

83A High Street

Billingshurst

West Sussex

RH14 9QX



Planning Statement

To accompany a Section 73 Application to vary Condition 8
attached to Planning Permission ref: DC/20/0506

Applicant: Billingshurst Parish Council

March 2026

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Billingshurst Parish Council, in support of a Section 73 application seeking to vary Condition 8 attached to planning permission ref. DC/20/0506.
- 1.2 The approved development relates to the change of use of the ground floor from offices to a Youth Day Centre. This application seeks to amend the wording of the condition to allow for a broader **community use** of the premises.

2.0 LOCATION AND SITE SETTING:

- 2.1 83A is located on the East side of the High Street and accessed off a private road to the North. The building is located within the Billingshurst Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The site is located within the Billingshurst Conservation Area and lies within the defined built-up area boundary and occupies a sustainable and accessible location.
- 2.3 The surrounding context is mixed in character, comprising residential, commercial, and community uses typical of a town centre environment.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

- 3.1 **DC/20/0506** – Change of use of ground floor from offices to Youth Day Centre, including external alterations (Approved)
- 3.2 This application relates solely to the variation of a condition associated with the above consent. No changes to the built form are proposed.

4.0 PROPOSAL:

- 4.1 This application seeks to vary Condition 8 to allow the use of the premises as a community centre (flexible community use) rather than restricting the use solely to a Youth Day Centre.
- 4.2 The proposed use would enable a wider range of activities, including:
- Community meetings and events
 - Educational and training uses
 - Support groups and social activities
 - Youth and adult services
- 4.3 The nature of the use remains within the scope of community-focused activities and does not materially alter the character of the approved development.

5.0 NEED AND JUSTIFICATION:

- 5.1 The proposed variation is driven by the need to ensure the building can operate as a flexible and viable community facility.
- 5.2 Restricting the use exclusively to a youth centre limits occupancy and reduces the building's effectiveness as a local resource. The proposed amendment will:
- Support a broader cross-section of the community
 - Increase utilisation of the space
 - Improve operational viability
 - Enhance the social value of the building
- 5.3 The proposal represents an efficient re-use of an existing consented community facility.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
The proposal accords with the core objectives of the NPPF, in particular:
- Promoting healthy and inclusive communities
 - Supporting the retention and development of community facilities
 - Encouraging sustainable patterns of development
- 6.2 Local Policy
The proposal is consistent with policies within the Horsham District Planning Framework which:
- Support community uses within settlement boundaries
 - Encourage accessible and sustainable development
 - Promote social cohesion and wellbeing
- 6.3 Given the site's location and established lawful use as a community facility, the principle of the proposed variation is considered acceptable.

7.0 ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Use and Impact
The proposed use remains within a community function and is not considered to result in any greater impact than the approved Youth Day Centre use.
- 7.2 Amenity
No adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity are anticipated. The scale and nature of activities are comparable to the approved use.
- 7.3 Highways and Access
No changes are proposed. Trip generation is expected to be similar to, or more flexible than, the consented use.

7.4 Design

No external alterations are proposed as part of this application.

8.0 PRE-APPLICATION AND CONSULTATION

8.1 No formal pre-application advice has been sought in relation to this submission. However, a discussion was had with the Duty Planning Officer on 03 March 2026 regarding the correct approach for changing the use of the ground floor. They advised a Section 73 application would be appropriate.

8.2 The proposal reflects a generalised and established need for flexible community space within the locality.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 This application seeks a minor amendment to an existing permission to enable a more flexible and inclusive community use of the premises.

9.2 The proposal:

- Maintains the established community function of the site
- Enhances usability and viability
- Aligns with national and local planning policy
- Gives rise to no additional adverse impacts

9.3 The variation of Condition 8 is therefore considered reasonable and is respectfully recommended for approval.