

SHAMBLEWOOD BIKE PARK

ENFORCEMENT NOTICE APPEAL GROUND (a) - DEEMED PLANNING APPLICATION PLANNING STATEMENT AND STATEMENT OF CASE

Site	Land off Shamblehurst Lane North, Hedge End, Southampton SO32 2BY
Appellant	Shaun Goddard / Shamblewood Bike Park
Local Planning Authority	Eastleigh Borough Council
Enforcement reference	ENF/2025/200
Notice issued	22 July 2026
Effective date	28 August 2026
Document date	24 August 2026

APPEAL REQUEST

Allow the appeal on Ground (a) and grant planning permission for the continued use of the land as a non-motorised bike park and associated development, subject to proportionate conditions.

Document control

Document	Planning Statement and Statement of Case - Ground (a)
Appeal basis	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, section 174(2)(a)
Development sought	Continued use as a non-motorised outdoor cycling recreation facility with associated riding features, parking, woodland management, drainage and ancillary site office
Drawing set	SG001 001 P1; SG001 002 P1; SG001 003 P1; SG001 004 P1
Status	Submission version
Purpose	To explain why planning permission ought to be granted on the deemed planning application

Submission note

This statement is deliberately focused on the planning merits of Ground (a). The Planning Inspectorate's current Enforcement Notice Appeals Procedural Guide states that a Ground (a) appeal is a deemed planning application and that the appellant should explain in detail why permission should be granted. It also advises that the grounds should be clear, concise and normally not exceed 3,000 words. This statement has therefore been kept focused, with technical and supporting material intended to be submitted separately as appendices.

The appeal must be received before the Enforcement Notice takes effect on 28 August 2026. The final online appeal form, ownership certificate/notice requirements and deemed-application fee remain procedural items to be completed through the appeal service.

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1. Executive summary

This appeal is made under Ground (a) of section 174(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against Eastleigh Borough Council Enforcement Notice ENF/2025/200. The notice alleges, without planning permission, the material change of use of the land to a bike park. The appellant submits that planning permission ought to be granted.

Shamblewood is an approximately 2.92-hectare woodland and grassland site used for non-motorised bicycle trials and mountain-bike skills recreation. The use comprises low-speed technical cycling, coaching, introductory sessions and occasional organised events, together with riding obstacles, ramps, jumps, runs, tracks, parking, drainage features and a small ancillary site office. It is not a motor-sport use.

The appeal proposal is deliberately low in built form. The site remains predominantly woodland. Riding features sit within the existing vegetation and are capable of alteration or removal. The submitted drawings now define the appeal site, access, parking, principal activity areas, drainage, screening and ancillary building.

Independent ecological evidence prepared by Robin Leech MCIEEM describes the pre-project woodland as unmanaged, structurally poor and containing declining trees with little understorey or ground flora. The evidence supports active woodland management and records a positive overall ecological effect from the management undertaken. A separate Woodland Management Plan provides for rotational coppicing, natural regeneration, deadwood retention, nesting-bird safeguards, soil protection and continued woodland cover.

The proposal is also consistent with the recreational function expressly contemplated by Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Policy DM36. That policy allows new and enhanced recreation facilities in the countryside where buildings are ancillary and essential, urbanisation is avoided, countryside management is supported and sustainable accessibility is achieved. Shamblewood is immediately adjacent to Hedge End railway station, can be reached by bicycle, and has substantial on-site parking for those carrying specialist equipment.

The appellant recognises that the Council has raised legitimate matters requiring evidence and control: countryside character, settlement-gap effects, noise, access, flood risk, drainage and woodland impacts. The correct planning response is not necessarily cessation. These effects can be controlled through the defined layout, retained vegetation, woodland management and proportionate planning conditions.

The facility provides unusual public benefit. Biketrial Federation UK has supported its retention and identifies Shamblewood as one of a very small number of English venues capable of hosting national trials competition while also providing introductory sessions and coaching. The site supports youth participation, physical activity, supervised riding and progression from beginner to elite level.

Taken as a whole, the proposal retains the essential wooded and open character of the land, does not cause settlement coalescence, provides an appropriate countryside recreation use, secures active woodland stewardship and delivers substantial sporting and community benefits. The Inspector is respectfully requested to allow the appeal on Ground (a) and grant planning permission subject to conditions.

2. Appeal and development sought

The Enforcement Notice alleges: "Without planning permission, the material change of use of the Land to a bike park." The Ground (a) deemed planning application therefore requires the planning merits of that use, and the associated development identified by the notice, to be considered.

For the purposes of the deemed planning application, the appellant seeks permission for:

Continued use of approximately 2.92 hectares of woodland and grassland as a non-motorised bike park for bicycle trials and mountain-bike skills riding, coaching, introductory sessions and

occasional organised events, together with associated riding obstacles, ramps, jumps, runs and tracks, informal parking, surface-water drainage features, woodland management and an ancillary timber site office, as shown on drawings SG001 001 P1 to SG001 004 P1.

The proposal is for pedal-cycle activity only. No motorbike, motorcycle or motor-sport use is sought. No external floodlighting is required. The appellant accepts that a permission can be framed around the submitted plans and proportionate operational controls so that the Inspector is not being asked to authorise unrestricted intensification.

3. Site and surroundings

The site lies on the west side of Shamblehurst Lane North at Hedge End, Southampton SO32 2BY. Drawing SG001 001 P1 provides the 1:1250 site location plan and 1:500 block plan. The site is immediately adjacent to the Hedge End railway corridor and station.

The ecological baseline identifies a mosaic of Wet Woodland, Other Broadleaved Woodland, Mixed Scrub and a limited area of Other Neutral Grassland. Ford Lake (Stream), a tributary of the River Hamble, adjoins the site. The site has changed through historic land management and natural succession; it is not an untouched woodland landscape.

Drawing SG001 002 P1 shows the whole-site layout, existing natural stream, formed drainage ditches, site office, shed, principal trials area, retained perimeter vegetation, access and visibility information. Drawing SG001 003 P1 provides a larger-scale plan of the main activity area, including informal parking, trials obstacles, the jump starting ramp, Northshore-style timber skills features and dirt jumps beneath the tree canopy.

The riding areas are contained within substantial vegetation. Existing green screening to the perimeter is expressly identified on the drawings for retention and management. This is important to the character of the proposal: the recreational use sits within the woodland rather than replacing the woodland.

4. Enforcement context

Eastleigh Borough Council issued Enforcement Notice ENF/2025/200 on 22 July 2026, with an effective date of 28 August 2026. The notice requires cessation of the bike park use, removal of associated office/building and cycling features, and restoration of land levels including backfilling man-made trenches.

The Council's planning concerns are understood to relate principally to countryside and settlement-gap character; the layout and design of associated structures; noise, light and traffic/access; drainage, water quality, hydrology and flood risk; and insufficient arboricultural/ecological information.

The appellant does not rely on the history of discussions with the Council as a reason permission should be granted. The appeal instead addresses the planning merits and supplies a clearer set of plans and management evidence than was previously available.

5. Development plan and national policy

The statutory starting point is the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 (2022) is the principal local policy document.

The policies of greatest relevance are Strategic Policy S5 (New development in the countryside), Strategic Policy S6 (Protection of settlement gaps), DM1 (General criteria for new development), DM5 (Managing flood risk), DM6 (Sustainable surface water management and watercourse management), DM8 (Pollution), DM11 (Nature conservation), DM13 (General development criteria - transport), DM14 (Parking) and DM36 (New and enhanced recreation and open space facilities).

Policy DM36 is particularly important. It supports the provision, extension or enhancement of public and private recreation facilities subject to safeguards. In the countryside it expects buildings to be ancillary and essential to outdoor sport/recreation, seeks to avoid structures, floodlighting or activities that cause urbanisation or detract from rural character, encourages management and enhancement of countryside/open space, and requires accessibility by means other than the private car.

The current National Planning Policy Framework was published on 17 August 2026. Its overarching approach remains relevant to this appeal: decisions should support healthy communities and opportunities for sport and physical activity, promote sustainable transport, manage flood risk, and protect and enhance the natural environment. NPPF Annex 3 identifies outdoor sports and recreation as water-compatible development.

6. Principle of development and countryside location

Shamblewood is an outdoor recreation use that inherently benefits from space, natural terrain and a woodland setting. It is not readily replicated in a conventional building or small urban recreation plot. The countryside location therefore has a functional relationship with the activity.

Policy S5 protects the countryside from inappropriate development, but the Local Plan must be read as a whole. Policy DM36 expressly provides a route for outdoor recreation in the countryside where the specified safeguards are met. The question is therefore not whether any recreational activity is capable of taking place in the countryside, but whether this particular facility retains rural character and controls its impacts.

The proposal does so. Built development is limited and ancillary. The 21 m² timber site office shown on SG001 004 P1 is approximately 4.8 m by 4.8 m, has no permanent power or water services, and is installed on stilts to minimise ground disturbance. The riding features are dispersed within retained vegetation rather than forming a conventional surfaced sports complex.

The continued recreational use also creates a practical reason and resource base for active woodland management. If the use is extinguished, that management benefit should not simply be assumed to continue independently. The planning balance should compare the managed proposal before the Inspector with the realistic consequences of cessation.

7. Settlement gap, landscape and visual character

Policy S6 seeks to prevent development within a settlement gap from undermining the physical or visual separation of settlements or having an urbanising effect detrimental to countryside character or the separate identity of adjoining settlements.

Shamblewood does not introduce a new settlement edge, housing, employment estate or continuous built form. The site remains wooded and visually contained. The physical gap between settlements is not materially narrowed by the cycling use, and the retained tree and vegetation structure continues to perform the visual separation function of the land.

The perimeter screening shown on SG001 002 P1 and SG001 003 P1 is to be retained and managed. Coppiced material is reused in dead hedging and habitat piles. A substantial dead hedge, approximately 30 feet thick and 12 feet high in places, provides additional physical and visual screening within the woodland. No quantified acoustic performance is claimed for it.

The absence of floodlighting is also significant. A condition preventing external floodlighting would avoid a conspicuous urbanising effect after dark. Taken together, the retained woodland, limited ancillary building, removable riding features and absence of lighting materially distinguish the proposal from development that would erode the purpose of the settlement gap.

8. Ecology, trees and woodland management

Robin Leech MCIEEM's Ecological Statement directly addresses the woodland and biodiversity concerns. It records that, at the start of the project, the woodland was unmanaged and in poor condition, with declining trees, low species diversity, limited structural complexity and little understorey or ground flora. Grassland areas were also declining through succession.

The management response is not wholesale clearance. The strategy is selective and rotational: coppicing of willow, retention of established root stools, natural regeneration, retention of mature trees and suitable deadwood, nesting-bird checks, habitat piles and dead hedges, and continued monitoring. The Woodland Management Plan 2026-2031 formalises these commitments.

The simple willow coppicing plan further confirms that only a proportion of willow is normally coppiced at any one time, leaving vegetation of different ages and heights across the site. Material is reused for dead hedging, habitat piles, screening and suitable woodland structures.

This is a material benefit of the proposal. The site is not merely being used despite the woodland; the continued recreational use is capable of supporting active stewardship of the woodland. A condition requiring implementation and periodic review of the Woodland Management Plan would secure this benefit for the life of the permission.

9. Noise and residential amenity

The activity is non-motorised. The principal sounds associated with ordinary use are bicycle contact with obstacles, voices and vehicle arrivals/departures. These should be assessed in the context of the site's woodland enclosure and the immediately adjacent railway corridor.

A specialist acoustic report has not been available within the short period between service of the Enforcement Notice and the appeal deadline. The appellant does not invite the Inspector to treat an informal sound reading as a substitute for a professional BS 4142 or other specialist assessment, nor is a quantified decibel reduction claimed for the dead hedge.

However, absence of a specialist report is not evidence that unacceptable harm occurs. The planning system can control the actual characteristics that could cause disturbance. The appellant therefore offers conditions restricting the use to non-motorised cycling, preventing external floodlighting and amplified music/PA except where separately agreed, defining reasonable operating hours, and requiring an operational management and complaints procedure.

The approximately 30-foot-thick and 12-foot-high dead hedge and retained woodland provide substantial physical separation and screening. The adjacent railway is a relevant part of the existing acoustic context, although the appellant does not rely on railway noise as a licence to create unreasonable disturbance.

On that basis, residential amenity can be protected by enforceable controls proportionate to the nature and intensity of the use. If the Inspector considers additional protection necessary, a condition requiring an Operational and Noise Management Plan before further organised events would be preferable to refusal.

10. Access, parking and sustainable transport

The final drawings materially improve the evidence on access. SG001 002 P1 identifies the gated access, an area exceeding 5 m by 5 m in which a vehicle can pull clear of the highway before the gates are opened, visibility splays within land under control, and longer actual visibility distances.

SG001 003 P1 identifies the informal hardstanding parking area. Ordinary use is modest relative to the available area. Event periods can be managed separately through marshals, designated parking and a prohibition on overspill onto habitat areas or the public highway.

The site also has an unusually strong sustainable-transport relationship for a specialist cycling facility: Hedge End railway station is immediately adjacent, and local users can arrive by bicycle. This directly assists the accessibility criterion in Policy DM36.

The combination of defined access geometry, on-site parking, event management and realistic alternatives to private-car travel demonstrates that the use can operate without unacceptable highway effects.

11. Flood risk, drainage and water environment

The site is wet in winter and adjoins Ford Lake (Stream). The formed drainage ditches are shown on SG001 002 P1 and SG001 003 P1. They are small, shallow features intended to manage standing surface water rather than create extensive engineered drainage infrastructure.

Professional flood/drainage advice previously obtained for the appeal identifies outdoor sport and recreation as water-compatible development and notes that the use does not inherently create new impermeable area or increase runoff rates. The principal issue requiring management is the relationship between drainage, sediment and the receiving watercourse.

The appellant accepts conditions preventing material land raising within the floodplain, requiring appropriate sediment control, and preventing any new or materially altered outfall to the main river except in accordance with approved details and any separate Environment Agency consent or exemption required.

Those controls address the actual planning risk without requiring cessation of a water-compatible recreational use.

12. Safety and operational management

Shamblewood is a managed cycling facility rather than uncontrolled public access to informal obstacles. Organised riding has a strong supervised and coaching element. Helmets are mandatory for organised activity and appropriate protective equipment is encouraged.

Riding features are inspected and maintained as part of site operation. The operator has an engineering background and applies a structured approach to construction and maintenance. First-aid and incident-management arrangements form part of the operational framework.

A planning condition can require an Operational Management Plan covering operating hours, organised events, parking, first aid, feature inspection, safeguarding where relevant, waste, complaints and emergency access. This provides a clear mechanism for controlling the use over time.

13. Sporting need and community benefit

Bike trials is a specialist cycling discipline requiring technical obstacles and progressive training terrain. Dedicated facilities are scarce. Biketrial Federation UK supports Shamblewood and has identified it as one of only five English venues used to host British Trials Cup rounds and one of only three regularly hosting organised introduction-to-trials sessions, coaching and competitive events.

That combination is important. Shamblewood can provide a beginner's first supervised experience, regular youth development, club-level coaching, national competition and terrain capable of challenging elite riders. Current and former world-level riders have used the site, demonstrating the standard of the facility and providing inspiration to developing riders.

The community benefit is broader than competition. The site provides structured outdoor activity for children and young people, opportunities for Scout and community groups, physical activity, skills development and a safe place to ride away from unsuitable public locations.

The appellant also relies on the wider public benefit of keeping the woodland in active management. Continued recreational use gives more people a reason to value and experience the site while funding and motivating coppicing, habitat work, screening, safety inspections and maintenance. If permission is refused and the land is simply secured and unmanaged, those recreational and management benefits would be lost.

These benefits do not override unacceptable environmental harm. Rather, once the identified impacts are shown to be limited and controllable, they add substantial positive weight to the planning balance.

14. Response to the Council's reasons

14.1 Countryside / settlement gap / urbanisation

The use is outdoor recreation of a kind expressly contemplated by Policy DM36. The woodland remains the dominant site character; perimeter vegetation is retained; built form is limited and ancillary; there is no floodlighting; and the use does not physically or visually close the settlement gap. The proposal therefore does not create the type of urbanising effect the countryside and gap policies are intended to prevent.

14.2 Noise, light and amenity

The activity is non-motorised and contained within woodland adjacent to an existing railway corridor. No floodlighting is sought. The appellant offers operating, event, amplified-sound and complaints controls. In the absence of evidence of unacceptable harm, proportionate conditions provide an appropriate planning response.

14.3 Traffic and access

The submitted drawings now identify the access arrangement, pull-in area and visibility. On-site parking is available and ordinary attendance is low relative to capacity. The adjacent railway station and cycle access provide sustainable alternatives. Organised events can be controlled by an event parking plan.

14.4 Flood risk, drainage and water quality

Outdoor recreation is water-compatible development. The use does not inherently require impermeable surfacing. Conditions can prevent harmful land raising, require sediment management and ensure that any outfall works comply with approved details and separate Environment Agency requirements.

14.5 Trees, woodland and biodiversity

Independent ecological evidence now explains the baseline and management effects. The woodland had been unmanaged and structurally poor. Rotational coppicing, natural regeneration, deadwood retention and habitat management are formalised in the Woodland Management Plan. The continued use can therefore coexist with, and help sustain, beneficial woodland management.

15. Suggested conditions

Without prejudice to the Inspector's discretion, the appellant would accept conditions along the following lines:

1. The development shall be carried out substantially in accordance with drawings SG001 001 P1, SG001 002 P1, SG001 003 P1 and SG001 004 P1.
2. The use shall be restricted to non-motorised pedal-cycle recreation, coaching and associated events; no motorised motorcycle or motor-sport activity shall take place.
3. No external floodlighting shall be installed or operated without separate written planning approval.
4. The site office shall be used only for purposes ancillary to the bike park and shall not be used as residential accommodation.

5. The retained perimeter vegetation shown on the approved plans shall be managed to maintain the woodland screening function, subject to normal arboricultural and ecological management.
6. The Shamblewood Woodland Management Plan 2026-2031, or a subsequently approved replacement, shall be implemented and reviewed at least annually.
7. Before any materially larger organised event programme is introduced, an Operational Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, covering hours, parking, event management, amplified sound, waste, complaints and emergency arrangements.
8. No amplified music or public-address system shall be used outdoors except in accordance with an approved event or operational management plan.
9. Parking shall be confined to the approved parking areas during normal operation, with event overflow managed so as to avoid obstruction of the highway and unnecessary use of ecologically sensitive areas.
10. No new impermeable surfacing or material raising of land within an identified flood-risk area shall take place except in accordance with details approved by the Local Planning Authority.
11. No new or materially altered drainage outfall to the adjoining watercourse shall be constructed except in accordance with approved drainage/sediment-control details and any separate consent or exemption required from the Environment Agency.
12. Redundant artificial riding features shall be removed and the ground made good when permanently taken out of use.

16. Planning balance and conclusion

The appeal should be determined on the development now defined by the submitted plans and the evidence now available, not on an assumption of uncontrolled expansion.

There is tension with countryside policy insofar as the proposal introduces recreational structures and an ancillary office into a countryside and settlement-gap location. That tension is materially reduced by the nature of the use: non-motorised outdoor recreation, limited built form, retained woodland screening, no floodlighting and removable/adaptable riding features.

Policy DM36 is a significant positive consideration because it expressly supports recreation facilities, including in the countryside, where urbanisation is avoided, countryside management is supported and sustainable access is available. Those requirements can be met here.

The technical concerns are capable of proportionate control. Ecology and woodland management are supported by professional evidence and a management plan. Flood and drainage risks can be controlled through restrictions on land raising, sediment and outfall works. Access is now defined on scaled drawings and the site benefits from both on-site parking and immediate rail accessibility. Noise is generated by a non-motorised activity and can be controlled through hours, event and amplified-sound restrictions.

Against any residual harm must be weighed the substantial benefits: scarce specialist sports provision; youth coaching and introductory opportunities; physical activity; community use; national competition capability; safe and supervised riding; and the continuation of active woodland stewardship.

The realistic alternative is not necessarily a woodland receiving the same level of management without recreation. The recreational use provides the purpose, volunteer effort and income that support ongoing management. Cessation risks the loss of both the facility and the active stewardship now being delivered.

For those reasons, the appellant respectfully requests that the Inspector ALLOW the appeal on Ground (a) and GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION for the continued use and associated development described in section 2, subject to such proportionate conditions as the Inspector considers necessary.

Appendix schedule

Ref	Document
A	Enforcement Notice ENF/2025/200 - complete copy
B	Planning drawings: SG001 001 P1 Site Location Plans; SG001 002 P1 Indicative Site Layout - Whole Site; SG001 003 P1 Indicative Site Layout - Main Site; SG001 004 P1 Site Office Building
C	Ecological Statement - Robin Leech MCIEEM
D	Shamblewood Woodland Management Plan 2026-2031
E	Simple Willow Coppicing Management Plan
F	Biketrial Federation UK supporting letter
G	Flood risk / drainage professional evidence and any Environment Agency correspondence available at submission
H	Operational / Noise Management Statement
I	Community, Scout, rider and user support evidence
J	Site photographs / screening photographs
K	Relevant Council correspondence and procedural chronology

Submission checklist

- ☐ Submit the enforcement appeal online before 28 August 2026.
- ☐ Select Ground (a) expressly and pay the deemed-planning-application fee within the required period.
- ☐ Upload the complete Enforcement Notice.
- ☐ Upload this Planning Statement / Statement of Case.
- ☐ Upload drawings SG001 001 P1 to SG001 004 P1 as separate legible PDFs.
- ☐ Complete the correct ownership certificate and serve any required notice on landowners.
- ☐ Upload the Ecological Statement and woodland management documents.
- ☐ Upload the Biketrial Federation UK letter and the strongest signed community/rider evidence.
- ☐ Upload any flood/drainage and Environment Agency evidence currently available.
- ☐ Upload a short Operational / Noise Management Statement if available.
- ☐ Check that the description of development on the online form is consistent with section 2 of this statement and the submitted drawings.

Sources relied upon

- Planning Inspectorate, Enforcement notice appeals: Procedural Guide England, updated 22 April 2026.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, published 17 August 2026.
- Eastleigh Borough Council, Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036, adopted 2022.
- Robin Leech MCIEEM, Shamblewood Bike Park - Ecological Statement.

- Shamblewood Bike Park, Woodland Management Plan 2026-2031.
- Shamblewood Bike Park, Simple Willow Coppicing Management Plan.
- Biketrial Federation UK supporting statement.
- Planning drawings SG001 001 P1 to SG001 004 P1, dated 12 August 2026.

END OF STATEMENT