

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Held at: 10.00am on 12 February 2026 at The Memorial Hall, South Downs Centre.

Present: Heather Baker (Chairman), Alun Alesbury, Paul Bevan, Antonia Cox, Janet Duncton, Joan Grech, John Hyland, Gary Marsh, Stephen McAuliffe, Robert Mocatta, Tom Nevill, Andrew Shaxson and Vanessa Rowlands.

Officers: Tim Slaney (Director of Placemaking), Robert Ainslie (Head of Development Management), Vicki Colwell (Principal Planning Officer (Strategic Projects)), Richard Ferguson (Development Management Lead (West), Richard Fryer (Senior Governance Officer), Robert Green (Head of Major Development and Planning Operations), Rebecca Moutrey (Senior Solicitor), Kelly Porter (Major Projects Lead), Jane Roberts (Governance Officer), Sarah Round (Principal Development Management Officer), Jody Slater (Planning Policy Lead (Allocations)), Katharine Stuart (Planning Policy Lead), Claire Tester (Head of Strategic Planning) and Amy Tyler-Jones (Planning Policy Lead).

OPENING REMARKS

The 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

137. Apologies for absence were received from Daniel Stewart-Roberts.

ITEM 2: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

138. The following declarations was made:

- Andrew Shaxon declared a public service interest on Agenda Items 6 and 13 as a Harting Parish Councillor. He also declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 13 as a relative owned a nearby site and was also acquainted with public speakers Robin Wills (Item 6), Cllr Sheila Bramley (Items 6 and 13) and Simon Ashby-Rudd (Item 13).
- Robert Mocatta declared a public service interest on Agenda Items 9 and 12 as an East Hampshire District Councillor and Hampshire County Councillor and was acquainted with two of the public speakers (Item 12)
- Gary Marsh declared a prejudicial interest on Agenda Item 9 as a neighbouring property was owned by a close relative and would withdraw from the meeting for the discussion and vote on this item.
- Stephen McAuliffe declared a pecuniary interest on Agenda Item 10 as a trustee of the South Downs Trust and would withdraw from the meeting for the discussion and vote on the item.
- Tim Slaney, the Director of Placemaking, declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 9 as a Director of Petersfield CLT, the applicant, and would withdraw from the meeting for the discussion and vote on the item.
- Janet Duncton declared a public service interest in Agenda Item 6, as a West Sussex County Councillor.

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

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

ITEM 4: UPDATES ON PREVIOUS COMMITTEE DECISIONS

140. The following updates were provided by the Head of Development Management:
- **SDNP/24/05322/FUL** - Blacknest Golf Centre, Binsted, was heard at Planning Committee in July 2025, and a decision was issued December 2025.
 - **SDNP/24/03715/FUL** - Land South of 22 Pulens Lane, Sheet was heard at Planning Committee in July 2025, and a decision was issued December 2025.
 - **SDNP/24/04066/FUL** - Garage Compound, The Lynchets, Lewes was heard at Planning Committee in July 2025 and a decision was issued December 2025.
 - **SDNP/25/02551/FUL** - Aldi House, Brooks Road Lewes, was heard at Planning Committee in November 2025 and a decision was issued December 2025.
 - **SDNP/25/01871/FUL** - Land East of Brooks Road, Lewes, was heard at Planning Committee in December 2025 and the decision was issued December 2025.
 - **SDNP/24/03582/FUL** - Garage Compound at Crisp Road, Lewes, was heard at Planning Committee in October 2025 and the decision was issued 4 February 2026.

ITEM 5: URGENT ITEMS

141. There were none.

ITEM 6: LOCAL PLAN: REGULATION 19 PUBLICATION

142. Officers reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-33) and the update sheet.
143. The following speakers addressed the committee in against the application:
- Sheila Bramley, representing Harting Parish Council, on site SDA63.
 - Tim Carter, representing Cocking Parish Council, on site SDA41.
 - Robin Wills, representing local residents on site SDA41.
144. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-33), the updates and commented as follows:
- Congratulated officers on the report and commended the process that had been undertaken.
 - Raised concerns regarding SDA63 Three Cornered Piece, noting the extensive appeal history which had consistently identified unacceptable permanent landscape harm and an inconsistency with previous SDNPA and Planning Inspectorate (PINS) conclusions.
 - Questioned the justification for allocating a site repeatedly found unsuitable by PINS and Secretaries of State over the past 15 years and whether any new evidence materially altered those conclusions.
 - Expressed concern that a single pitch at Three Cornered Piece would not meaningfully address the identified Gypsy & Traveller need and asked why alternative sites had not emerged through calls for sites and local authority land reviews.
 - Queried the role of West Sussex County Council and district partners in identifying pitches, noting the implications of future local government reorganisation and the need for cross-boundary co-operation.
 - Highlighted an apparent inconsistency between the high landscape sensitivity conclusions and continued inclusion of the allocation SDA41 at Cocking and asked whether the policy map and developable area could be amended to reduce harm.
 - Expressed concern that retaining highly contentious allocations could jeopardise the Local Plan timetable, potentially requiring resubmission under the new planning system and increasing uncertainty at examination.

- Noted the risk to the soundness of the Plan from major allocations in the current plan period that had not been delivered and emphasised the need to ensure all allocations were realistic, deliverable, and defensible at examination.
- Highlighted the ecological sensitivity of allocation SDA41 at Cocking, including chalk stream hydrology, ancient woodland buffer requirements and nocturnal species, and questioned whether the proposed buffers and survey requirements were adequate.
- Queried whether further ecological surveys might demonstrate that SDA41 was undeliverable, and if so, why allocation should proceed given community concerns and statutory nature conservation objectives.
- Sought clarification on the implications to the Plan if the Inspector concluded that the Gypsy & Traveller shortfall was too large to justify removal of one or both sites, including whether withdrawn sites could be required to return.
- Requested clarity on whether additional sites could still be introduced at Regulation 19 or examination to address any deficit and whether the evidence base would include assessments of sites that had been rejected.
- Asked whether outcomes from the Lewes masterplanning exercise could be incorporated as modifications at examination where they improve deliverability or density on brownfield sites.
- Noted that public responses had indicated a desire for the Authority to go further on Climate Change and Sustainability action and whilst acknowledging that actions were constrained by the limits of legislation, questioned whether sufficient consideration had been given to the impact of current and future rain levels.
- Sought clarification on the role of the Planning Committee in the process going forward.
- Raised the role of water companies and the potential impact on their actions could have on delivery of the Plan.

145. Members were advised:

- It was acknowledged that both Three Cornered Piece and Cocking were high-sensitivity landscape locations, and that despite multiple calls for sites and direct engagement with landowners, no alternative Gypsy & Traveller pitches had come forward to meet the identified need. Members were advised they were entitled to reach a different on-balance conclusion.
- It was confirmed that removing allocations would require technical updates prior to the March National Park Authority (NPA) meeting and that alternatively policy text for SDA41 could include mandatory surveys to support a future planning application (ecology, hydrology, arboriculture, and topography) and strengthen requirements for long-distance views and buffers where allocations were retained.
- It was clarified that Inspectors would not insert new sites themselves but could require the Authority to identify additional sites during the examination. Members were advised that other sites could still be advanced through Regulation 19 representation or during the examination stage, and that the full evidence base, including assessments of rejected sites, would be submitted.
- Members were reminded that decisions on sites must be made on their planning merits and that many communities across the National Park had strongly objected to sites.
- Risks were explained in relation to the bespoke National Park housing methodology if it were to be challenged at examination. It was confirmed that masterplanning work in Lewes could inform modifications or the Neighbourhood Plan could be updated.
- It was reiterated that maintaining the November submission date was important to ensure the Local Plan proceeded under the current national policy framework and

current plan-making system. Delegated authority was highlighted as necessary to compile the submission pack efficiently.

- It was noted that the whilst the flood risk mapping was included, the Strategic Flood Risk assessment was ongoing and may produce output which impacted the Plan, necessitating the delegation in recommendation 4.
- The timeline for the Local Plan review was clarified and it was noted that modifications could be shared with Members at a Member workshop ahead of submission for examination.
- It was noted that the Authority was working with water companies as part of the Infrastructure Business Plan, and that work may impact the phasing of sites for delivery.

146. It was proposed, seconded and approved that SDA63 Three Cornered Piece, Nyewood be removed from the Site Allocations.

147. It was proposed, seconded and approved that SDA41 Land east of the A286 and north of Mill Lane, Cocking be removed from the Site Allocations.

148. **RESOLVED:**

- 1) Noted the contents of the Regulation 18 Consultation Report (Appendix 1).
- 2) Noted the main issues arising from the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) set out in the report.
- 3) Recommended, subject to comments from Planning Committee being considered which included the removal of SDA63 Three Cornered Piece and SDA41 Cocking, that the National Park Authority approves the draft Proposed Submission Local Plan (Appendix 2) and changes to the Policies Map (Appendix 3) (which includes those changes set out in the Update Sheet) for publication under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012 subject to any minor, factual and presentational changes that arise prior to publication being agreed by the Director of Placemaking in consultation with the Chairs of Planning Committee and the National Park Authority.
- 4) Recommended that the National Park Authority delegates authority to the Director of Placemaking in consultation with the Chairs of Planning Committee and the National Park Authority to propose modifications arising from responses to the Regulation 19 publication and submit the Proposed Submission Local Plan and proposed modifications to the Secretary of State (and other documents required) in accordance with regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012 for examination.
- 5) Approved the Community Involvement Plan for the Regulation 19 publication (Appendix 4) (which includes those changes set out in the Update Sheet).
- 6) Approved the wording change for the Local Development Scheme (paragraph 3.4). (which includes those changes set out in the Update Sheet).

149. The Committee broke for a short comfort break at 11.25am

ITEM 7: CONSULTATION ON THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER PLANNING REFORMS

150. The Officer reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-34).

151. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-34), commented as follows:

- Welcomed the quality and depth of the draft response, noting that the language was well-crafted, clear, and appropriately robust, and commended officers for identifying issues that could directly weaken National Park protections under the proposed National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) revisions.

- Highlighted that the revised NPPF appeared to weaken the National Park's ability to manage its own landscape, particularly through the restructuring of national decision-making policies and stressed the need for a strong collective response to safeguard National Park purposes and duties.
- Expressed concern that several emerging NPPF proposals risked undermining the Authority's upcoming Local Plan, noting that policies adopted under the current framework could later be afforded "very limited weight" if inconsistent with new national wording, potentially requiring significant work to be redone.
- Supported the Authority's strong stance on major development policy, agreeing that shifting the test from "permission should be refused" to "permission should only be supported" carried a substantial risk of weakening protections and could increase pressure for large-scale energy or infrastructure development within protected landscapes.
- Raised concerns regarding the proposed removal of bespoke National Park housing methodologies, warning that without an adjustment for protected-landscapes, housing numbers could be set at the strategic (Mayoral) level and then allocated downwards, placing unrealistic pressures on the South Downs given its unique landscape and population constraints.
- Noted that Sussex contained exceptionally high proportions of protected landscapes, over 58% and emphasised that spatial development strategies should not be allowed to override National Park purposes and duties. They highlighted the need to explicitly exclude National Parks from generalised housing apportionment formulas and Members requested strengthened language in the response to prevent misinterpretation by future combined authorities or elected mayors.
- Supported the Authority's objection to proposals allowing commuted sums for affordable housing (on 10–49 dwelling sites) at the applicant's discretion, noting that such an approach threatened the delivery of on-site affordable homes in the South Downs, where small and medium-sized sites formed the majority of supply.
- Highlighted the need for the National Park to have a formal seat at the table in developing Spatial Development Strategies, rather than being treated solely as a consultee, noting this was essential to ensure nature, landscape, water and climate-resilience were integrated from the outset.
- Echoed concerns that highly technical drafting around natural beauty, decision-making policies, and transitional arrangements risked undermining 75 years of protected-landscape principles and encouraged officers to adopt the strongest possible line in collaboration with other National Parks.
- Fully endorsed officers' analysis of heritage implications, particularly the consequences of removing the "optimum viable use" test, which Members considered could unintentionally promote more harmful alterations to listed buildings within the National Park.
- Encouraged officers to raise the Authority's concerns publicly, alongside other National Parks, should Ministers demonstrate a limited willingness to acknowledge or amend problematic sections of the NPPF.
- Noted that no other National Park faced the housing pressures that the SDNPA faced.

152. Members were advised:

- Officers confirmed that the consultation represented a substantial restructuring of national policy, including a new division between plan-making and decision-making policies, and noted that many protective elements had been removed, weakened or re-framed.

- Explained that although the statutory system for National Development Management Policies was not yet being implemented, the revised NPPF would operate as a functional halfway house, capable of overriding local plans where national policies conflicted with locally adopted approaches.
- Confirmed that under the proposed framework, National Parks would no longer be able to use a bespoke methodology for housing need, with numbers instead expected to be addressed at the Spatial Development Strategy level. Officers highlighted the risks if strategic authorities failed to reflect protected landscape constraints appropriately.
- Clarified that the revised presumption in favour of sustainable development removed the current ability for National Parks to disapply the tilted balance where landscape harm was identified, representing a material weakening for protected landscapes.
- Advised that the proposed changes to major development policy shifted the direction of policy from a presumption against major development to a conditional support, merging the “exceptional circumstances” and “public interest” tests and significantly altering the interpretation of major development within National Parks.
- Confirmed that the loss of the phrase “highest status of protection” and removal of the footnote referencing the National Parks Circular were matters of significant concern and had been highlighted within the draft response.
- Explained that accessibility, water efficiency, and design standards could continue to include quantitative requirements, but authorities would no longer be permitted to apply carbon or energy-efficiency standards exceeding national building regulations.
- Noted that transitional arrangements allow the South Downs Local Plan to be examined under the current NPPF, but Members were warned that if national policy were to change substantially thereafter, some newly adopted policies might be afforded limited weight, reinforcing the need for strong representations at this stage.
- Confirmed that National Parks England were preparing a coordinated response, and that the Authority’s draft response would be strengthened, where appropriate, to align with the collective agreed protected landscape position.
- Members were advised that suggested changes, particularly those relating to spatial development strategies, protected-landscape exemptions, major development policy, and transitional protections, could all be incorporated under delegated authority before submission.
- Officers would welcome the submission by Members of a more robust form of words to be included in the response to the consultation on the NPPF and other planning reforms.

153. **RESOLVED:**

The Committee received and considered the draft consultation response and inform the final response to be delegated to the Director of Placemaking in consultation with the Chairman of Planning Committee.

ITEM 8: SUMMARY OF APPEAL DECISIONS FROM 23 SEPTEMBER 2025 – 20 JANUARY 2026

154. The Officer reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-35) and noted a correction to paragraph 1.2 of the report noting it should read “15 were allowed”.
155. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-35), and commented as follows:
- Observed that the Planning Inspectorate PINS were allowing an increasing number of appeals and questioned what the Authority could learn from this change in approach.

- Expressed concern at the decisions on Ditchling Rugby Club and Hockley Golf Course, noting PINS had accepted that landscape harm would occur yet allowed the schemes on the basis that recreational or social benefits outweighed that harm.
- Highlighted a recurring issue in appeal decisions whereby Inspectors appeared to prioritise “scenic beauty” over “natural beauty,” the latter being the statutory basis of the National Park’s designation. Members stressed that an overly scenic-led interpretation risked diminishing protections for tranquillity, ecology, dark skies and cultural heritage, all integral components of natural beauty under legislation.
- Raised concern that several allowed appeals involved certificates of lawfulness or matters turning on timing or existing use and questioned whether earlier intervention could have avoided escalation to appeal.
- Discussed the potential of Judicial Review in cases where the decision-making reasoning appeared contradictory or inconsistent with National Park purposes. Members expressed unease that some Inspectors appeared to treat expansion on recreation sites as inherently positive even where landscape harm had been acknowledged.
- Requested that the Authority consider writing formally to the Planning Inspectorate to highlight concerns around inconsistency, insufficient recognition of natural beauty, and the risks of creating precedents that could weaken long-established National Park protections.

156. Members were advised:

- Officers acknowledged that the recent appeal pattern showed a greater number of finely balanced decisions and confirmed that every allowed appeal was reviewed to identify learning points and strengthen future casework.
- Advised that officers were already updating internal practice to ensure future appeal statements placed an increased emphasis on natural beauty rather than scenic beauty, drawing attention to tranquillity, cumulative change, ecological networks, dark skies, and cultural heritage, all areas that had been afforded insufficient weight in some decisions.
- It was confirmed that while some appeal outcomes were unexpected, particularly Hockley Golf Club where the Inspector’s reasoning differed with officer and committee conclusions, legal review had determined that the threshold for Judicial Review had not been met, although concerns regarding contradictory reasoning were noted.
- Officers advised that a formal letter would be sent to the Planning Inspectorate, reflecting the approach taken recently by North Yorkshire Moors National Park, to express the Authority’s concerns regarding the direction of appeal reasoning, the treatment of natural beauty, and the weighting of benefits in protected landscapes.
- It was confirmed that although the Authority’s overall appeal performance had dipped during the quarter, the government-monitored performance metric continued to place the SDNPA within a strong performance and monitoring systems were in place to track trends closely.

157. **RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the outcome of appeal decisions

158. Gary Marsh, Tim Slaney, and Vanessa Rowlands left the meeting at 12.21pm.

ITEM 9: SDNP/25/04147/REM - LAND WEST AND NORTH OF WINDWARD RESERVOIR LANE, PETERSFIELD

159. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-36) and the update sheet.

160. The following speakers addressed the committee in against the application:

- William Redmond, representing himself.

- Lisa Hollyhead, representing herself.
161. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:
- Chris Cooper, representing Petersfield CLT.
162. The Committee considered the report by the Head of Development Management (Report PC25/26-36), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
- Praised the Petersfield Community Land Trust (CLT) for persisting through a long and challenging process, noting the difficulty across the district in bringing genuine self-build schemes forward. Recognised that the custom-build model proposed represented a practicable solution that honoured the aspiration of the Petersfield Neighbourhood Plan allocation.
 - Welcomed the revised approach to design, noting that the range of elevational treatments, materials, porches, chimneys, windows, and detailing options ensured variety while maintaining cohesion. Members appreciated that, unlike a typical estate development, this scheme would result in a visually interesting and characterful group of dwellings and suggested it could provide a useful model for other developments. Questioned whether affordability considerations had informed the design palette to ensure choices were not unduly restricted.
 - Supported the ecological enhancements embedded in the application, including swift and bat bricks, and requested the inclusion of bee bricks.
 - Proposed a minor landscape adjustment, suggesting that rear gardens be reduced by one metre and a new hedgerow planted behind the boundary to enhance ecological connectivity between the existing copse and adjacent hedgerows. Members considered this as a simple yet effective means of strengthening biodiversity corridors.
 - Commended officers for their sustained work in supporting the Community Land Trust to reach this stage and acknowledged that the successful progression of the scheme reflected the Authority's longstanding support for community-led housing delivery.
 - Welcomed the delivery of five much-needed affordable homes secured through the Section 106 agreement.
 - Noted that policy H11 of the Petersfield Neighbourhood Development Plan was allocated for up to 11 houses and questioned what would happen to the rest of the allocation.
163. Members were advised:
- Affordability considerations had been taken into account when developing the design palette.
 - Officers would explore the suggestion regarding additional hedgerow connectivity, confirming that this could be incorporated through plot-level landscaping submissions required under condition.
 - Confirmed the application would supersede H11 in the Petersfield Neighbourhood Development Plan and noted that a separate allocation, 'Windwood', was proposed within the revised Local Plan.
164. **RESOLVED:**
- That the reserved matters (appearance, landscaping and scale) pursuant to permission SDNP/21/03545/OUT be approved, subject to the conditions set out in Section 9 of this report and any amendments or other conditions to address technical matters.

165. Stephen McAuliffe left the meeting at 12.52pm.
166. Gary Marsh and Tim Slaney rejoined the meeting at 12.52pm.

ITEM 10: SDNP/25/01323/FUL - THE WOODCOTE, GRAFFAM

167. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-37) and the update sheet.
168. The following speakers addressed the committee in against the application:
- Nicholas Loble, representing himself.
 - Deepak Mahal, representing himself and friends in Graffham.
 - Peter Bradley, representing the Foresters Arms Inn.
169. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:
- Jamie Lumsden, the Applicant.
 - William Morley, representing the Woodcote.
 - Richard Dollamore, of Whaleback, the Agent, representing the Applicant.
170. The following speaker addressed the committee giving Parish Council Representation.
- Cllr Gillian Charlesworth, representing Graffham Parish Council.
171. The Chair asked the Officer to address the issues raised by the public speakers.
172. The Officer reported:
- Sewage and foul drainage matters were addressed through condition 10, which was to be agreed with Southern Water.
 - The number of seats and internal floor plan were addressed by condition 17, and it was recommended that this could be strengthened by requiring the applicant to keep records of the number of customers present and provide them to the Authority upon request.
 - Viability issues had been fully considered by the Sustainable Business Officer and that there remained an unmet need which the application would help to address.
 - Acknowledged and explained that the West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) Public Rights of Way (PRoW) officer's objection had not been summarised within the report and apologised for the omission. They confirmed that the objection had been considered in detail and the report explained how the PRoW would be retained safely and without prejudice to users.
173. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Placemaking (Report PC25/26-37), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
- Questioned whether the PRoW could be diverted along the permissive path and whether there was scope to utilise Section 106 contributions for wayfinding.
 - Requested clarification on the distinction between 'rooms' and 'units' in paragraphs 3.10 and 3.11.
 - Queried whether condition 15 would prohibit the venue from being used for meetings, conferences or purposes beyond dining and accommodation.
 - Requested clarification on policy SD23 (Sustainable Tourism) and questioned whether the application was compliant with the policy.
 - Queried the basis of the 80-cover dining limit.
 - Recognised that the application had undergone substantial redesign since the pre-application stage, acknowledging that the original scheme had been considerably

larger, more sprawling, and included elements that would have been unacceptable. Members noted that the scheme represented a substantial enlargement within a field setting outside a village.

- Questioned the suitability of the Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) given the heavy clay soil.
- Commended the Officer for bringing forward an application to Committee that was finely balanced and required a judgement call from the Committee, noting that the Parish Council was divided on the proposal.
- Welcomed the improvement to Dark Night Sky compliant lighting and glazing within a designated Dark Night Skies reserve.

174. Members were advised:

- It was confirmed that the Public Right of Way (PRoW) could be diverted under Section 257 of the Highways Act 1980 and that funding for wayfinding could be sought from the applicant.
- It was clarified that the reference to 16 rooms related specifically to bedrooms, and that the term “unit” was generally used in relation to private dwellings.
- It was confirmed that Condition 15 would prohibit the venue from being used for meetings, conferences, or any purposes other than dining and accommodation.
- Officers advised that in their opinion the application complied with Policy SD23 (Sustainable Tourism).
- It was confirmed that the 80-cover dining limit had been proposed by the applicant.
- Officers advised that the Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) was not yet agreed but was addressed by conditions, as further information was required from the applicant.

175. **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That planning permission be granted subject to:
 - the conditions set out at paragraph 8.1 of the report;
 - conditions in the Update Sheet;
 - an amended condition 17, the wording of which was delegated to the Director of Placemaking, to reference the requirement for the applicant to keep records that can be evidenced when requested by the LPA;
 - any amendments or other conditions required to address technical matters including any necessary waymarking; and
 - the completion of a Section 106 Agreement, the final form of which was delegated to the Director of Placemaking, to secure a Sustainable Travel Plan.
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Placemaking to refuse the application with appropriate reasons if the Section 106 Agreement is not completed or sufficient progress has not been to secure the Sustainable Travel Plan within 6 months of the 12 February Planning Committee Meeting.

176. The meeting broke for lunch at 2.06pm

177. Gary Marsh left the meeting at 2.06pm

178. Stephen McAuliffe returned to the meeting 2.41pm

ITEM 11: SDNP/25/02622/FUL – HATCH FARM, MILLAND

179. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-38).

180. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:
- Molly McLean, of Whaleback, the agent, representing the Applicant.
181. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-38), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
- Sought clarification on the foundations proposed for the solar array, specifically the use of ground screws to anchor the panels. Members queried whether this method of fixing had the potential to disturb archaeology.
 - Raised a technical question regarding the transformer and energy infrastructure proposed close to the curtilage of the Grade II listed Hollycombe House. Members asked whether any element of the development, particularly the step-down transformer location, given its positioning near the historic ha-ha and designed landscape, required Listed Building Consent.
 - Queried whether the proposal risked impacting veteran trees, noting earlier consultation concerns. Members asked whether any track alignment or construction access might intrude into veteran tree root protection areas and whether no-dig construction methods were required.
 - Requested reassurance that ecological recommendations, particularly those relating to root protection, track construction, and tree buffers, had been fully addressed within the amended scheme.
182. Members were advised:
- It was confirmed that the site was not in an archaeological notification area and on previous applications at Hatch Farm, the County Archaeologist had advised the site as having low archaeological potential. Therefore no significant risk arose from the use of ground screws. A written scheme of investigation could be secured by condition, although officers did not consider this necessary.
 - Officers confirmed that Listed Building Consent was not required, as the step-down transformer located close to the ha-ha would be a sunken installation, not physically attached to any listed structure. Assessment on the setting of the listed building was carried out as part of the consideration of the planning application. Officers advised that the low-lying and visually recessive placement of the structure ensured that no adverse heritage impact would arise.
 - It was clarified that the energy centre buildings were not within the curtilage of Hollycombe House and were situated closer to the farmstead.
 - Members were advised that earlier proposals for a more intrusive track alignment had been scaled back or removed. The final scheme incorporated a reduced and less formalised access arrangement. Officers confirmed that concerns related to veteran trees and root protection areas had now been fully resolved, with appropriate buffers secured.
183. **RESOLVED:**
- That planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in Section 9 of this report and any amendments or other conditions to address technical matters.
- ITEM 12: SDNP/25/04090/FUL – LAND NORTH OF DURFORD ROAD, PETERSFIELD**
184. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-39) and the update sheet.

185. The following speakers addressed the committee in against the application:
- Gethin Morgan-Owen, representing The Friends of the Rother Valley Way.
 - Cllr Louise Bevan, representing the residents of Heath Ward, Petersfield.
186. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:
- Andy Marshall, of Brackley Investments Ltd, the Applicant.
 - Mark Baines, of Hunters, the Architect.
 - Matt Sargent, of Brackley Investments Ltd, the Applicant.
187. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Placemaking (Report PC25/26-39), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
- Welcomed the landscape-led design and were of the opinion that the application made good use of the site.
 - Raised the issue of desire lines and questioned whether relocating the bus stop or installing guard rails might improve safety.
 - Raised concerns about highway and pedestrian safety at the Durford Road / Harrier Way / Penns Place junction, noting that the mature Category A Oak tree could restrict visibility for emerging vehicles.
 - Argued that removal of the Category A Oak tree would be unacceptable due to its landscape importance.
 - Commented that in an ideal scenario, a safe, legible, accessible pedestrian route should connect the Durford Road care home, Penns Place, and public open space, and that this could be better achieved via the Penns Place frontage.
 - Noted that Penns Place was owned by East Hampshire District Council (EHDC). Members debated the merits of deferring the application, for up to three months, to allow the applicant to negotiate alternative access via Penns Place with EHDC.
 - Requested clarification regarding the accessibility of the site for refuse vehicles, ambulances and fire engines.
 - Noted that Members routinely placed significant weight on the views of the Local Highways Authority (LHA) when no objection was raised to a scheme and therefore should give such weight when the LHA had raised an objection.
 - Queried the drainage strategy and questioned whether the proposed lined SuDS basins and attenuation tanks could function reliably under the site's hydrological conditions. Members were comfortable that these matters could be addressed by condition.
 - Raised concerns about foul drainage, referencing previous failures at the nearby pumping station, and questioned whether the additional load from a 70-bed dementia care facility would overstretch existing capacity. Members stressed the need to ensure Southern Water's systems could accommodate peak flows.
 - Questioned whether approval of the application would impact the safeguarded route for the Rother Valley Way.
 - Recognised the substantial need for dementia care in Petersfield and praised the internal layout including household clusters, quiet rooms, terraces, and specialist facilities and noted that, in design terms, the scheme appeared excellent for dementia residents.
188. Members were advised:

- Landscaping could be reviewed to address concerns regarding the creation of desire lines and this was already secured through conditions. Officers advised that the installation of guard rails could impact visibility and the part of Durford Road within the application boundary already functioned as a shared space.
- It was confirmed that refuse vehicles, ambulances and fire engines would be able to access the site.
- It was confirmed that the site lay within Flood Zone 1 but was susceptible to overland flow and groundwater flooding, and that the SuDS system had been redesigned to increase attenuation capacity and to utilise lined basins positioned above the water table.
- Clarified that Southern Water approval for both foul and surface water connections would be required through separate statutory processes, and that pre-commencement conditions would require full technical details to be submitted and approved before construction could begin.
- Confirmed that surface water currently entering the foul system would be removed entirely, thereby improving, rather than worsening, the existing drainage situation.
- It was confirmed that the safeguarded route for the Rother Valley Way lay outside the red line boundary and would not be prejudiced by the proposed development.
- Officers were of the view that, although the LHA continued to express concerns, through the use of conditions and off-site works, the associated risks could be managed acceptably.
- Officers warned that negotiating access over Penns Place land could take between six and twelve months and therefore might not be feasible within the development timetable.

189. It was proposed, seconded but not approved that the application be deferred for three months to allow the applicant to negotiate access via Penns Place.

190. **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the application be granted planning permission subject to the conditions set out in Section 9 of this report and the Update Sheet and any amendments or other conditions to address technical matters, and subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement, the final form of which is delegated to the Director of Placemaking, with obligations relating to:
 - i. Securing the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain onsite and offsite and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (as well as the associated monitoring fee) and purchase of Off-site Biodiversity Net Gain units/statutory credits;
 - ii. Highway access works and a financial contribution for off-site works for sustainable travel (£39,500);
 - iii. Securing a Travel Plan and the formal approval fee (£1,500) and monitoring fee (£15,000) of the Travel Plan and financial surety; and
 - iv. Estate Maintenance and Management Plan (to include landscaping, internal roads and surface water and foul drainage)
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Placemaking to refuse the application with appropriate reasons if the Section 106 Agreement is not completed or sufficient progress has not been made within 6 months of the 12 February Planning Committee Meeting

ITEM 13: SDNP/25/03104/FUL – CLAREFIELD COPSE, DUMPFORD LANE, NYEWOOD

191. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-40) and the update sheet.
192. The following speakers addressed the committee in against the application:
- Sheila Bramley, representing Harting Parish Council.
 - Simon Ashby-Rudd, representing Dumpford Park Farm Partnership.
 - Simon Ashby-Rudd, representing himself as a neighbour.
193. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:
- Angus Sprackling, speaking as the applicant.
194. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Placemaking (Report PC25/26-40), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
- Recalled that the previous temporary permission had been granted to consider the impacts and operation of any future permanent permission and noted that this had not been demonstrated during this period.
 - Requested clarification on how licensing laws interacted with planning requirements and the extent to which licensing legislation was enforceable.
 - Commented that the Authority had an obligation to foster the social and economic wellbeing of neighbours as well as the applicant.
 - Raised concerns about the enforceability of some measures, particularly the wording “noise must be kept to a minimum,” observing that such phrasing was not objectively measurable and could therefore prove difficult to enforce in practice. Members expressed a preference for a condition focused on avoiding disturbance rather than a specific noise level.
 - Requested that any permission include a strengthened noise condition, drafted in enforceable terms, the final form of words to be delegated to the Director of Placemaking in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee.
 - Acknowledged the applicant’s assertion that permitted development rights could allow 60 uncontrolled days of camping with up to 50 pitches but emphasised that this did not justify granting a permanent permission where management and anti-social behavioural issues remained unresolved, and that an Article 4 direction could be considered to address the matter.
 - Recognised that the amenity building had been adjusted to include additional toilet and urinal capacity, following district licensing advice, and that the Authority had requested an improved Campsite Management Plan (CMP), which the applicant had produced.
 - Questioned how the CMP would be monitored and how compliance could be demonstrated to the local community.
 - Considered whether a further temporary permission might be proportionate, allowing close monitoring under a strengthened CMP to ensure that the campsite could operate in a satisfactory manner.
 - Agreed that a two-year period would be appropriate, providing sufficient time for the enforcement team to assess whether meaningful improvement had been achieved and striking a balance between community concerns and legitimate rural tourism use.
195. Members were advised:

- Licensing was distinct from planning, but that part of the licensing process involved verifying that planning permission had been granted. Officers confirmed that licensing laws did provide enforcement powers, as the operation of the campsite would need to accord with any future granted licence, and that it was for the licensing authority (Chichester District Council) to enforce them.
- That the amenity building layout had been revised to comply with Chichester District Council licensing requirements, adding an additional women's toilet and an additional men's urinal without altering the external appearance of the building.
- Confirmed that the Authority's enforcement team was now fully staffed, enabling more proactive site monitoring than had previously been achievable.
- Officers advised that the wording of the CMP planning condition met the test for planning conditions, including enforceability, and that the phrasing "noise must be kept to a minimum" was commonly used in noise management conditions and that there could be circumstances where specific noise decibel limitations could be specified.
- Officers confirmed that the wording around noise could be strengthened to make enforcement more practicable and measurable.

196. It was proposed, seconded and approved that the recommendation be amended to grant a two-year temporary permission.

197. **RESOLVED:**

1) That Planning Permission be granted subject to:

- the conditions set out at paragraph 9.1 of the report;
- the conditions set out in the Update Sheet;
- the addition of a condition which limits the planning permission to a 2-year period and the addition of a condition or additional wording that clarifies the acceptable noise levels on the site the form of wording of which is delegated to the Director of Placemaking in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Committee; and
- any amendments or other conditions required to address technical matters.

198. The Chair closed the meeting at 4.56pm

CHAIR

Signed: _____

