



Horsham District Council
Parkside
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1RL

Our ref: 14519
Date: 3 March 2026

For the attention of: Nicola Pettifer

Application ref: DC/26/0033
Location: Land South of Billingshurst Business Park (Phase 3) Hilland Road Billingshurst West Sussex
Proposal/Description: Outline permission for erection of buildings for Eg(iii)/B2/B8 use with associated yard areas, vehicle parking and access. All matters except access.

Thank you for consulting with Place Services on the above Outline planning application. This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

Summary

Not supportive on landscape grounds	☐
No landscape objection, subject to attached recommendations and/or conditions	☐
Further information required prior to determination	☒
No landscape comments / does not wish to comment	☐

This review is based on a desktop study without a site visit of the above-referenced application and its submitted documents. Our Landscape comments are as follows:

1.0. Site Context

- 1.1. The site is located on the northern edge of Billingshurst. To the north of Hilland Road (A272) and east of existing commercial development. To the north of the site is the approved development under appeal (DC/24/0749) for up to 125 dwellings.
- 1.2. The site comprises improved grassland currently grazed by sheep, with landform levels that reflect the wider, gently undulating character of the surrounding landscape.
- 1.3. The rurality of the site and immediate surrounding landscape has been compromised by the presence of commercial development to the west. The approved extension to Billingshurst and commercial development have changed the context and setting of the



site. There is also a pylon route to the south-west, running across the land in a broad swathe from northwest to southeast, which detracts from the site's landscape value.

- 1.4. Although partly interrupted by pylons, overhead cables and recent residential development, views of the church spire from the public footpath to the east of the site remain.
- 1.5. The site is within the Landscape Character Area G3: Slinfold and Five Oaks Wooded Farmlands. Key characteristics include gently undulating wooded landscape, largely rural character, although busy A29/A272 road corridors together with some aircraft noise, extensive coppice woodland in small and large irregular shaped blocks, small hedged pastures – some larger arable fields.
- 1.6. The Planning and Land Management Guidelines refers to “Conserve rural undeveloped character. Any large scale housing and commercial development is likely to damage character, e.g. through loss of small field patterns and loss of woodlands.”

2.0. Planning Policy Context

- 2.1. The site area is outside of the proposed amended Built-up Area Boundary under the Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 Regulation 19 and The Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan (2019-31).
- 2.2. The proposals should have regards to the Policies within the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF, 2015) Policy 26: Countryside Protection, Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Policy 33 with regards development principles.

3.0. Review of the proposal/submitted information

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) - DLA/2043/LVIA/RPT/01, REV 3 – (Proposed Development on Land North of Billingshurst (Phase 3))

- 3.1. As per our comments regarding the Hybrid application (DC/25/1697), some visual context has changed since the preparation of the LVIA, including commercial development to the west and residential development to the north of Billingshurst. The proposed mitigation measures relevant for this site are in particular *“Reduce visual effects through careful location of built form and associated planting”*. We acknowledge that the excavation is proposed in order to reduce visibility of the proposed business units and the localised change resulting in minor adverse effect. Planting strategy for the south-western boundary should be strengthened.
- 3.2. The LVIA for the development site to the north (Phase 1 and 2) identifies the importance of avoiding development within the eastern parcel to protect views towards St Mary's Church from the public footpath and maintain views towards the South Downs National Park. We consider that the proposed business units 17 & 18, and unit 19, will obscure the remaining views of the church and South Downs, conflicting with the recommendations for

Phase 1 and 2. Without Photowire visualisations from viewpoints RVP 03 and RPV 05 of Phase 3 LVIA along the public footpath to the east, it is not possible to confirm how the proposal have addressed the impact on this view and has considered the design recommendations set out for the adjacent site.

- 3.3. Figure 21 of the LVIA Phase 3 includes a bigger site area and shows potential SuDS and habitat creation areas along the southwestern boundary – pylon route (page 48). This area appears to be excluded of the red line boundary under this application but within the hybrid application DC/25/1697. The delivery of planting along this boundary will aid reducing visual effects of the B2/B8 units. Overall, we consider that additional planting will be required along the land adjacent the A272 to reduce visual effects from the public open space, including Challen Way playarea, and residential development to the south of the site.

Green Infrastructure

- 3.4. The Design and Access Statement show the delivery of a green link /GI buffer to the northern boundary, extending from existing vegetation G1 and linking with G2 to the east. Clarification is needed regarding the delivery of this green link as part of outline application DC/25/1910 or within this outline application.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 3.5. The submitted Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report 20253 1.2 (July 2025) shows a different red line boundary to the proposed application site under this outline application. The submitted BNG report is for the site area to the east of the site comprising Unit 19.

4.0. Summary

- 4.1. It is increasingly difficult to understand the relationship between the various development parcels and to identify which elements are being delivered in each phase, as the red-line boundaries are not consistently aligned across the different applications and supporting reports relating to this site and the wider site's applications to the north and east.
- 4.2. The LVIA has been split into two documents to address separate application sites. This approach has resulted in a disjointed mitigation strategy, with the overarching principles established for the northern parcel (Phases 1 and 2) appearing to conflict with those proposed for the southern parcel (Phase 3). The landscape and visual assessment for the area on the edge of Billingshurst would have been strengthened by a single, comprehensive LVIA and a unified application, ensuring coordinated masterplanning and a more coherent design strategy.
- 4.3. It is acknowledged that the site lies outside the proposed amended Built-up Area Boundary as set out in the Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 Regulation 19 and The Billingshurst Parish Neighbourhood Plan (2019-31). However, it is positioned immediately

adjacent to existing commercial development and proposed development parcels that fall within the aforementioned Built-up Area Boundary. The principle of development on this site could therefore be considered acceptable in broad terms, provided the proposals responds to and aligns with the design principles established for the adjoining northern development site, minimise visual impact from development and open spaces at the settlement edge of Billingshurst, and can be appropriately accommodated in this location without undermining local character and been compliance with Policies 26 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF, 2015).

4.4. However, we consider that the submitted documents do not demonstrate this.

5.0. Recommended Submission Document(s)

If the application is minded for approval, we recommend the following documents are submitted:

- A review of the submitted documents to demonstrate that the proposed development responds to and aligns with the design principles established for the adjoining northern development site, minimises visual impact from development and open spaces at the settlement edge of Billingshurst, and can be appropriately accommodated in this location without undermining local character and been compliance with Policies 26 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF, 2015).
- Environmental Colour Assessment. We would advise an Environmental Colour Assessment (ECA) is produced to inform the colour palette for built form. The objective of an ECA is to help to resolve many of the issues associated with colour selection and specification and aid landscape and visual mitigation and enhancements. Commonly, the Natural Colour System (NCS) is used to identify the relevant colours; however, there are further details of the process available in the Landscape Institute ECA technical note (04/2018) which we would advise is followed as part of the ECA process.
- Detailed landscape plans. This should include any proposed changes in ground levels and also accurately identify spread, girth and species of all existing trees, shrubs, and hedgerows in the surrounding area. A specification of soft landscaping, including proposed trees, planting and seed mixes with details of quantity, species, densities, and size/type (bare root, container etc) must be included. The specification should be in line with British Standards and include details of planting works such as preparation, implementation, materials (i.e. soils and mulch), any protection measures that will be put in place (i.e rabbit guards) and any management regimes (including watering schedules) to support establishment.

- A Landscape Management Plan (LMP) to be submitted to ensure appropriate maintenance arrangements are in place to maintain high-quality value and benefits of the landscape assets. The content of the management plan should include the following:
 - Drawings showing the extent of the LMP i.e. only showing the areas to which the LMP applies, areas of private ownership should be excluded
 - Written Specification detailing:
 - All operation and procedures for soft landscape areas; inspection, watering, pruning, cutting, mowing, clearance and removal of arisings and litter, removal of temporary items (fencing, guards and stakes) and replacement of failed planting.
 - All operations and procedures for hard landscape areas; inspection, sweeping, clearing of accumulated vegetative material and litter, maintaining edges, and painted or finished surfaces.
 - All operations and procedures for surface water drainage system; inspection of linear drains and swales, removal of unwanted vegetative material and litter.
 - Maintenance task table which explains the maintenance duties across the site in both chronological and systematic order.

Please contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Place Services – Landscape Team

Email: landscape@essex.gov.uk



Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of Horsham District Council.

Please note:

This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.

We are unable to respond directly to applicants/agents or other interested parties. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant/agent or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer at the relevant LPA, who will seek further advice from us where appropriate.

