage infrastructure, biodiversity enhancements and additional landscaping within a currently undeveloped area.

The proposal would assist in the management of surface water runoff associated with the wider development and would contribute positively towards climate change adaptation. In addition, the proposed wetland meadow, native scrub planting and tree planting would provide biodiversity and landscape benefits which are consistent with the objectives of Policies 25, 31, 35 and 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework.

No objection has been raised by the Lead Local Flood Authority. Whilst the Council's Drainage Engineer and Arboricultural Officer have identified matters requiring further clarification, neither consultee has raised an objection in principle and both advise that their concerns can be satisfactorily addressed through the imposition of planning conditions securing detailed drainage and arboricultural information.

The proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts upon the character of the area, neighbouring amenity, highway safety, public rights of way, ecology, flood risk or drainage. Furthermore, the submitted Biodiversity Metric demonstrates that the proposal would achieve in excess of the statutory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement.

Overall, the proposal is considered to represent sustainable development and accords with the relevant policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), the Billingshurst Neighbourhood Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval subject to the conditions set out below.

Recommendation: Application is PERMITTED

Conditions:

- 2 **Regulatory (Time) Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 3 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** No development shall commence, including demolition pursuant to the permission granted, ground clearance, or bringing equipment, machinery or materials onto the site, until an Arboricultural Method Statement detailing all trees/hedgerows on site and adjacent to the site to be retained during construction works, and measures to provide for their protection throughout all construction works, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented and thereafter carried out at all times strictly in accordance with the agreed details.

Any trees or hedges on the site which die or become damaged during the construction process shall be replaced with trees or hedging plants of a type, size and in positions agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees and hedgerows on the site in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 4 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the proposed surface water drainage system shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To determine that the site drainage meets the requirements of the NPPF and PPG, National standards for sustainable drainage systems, Policies 35 and 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 5 **Pre Commencement Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:
- a) a non-technical summary;
 - b) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan; and

- c) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan from the completion of development.

has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

The created and/or enhanced habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP. Any proposed or retained planting, which within a period of 5 years after the completion of development, dies, is re-moved, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 6 **Pre-Commencement Condition:** No development shall take place (including any demolition, ground works, site clearance) until a Precautionary Biodiversity Method Statement for protected and Priority species (bats, Badger, retile, Hedgehog) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The content of the method statement shall include the following:

- a) purpose and objectives for the proposed works;
- b) detailed design(s) and/or working method(s) necessary to achieve stated objectives (including, where relevant, type and source of materials to be used);
- c) extent and location of proposed works shown on appropriate scale maps and plans;
- d) timetable for implementation, demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of construction;
- e) persons responsible for implementing the works;
- f) initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant);
- g) disposal of any wastes arising from works.

The works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, in order to be able to, where possible, grant permission.

Plans list for: DC/26/0454

Schedule of plans/documents **approved:**

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location plan		02 REV P04	24.03.2026
Supporting Docs	THE SMALL SITES METRIC	NONE	13.03.2026
Plans	ACCESS ROAD - SOFT LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS	02 REV P03	13.03.2026

Supporting Docs	Below Ground Maintenance Plan	Drainage	9950-PTA-XX-XX- SP-C-9010 P01	02.04.2026
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DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Daniel Holmes Date: 15.09.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial RHERMITAGE Date: 18/09/2026