

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Held at: 10.00am on 9 October 2025 at The Memorial Hall, South Downs Centre.

Present: John Hyland (Deputy Chair), Paul Bevan, Antonia Cox, Alun Alesbury, Janet Duncton, Joan Grech, Gary Marsh, Robert Mocatta, Andrew Shaxson and Daniel Stewart-Roberts.

Officers: Tim Slaney (Director of Planning), Robert Ainslie (Development Manager), Laura Floodgate (Senior Solicitor), Claire Tester (Planning Policy Manager), Robert Green (Major Planning Projects and Performance Manager) Richard Ferguson (Principal Development Management Officer), Sarah Round (Principal Development Management Officer), Vicki Colwell (Principal Planning Officer), Kelly Porter (Major Projects Lead), Richard Fryer (Senior Governance Officer) and Jane Roberts (Governance Officer).

OPENING REMARKS

The Deputy Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and informed those present that South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) Members had a primary responsibility for ensuring that the Authority furthered the National Park Purposes and Duty. That Members regarded themselves first and foremost as Members of the Authority and would act in the best interests of the National Park as a whole, rather than as representatives of their appointing body or any interest groups.

ITEM 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

18. Apologies for absence were received from Heather Baker, Debbie Curnow-Ford and Stephen McAuliffe.

ITEM 2: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

19. The following declarations were made:

- Robert Mocatta declared a public service interest in Agenda Items 6 as an East Hampshire District councillor and Hampshire County Councillor. He was acquainted with the two public speakers speaking against Agenda Item 6: Cllr Anne Stephenson, and Cllr Jamie Matthews.
- Janet Duncton declared a public service interest in Agenda Item 7 as a West Sussex County Councillor.
- Daniel Stewart-Roberts declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Items 8 and 10 as Lewes District Council was the applicant and he was a Lewes District Councillor. He would withdraw from the meeting for items 8 and 10.

ITEM 3: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2025

20. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 September 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Deputy Chair.

ITEM 4: UPDATES ON PREVIOUS COMMITTEE DECISIONS

21. The following updates were given by the Director of Planning, and Planning Policy manager:

- SDNP/23/02973/FUL - Former Bus Station, Lewes. The decision had been subject to an application for judicial review by Lewes Town Council. That request had been unsuccessful as the grounds were deemed insufficient to justify a judicial review, and the decision had now been issued.
- An update was provided on the water neutrality position affecting development in the Sussex North Water Resource Zone. It was reported that the government had announced a solution involving changes to water abstraction permits and funding to restore affected habitats. As a result, it was anticipated that Natural England would withdraw its position statement, requiring all development in the zone to be water neutral due to the impact of water extraction on the Arun Valley Special Area of

Conservation (SAC), by the end of the month. Members were advised that, for decisions made at this meeting, the water neutrality requirement remained in place and would be addressed in relevant agenda items.

ITEM 5: URGENT ITEMS

22. There were none.

ITEM 6: SDNP/24/03588/REM - LAND NORTH OF BUCKMORE FARM, PETERSFIELD

23. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-16) and the update sheet.
24. The following speakers addressed the committee against the application:
- Cllr Anne Stephenson, speaking as a Petersfield Town Councillor.
 - Cllr Jamie Matthews, speaking as the East Hampshire District Council Ward Councillor for Petersfield Bell Hill.
25. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:
- James Taylor, representing Dandara Southern Limited,
 - Ben Baillie, of Cooper Baillie Ltd, representing Dandara Southern Limited,
 - Annelies Earley, of Green Landscape Studio, representing Dandara Southern Limited.
26. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-16), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
- Requested clarification as to whether East Hampshire District Council maintained a register of individuals interested in self-build plots and whether the SDNPA had been consulted.
 - Requested further detail on the justification for the change in position over self and custom build, given the previously expressed desire for the site.
 - Sought clarity on the legality of changing the tenure type secured in the outline consent without formal consultation or supporting evidence and indicated discomfort with altering the outline agreement without a clear evidential justification.
 - Agreed that a lack of self-build schemes coming forward provided a reasonable evidential basis for the change to the legal agreement.
 - Expressed support for the revised scheme, noting its improved design, contextual fit with Petersfield, and the significant increase in affordable housing provision.
 - Were of the opinion that the site was too large for self-build and that there appeared to be no appetite for self-build locally.
 - Drainage concerns were raised, particularly regarding the translocation of rush pasture and the potential for flooding. Members questioned the effectiveness of the proposed Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
 - Questioned the absence of photovoltaic (PV) panels and suggested strengthening the sustainability condition to reflect the energy strategy.
 - Discussed the impact on designated green space, noting that the SuDS basin occupied a significant portion of the area and that the road dissected the space.
 - Requested that the informal pedestrian route to Bell Hill Recreation Ground be formalised to improve year-round accessibility, particularly for pushchairs.
 - Noted that the role of the Committee was to assess compliance with planning policy and material considerations, rather than redesign the application.
27. Members were advised:

- It was clarified that the SDNPA was the responsible planning authority and maintained the self-build register, rather than East Hampshire District Council.
- The conflict between the Neighbourhood Plan and the scheme was acknowledged. It was noted that the examiner's report had expressed concern about the deliverability of self-build on the site. It was noted that self and custom-build housing did not constitute affordable housing as per the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Officers were of the opinion that the marketing exercise had been sufficiently robust and that no self-build schemes had come forward.
- It was confirmed that the proposed change in tenure would be secured via a deed of variation to the Section 106 agreement and did not constitute a change to the outline permission and it was lawful to change the tenure in this way.
- The SuDS system had been reviewed by the lead local flood authority and county ecologist. Conditions 7–9 would secure further detail and mitigation.
- The methodology for translocating rush pasture had been assessed and considered acceptable. The drainage design captured water at source and was consistent with the outline strategy.
- It was confirmed that the sustainability strategy included air source heat pumps and exceeded Local Plan requirements. Condition 3 could be amended to explicitly reference the principles outlined in the sustainability report.
- The scheme had reduced the number of SuDS basins from three to one, and the layout was consistent with the outline consent.
- The pedestrian access to Bell Hill Recreation Ground was addressed in Condition 16.
- It was reiterated that the revised scheme responded to the reasons for deferral and represented a significant improvement in design, layout, and landscape integration.

28. **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the approval of Reserved Matters is granted, subject to:
 - i. The satisfactory completion of a Deed of Variation, the final form of wording for which is delegated to the Director of Planning, to amend the Outline Planning Permission S106 Legal Agreement to secure:
 - 30% of dwellings as 65% Affordable Rent and 35% shared ownership.
 - 15% of dwellings as Discount Market Sales.
 - Remove all requirements associated with self and custom build.
 - ii. The conditions set out at paragraph 9.2 of the report and Update Sheet and any amendments or other conditions, as required.
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse Reserved Matters Approval, with appropriate reasons, if the completion of the Deed of Variation to the existing S106 Legal Agreement is not completed, or insignificant progress made, within six months of the 9 October 2025 planning committee meeting.

ITEM 7: SDNP/25/01421/FUL - GARAGE SITES, PETWORTH

29. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-17) and the update sheet and provided a verbal update.
30. The following speakers addressed the committee against the application:
 - Amy Stokes, representing herself and neighbours.
 - Katrina Budd, representing herself.
31. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:

- Peter Cleveland, of Henry Adams LLP, the agent, representing Hyde Housing Association.
32. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-17), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
- Expressed strong support for the application, describing it as excellent and welcomed the provision of affordable units.
 - Sought clarification regarding the number of units secured.
 - Applauded Hyde Housing for delivering 19 new homes but expressed disappointment that the yield was not higher.
 - Noted that some of the existing garages were in poor condition and that redevelopment would be beneficial. Acknowledged parking concerns but considered that the application could not be refused on those grounds.
 - Observed that parking demand often exceeded statistical projections, particularly where residents relied on cars for work.
 - Acknowledged parking as a persistent issue in dense urban areas and asked whether a car club had been considered.
 - Questioned the absence of Electric Vehicles (EV) charging points and whether that had been addressed.
 - Praised the proposed landscaping improvements, noting that the estate's existing planting scheme was bare.
 - Discussed concerns about the potential impact of tree planting on drainage infrastructure but noted that planting appeared to be away from existing drainage systems.
 - Asked about post-completion monitoring of the developer's planting commitments.
 - Raised concerns about the consultation process, noting that some residents had not been notified and asked what would happen if new material points were raised.
33. Members were advised:
- It was clarified that the application was for 19 units, with 10 secured through a Section 106 agreement and the remaining nine delivered as affordable units by Hyde Housing. Homes England funding could not be used for units secured through Section 106, which explained the split.
 - It was confirmed that each individual home would have an EV charging point, and additional EV charging point provision was conditioned.
 - A travel plan and contribution towards monitoring of the travel plan had been submitted, incorporating walking, cycling, and car-sharing measures, but no car club.
 - It was acknowledged that while site notices had been issued, adjacent residential properties had not been notified. A post-committee notification would be carried out and should any new material matters be identified then the application would return to Committee for a decision.
 - Post-development monitoring of planting would be secured through Conditions 15, 16, and 17, with a 30-year monitoring period in line with biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements.
 - Water neutrality was addressed, with confirmation that the mitigation scheme met Natural England's current requirements. Should Natural England withdraw its position statement, the Authority, as the local planning authority, would need to be satisfied that there were no significant effects on the designated area.

34. It was resolved that the recommendation be amended to add at recommendation I (c) second bullet “*noting there may be a need to remove any elements or requirements of the approval as a result of an expected position change on water neutrality.*”
35. **RESOLVED:**
- 1) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee, to grant planning permission subject to:
 - (a) No new material matters arising, following neighbour notification consultation;
 - (b) The conditions at paragraph 9.1 of the report and the update sheet and any amendments or other conditions required to address technical matters
 - (c) The satisfactory completion of a section 106 agreement, the final form of which is delegated to the Director of Planning, to secure:
 - 10 Affordable Housing Units as set out in the report
 - Water neutrality, noting there may be a need to remove any elements or requirements of the approval as a result of an expected position change on water neutrality
 - The travel plan and monitoring fee of £3,950.
 - 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse planning permission, with appropriate reasons, if the legal agreement is not completed, or insufficient progress made, within six months of the 9 October 2025 Planning Committee meeting.
36. The Chair brought forward Agenda Items 11 and 12.

ITEM 11: MAKING OF THE PULBOROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

37. The Officer reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-21).
38. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC24/25-21) and commented as follows:
- Expressed strong support for the Plan, noting that it was always welcome when a parish such as Pulborough developed a Neighbourhood Plan. Members congratulated the parish for its efforts.
 - Commented on the irony that the plan had been delayed for four years due to water neutrality concerns, which were now expected to be resolved imminently.
39. **RESOLVED:**
- 1) Noted the outcome of the Pulborough Neighbourhood Development Plan Referendum; and
 - 2) Agreed to make the Pulborough Neighbourhood Development Plan part of the Development Plan for that part of the Parish within the South Downs National Park.

ITEM 12: SUMMARY OF APPEAL DECISIONS FROM 21 JUNE – 22 SEPTEMBER 2025

40. The Officer reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-22) and provided a verbal update to note that Lewes Town Council were not appealing the decision or award of costs in regard to SDNP/23/02973/FUL.
41. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC24/25-22) and commented as follows:
- Queried why the report contained summarised information on each appeal.
 - Questioned whether further details of the Lurgashall enforcement case would be reported to Members.
42. Members were advised:

- In response to Member feedback, appeal reports had been shortened to focus on key decisions rather than including full summaries of each case.
- It was confirmed that the Lurgashall enforcement case had been resolved and would be reported to Members in a future enforcement paper.

43. RESOLVED

The Committee noted the outcome of appeal decisions.

44. Committee broke for lunch at 12.22pm.

45. Daniel Stewart-Roberts and Robert Mocatta left the meeting at 12.22pm.

ITEM 8: SDNP/24/03582/FUL - GARAGE COMPOUND, CRISP ROAD, LEWES

46. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-18) and the update sheet and provided a verbal update.

47. The following speakers addressed the committee against the application:

- Simon Goodman, representing himself.

48. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:

- Nathan Chilvers, of Mohsin Cooper Ltd, the agent.
- Chris Wojtulewski, of Parker Dann Chartered Town Planning Consultants, representing Lewes District Council, the applicant.

49. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-18), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:

- Congratulated Lewes District Council on building homes, on an accessible site, of modular construction and expressed support for the scheme, noting that even two affordable homes represented a meaningful gain and outweighed the loss of parking spaces and that the use of redundant areas was to be welcomed.
- Raised concerns about the displacement of vehicles exacerbating existing parking pressures and questioned the accessibility and practicality of the proposed replacement parking site at Blois Road, observing it may be too far from the affected residents to be of practical use.
- Noted that each dwelling would have one parking space, which may be insufficient for the likely demand. Observed that the desire for parking may never be satisfied.
- Questioned how relevant the Lewes car club would be to the scheme.
- Noted that the site was currently used to provide approximately eight parking spaces and requested clarification on how many parking spaces were being created through the proposed alternative parking arrangements.
- Queried whether the displaced vehicles would be forced to park elsewhere on the estate, exacerbating existing parking pressures.

50. Members were advised:

- The residents would have access to the existing local car club, but no travel plan would be required for a development of this size.
- Concerns about the accessibility of the replacement site were acknowledged but it was within reasonable walking distance and would help alleviate displacement.
- The applicant had committed to providing 10 replacement parking spaces at Blois Road, which would be secured via a Section 106 agreement, and negotiations were ongoing. This was to be designed to respond to displaced parking.

51. RESOLVED:

- 1) That the planning application be approved subject to:
 - i) A Section 106 Agreement, the final form of which is delegated to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee to secure:
 - the dwellings as affordable rented or social rented housing (to be confirmed by the applicant), and
 - final details of the location and number of parking spaces to be provided on an alternative site within the Landport Estate, and
 - ii) the conditions set out in paragraph 9.2 of this report and the update sheet.
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee to make minor amendments to conditions pursuant to ii) as required, subject to the resolution of the s106 agreement.
- 3) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse the application with appropriate reasons if the agreement is not completed or sufficient progress has not been made in securing the agreement within six months of the 9 October Planning Committee meeting.

ITEM 9: SDNP/24/03583/FUL – GARAGE COMPOUND, KINGSLEY ROAD, LEWES

52. This Item was withdrawn from the agenda on 3 October 2025.

53. Gary Marsh left the meeting at 1.20pm

ITEM 10: SDNP/24/03587/FUL – GARAGE COMPOUND, QUEENS ROAD, LEWES

54. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-20) and the update sheet and provided a verbal update including the submission of a representation that morning.

55. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:

56. Nathan Chilvers, of Mohsin Cooper Ltd, the agent.

57. Chris Wojtulewski, of Parker Dann Chartered Town Planning Consultants, representing Lewes District Council, the applicant.

58. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-20), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:

- Acknowledged the constraints of the site and questioned whether any application would be able to overcome them.
- Noted the benefit of delivering six affordable homes and welcomed the use of a brownfield site with sustainable transport links. Support for the principle of the development was expressed.
- Questioned whether a change in site orientation could resolve surveillance concerns.
- Sought assurance that Officers had met with the applicant and provided positive suggestions to improve the scheme.
- Raised concerns over the difficulties identified by the Fire and Rescue service and questioned the accessibility of the site for emergency vehicles. Noted that whilst a sprinkler system would act as a mitigation for the development, the remaining garages may pose a fire risk.
- Questioned whether waste collection vehicles would be able to access the site.
- The provision of cycle storage was discussed, with the suggestion of secure cycle hangers for registered users.

59. Members were advised:
- Surveillance was a significant concern and the trees between the existing properties and the site did limit this. Such issues were not insurmountable through an amended design approach, which introduced more active surveillance.
 - Officers had met with the applicant and proposed improvements to the scheme. The design had not been amended since the application was withdrawn from the July Planning Committee agenda, despite suggestions from officers to improve surveillance, layout, and public realm quality.
 - Fire and Rescue had not commented on access to the remaining garages. Access to the site was not expected to be required for waste management vehicles as the proposed bin collection point was within the acceptable walking distance for collection from Queens Road.
60. **RESOLVED:**
- 1) That the planning application be refused for the reasons set out in paragraph 9.2 of the report.
61. The Chair closed the meeting at 1.49pm

CHAIR

Signed: _____