

Companion to the **Save Weston Big Wood Campaign Pack v8.0 (106 pages)**, the authoritative source for every claim, and to the **Campaign Action Pack**, which carries every template and contact ready to send. This sheet is the map; the pack is the case; the Action Pack is the toolkit. Figures and dates verified 17 August 2026, and updated the same day for the new NPPF.

THE ISSUE AT A GLANCE

What is proposed?

Tower Farm: up to 400 homes on 28.32 hectares of Green Belt pasture directly adjoining Weston Big Wood. Black Rock: around 100 homes on 7.2 hectares the far side of the same wood. Some 500 homes closing in from both sides.

Where?

Portishead, North Somerset. Weston Big Wood is 37.66 hectares of ancient woodland and a Site of Special Scientific Interest, notified in 1984, owned and managed by Avon Wildlife Trust.

Why act now?

There is no planning application for either site — the portal was searched on 11 August 2026 and there is none. The decision is being taken now, at the North Somerset Local Plan examination. Hearings were confirmed on 3 August 2026 for the weeks of 9, 16 and 30 November and 7 December 2026.

THE NUMBERS THAT MATTER

up to 400 homes proposed at Tower Farm, on 28.32 ha of Green Belt pasture against the wood	around 100 homes proposed at Black Rock, on the far side of the same wood: some 500 in total
100% of the SSSI recorded by Natural England as 'Unfavourable – Declining' — all four units	approx. 548 additional cars from Tower Farm, through a single access beside two schools — Portishead Town Council's own estimate
143 days late: North Somerset Council's environmental screening decision, due 3 March, issued 24 July 2026	15 metres the minimum buffer from the ancient woodland required by the made Neighbourhood Plan, Policy PEN5
none national data on where the 'grey belt' label is being applied: the Government's own statistics do not measure it	

FIVE THINGS TO KNOW

- 1

The wood is irreplaceable, and it is already failing. Ancient woodland and an SSSI, used by bats and woodland wildlife and part of the Gordano valley corridor. Natural England records every unit as unfavourable and declining, with ash dieback the stated primary driver and recreational pressure exacerbating it. It needs less pressure at its edge, not 500 homes. *Section 2.*
- 2

North Somerset Council's own record is wrong. Its consultation statement says there are “no SSSIs in the vicinity” of Tower Farm. The wood adjoins the site. The correction has still not been made. *Section 2.2.*
- 3

The ‘grey belt’ label is challenged, and this examination is the safeguard's last stand. Footnote 7 of the December 2024 NPPF keeps land beside SSSIs and ancient woodland out of the grey belt definition; it was never properly applied here. The new NPPF (17 August 2026) deletes it for future decisions — but this plan is examined on the December 2024 rules. *Sections 2.1 and 5.3.*
- 4

A rival housebuilder said no. Persimmon Homes — a competitor housebuilder — formally answered “No” to whether the site is suitable, on transport grounds. One vehicular access, on The Downs, past High Down Infant and Junior Schools. *Section 3.1.*
- 5

The plan itself keeps part of Black Rock back for nature. Only the eastern parcel is allocated; the western parcel nearer the wood stays in the Green Belt, and the plan's own Schedule 1 identifies it as the opportunity for ecological mitigation. The promoters ask the Inspectors to release that parcel too. *Section 3.11.*

THE FOUNDATION OF THIS CASE — LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY

The safeguard was never applied here — and it still governs this examination.

Tower Farm. North Somerset Council's Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment answered the footnote 7 question in one line that does not mention the wood. Clevedon Road, half a mile away. In a live application the planning statement quotes the grey belt definition three times and stops each time before the exclusion. Two separate processes, two different footnote 7 assets, the same step missing from both. *Section 5.1 and Appendix G.*

WHY THE CAMPAIGN IS CONCERNED

ENVIRONMENT A declining SSSI, ancient woodland, bats, red-listed birds and the wildlife corridor — with development on the pasture that buffers them. <i>Section 2.</i>	GREEN BELT / GREY BELT In 1987 an Inspector found excluding this land would “allow development to be taken too close to the wood”. The grey belt label now applied to the same landscape is the central challenge. <i>Sections 2.1 and 5.</i>	CUMULATIVE IMPACT Tower Farm and Black Rock are assessed separately, but the wood would live with both. No assessment of the combined pressure of some 500 homes exists. <i>Section 2.3.</i>	NECESSITY North Somerset Council's own submitted plan puts up to 785 homes on central brownfield land — and its own Castlewood report says the plan's headroom absorbs losing an allocated site. <i>Section 3.4.</i>
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WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN — AND WHAT YOU CAN DO

The three urgent actions take about twenty minutes altogether. Every one has a ready-made letter, step-by-step instructions and verified contacts in the **Campaign Action Pack** — document **01A** in the folder this sheet came from. Open it, pick an action, copy the template, add two sentences of your own, send.

1 • Email your ward councillors

Urgent

Ask them to press for both allocations to be removed from the Local Plan.

Use: Action 1 in the Action Pack — the ready-made email and all six Portishead ward councillors’ addresses.

2 • Support the environmental screening complaint

Urgent

Ask North Somerset Council to reconsider its decision that no Environmental Impact Assessment is needed (reference 26/P/0300/EA1).

Who: Jason.Mak@n-somerset.gov.uk, copying matt.lenny@n-somerset.gov.uk — or use North Somerset Council’s complaint form.

Use: Action 2 in the Action Pack — the form walkthrough, question by question, and a ready-made letter. **When:** now — the first-stage response is expected late August 2026.

3 • Sign and share the petition

Urgent

“Save Weston Big Wood from development” at change.org/p/save-weston-big-wood-from-development

Enter your postcode when prompted: that is how local support is counted. Signing is free and no donation is needed. A ready-made message to share it with is at Action 3 in the Action Pack.

IMPORTANT — DO THESE SOON

Write to the MP

Ask Sadik Al-Hassan MP to put the footnote 7 question to MHCLG and publish the answer, and to press for the safeguard deleted on 17 August 2026 to be restored. Action 4 in the Action Pack.

Send us what you see

Wildlife sightings, photographs and local history all strengthen the evidence base.

Email the campaign at info@swbwportishead.co.uk. Action 5 in the Action Pack.

Follow the examination

The statutory notice and the Inspectors’ Matters, Issues and Questions are expected around 28 September and had not been published as at 17 August 2026. Action 6 in the Action Pack.

Sign the petition to Parliament

A separate, national petition: clarify grey belt policy for land beside protected nature sites. petition.parliament.uk/petitions/777301 — click the confirmation email or your signature does not count. Action 7 in the Action Pack.

Watch the planning portal

No application exists for either site as at 11 August 2026. Set an alert at planning.n-somerset.gov.uk — Action 8 in the Action Pack, with a pre-loaded objection ready for the day one is ever lodged.

THE DATES THAT MATTER

When	What
17 Aug 2026	New NPPF published: deletes the grey belt safeguard for future decisions. The examination continues under the December 2024 rules (new NPPF, Annex A(8)).
Late August 2026	North Somerset Council’s first-stage response to the environmental screening complaint (NSC603122) is expected.
Around 28 Sep 2026	Statutory hearing notice, the Inspectors’ Matters, Issues and Questions, and the Guidance Note expected to publish.
From 9 Nov 2026	Examination hearings: weeks of 9, 16 and 30 November and 7 December 2026. Confirmed 3 August 2026.
From 18 Jan 2027	Reserve hearing week.
12 Feb 2027	The parliamentary petition closes.

WHAT DECISION-MAKERS NEED TO DO

North Somerset Council	Reconsider the negative screening decision or give full reasons for it, and correct the “no SSSIs in the vicinity” error on the record.
The examination	Test the grey belt classification and the ecological evidence base, and remove Tower Farm and Black Rock from the plan.
The MP and Government	Put the footnote 7 question to MHCLG and publish the answer, and press for the deleted safeguard to be restored to the new Framework.

NEED MORE DETAIL? THE PACK MAP

If you want...	If you want...	Go to...
Green Belt history, the 1987 inquiry finding and the grey belt challenge	Black Rock in detail, and the western parcel kept for nature	Section 2.1
SSSI condition, and North Somerset Council’s record error	Every action, with the examination timetable	Section 2.2
Cumulative effect, and the environmental screening decision	The national picture: the safeguard, and what happens if it goes	Section 2.3
Wildlife: corridor, bats, red-listed birds, hedgerows, orchard	A live grey belt case — application 26/P/1357/FUL	Sections 2.4–2.8
Access, alternatives, deliverability and the allocation decision	Evidence Register, and every source with its link	Section 3