

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Held at: 10.00am on 9 April 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, Daneil Stewart-Robets and Vanessa Rowlands.

Officers: Tim Slaney (Director of Placemaking), Robert Ainslie (Head of Development Management), Richard Ferguson (Development Management Lead), Richard Fryer (Senior Governance Officer), Robert Green (Head of Major Development and Planning Operations), Rebecca Moutrey (Senior Solicitor), Jane Roberts (Governance Officer), Sarah Round (Principal Development Management Officer), Philippa Smyth (Principal Development Management Officer), Claire Tester (Head of Strategic Planning) and Kevin Wright (Planning Policy Officer).

Others: Abby Toms (Environment Protection Manager - Winchester City Council).

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 Gary Marsh and Robert Mocatta.

ITEM 2: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

138. The following declarations was made:

- Alun Alesbury declared a public service interest on Agenda Item 9 as Marden was a neighbouring parish to Stoughton and he was acquainted with Edward Cottrell one of the public speakers.
- John Hyland declared a public service interest on Agenda Items 6 & 7 as a Hampshire Parish Member.
- Joan Grech declared a public service interest in agenda item 10 as a Horsham District Councillor.
- The Chairman noted that Jerry Pett, a Member of the SDNPA Authority, speaking on Agenda Items 6 & 7 was known to all Members.
- The Chairman reported that Katie Sharp, the agent for Agenda Item 8 and Natalie Fellows, the agent for Agenda Item 9, were both former Officers of the SDNPA.

ITEM 3: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12 MARCH 2026

139. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 March 2026 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ITEM 4: UPDATES ON PREVIOUS COMMITTEE DECISIONS

140. The following update was provided by the Head of Development Management:

- SDNP/25/04375/FUL - Roots Allotments was considered at Committee in March 2026, and a refusal was issued on 18 March 2026.

ITEM 5: URGENT ITEMS

141. There were none.

ITEM 6: SDNP/25/04953/CND - MATTERLEY FARM, OVINGTON

142. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-44) the update sheet and provided a verbal update.
143. The following speakers addressed the committee in against the application:
- Alison Matthews, representing herself.
 - Christopher Langford, representing himself.
 - Cllr David Pain, representing Cheriton Parish Council.
144. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:
- Shula Rael, speaking as the Applicant.
 - Nina Lloyd, speaking as the Agent.
 - Cllr Craig Manuel, speaking in a personal capacity.
145. The following additional Speaker addressed the committee:
- Cllr Neil Bolton, representing Upper Meon Valley Ward of Winchester City Council.
146. The following SDNPA Member addressed the committee:
- Jerry Pett.
147. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Placemaking (Report PC25/26-44), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
- The application of the exceptional circumstances and public interest tests was examined, with attention focused on whether the scale, frequency, and intensity of the event could be reconciled with the statutory purposes of the National Park. The long-term ecological benefits provided by the event were acknowledged. Consideration was given to the temporary inconvenience caused to neighbouring residents and the benefits provided by the event.
 - It was noted that the venue was a working farm, with no obligation to be managed for wildlife.
 - Consideration was given to the assessment of alternative sites. It was noted that an event of this scale required a desirable countryside location and that the Matterley Bowl was a particularly suitable location for such an event.
 - The adequacy of ecological baseline information was examined in detail. It was acknowledged that comprehensive baseline ecological data prior to 2023 was limited. It was noted that the festival had operated on the site for a number of years and that the absence of long-term historic data introduced uncertainty when assessing cumulative ecological effects.
 - The implications of limited baseline data were explored further, with emphasis placed on the need to monitor impacts arising not only during the festival itself but also during build, breakdown, and recovery periods. Concern was expressed that impacts could persist beyond the event and that cumulative effects could be underestimated without monitoring over a sufficiently long timeframe.
 - Clarification was sought on how issues identified during the period of the temporary permission would be addressed.
 - The Biodiversity and Landscape Mitigation and Management Plan (BLEMMP) was scrutinised extensively. Consideration was given to whether the proposed measures, including meadow creation, habitat enhancement, and management prescriptions, would deliver tangible ecological benefit. Reference was made to public representations questioning whether the meadow functioned as an isolated habitat rather than forming part of a wider ecological network.

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- Consideration was given to whether a temporary permission provided an appropriate mechanism to test the effectiveness of mitigation measures and to allow for evidence-led reassessment before any further consent might be contemplated.
- Tranquillity impacts formed a significant element of consideration. Representations describing disturbance extending into preparatory and dismantling phases were noted. Attention was drawn to the cumulative effect of prolonged activity, vehicle movements, lighting, and noise over a period of weeks rather than being limited to the festival days themselves. Comfort had been provided by the report provided by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust report.
- Dark Night Sky impacts, with the implications of temporary and functional lighting within a designated dark skies reserve were examined, including potential effects during construction and breakdown phases as well as during the event. Concern was expressed regarding implications for wildlife and residential amenity.
- Questioned whether there was any evidence of increased Road Traffic Accidents during the period of the festival.
- Noted that the site recovered well from the festival period.
- Questioned whether the applicant had submitted an active travel assessment and questioned what steps the Authority could take to minimise car travel to the venue.
- Public access issues were considered particularly in relation to the South Downs Way. Accounts of members of the public being turned back outside formal diversion periods were cited, raising concern about the management and duration of access restrictions.
- The asserted economic benefits of the festival were examined. It was noted that while some benefit was likely, the absence of quantified or independently verified evidence limited the weight that could be attached to these assertions.
- Support was expressed for the inclusion of a condition requiring independent monitoring and assessment of economic impacts. Members were cognisant of both the local and national economic benefit provided by the event.
- Consideration was given to requiring the removal of temporary structures at the end of the five-year period.
- The repeated use of temporary permissions was considered carefully. National guidance discouraging consecutive temporary consents was noted, and questions were raised as to why a five-year period was proposed following a single-year consent.
- Statutory obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 were considered. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that the Authority was satisfied that its legal responsibilities had been fully discharged and that assessment was not solely reliant on applicant-commissioned information.

148. Members were advised:

- The BLEMMMP provided a structured framework for managing impacts over time. This included annual ecological surveys, reporting requirements, and review mechanisms intended to identify trends, cumulative impacts, and the effectiveness of mitigation measures.
- The Plan was designed to allow mitigation measures to be adapted where monitoring identified adverse or unforeseen impacts. Survey outcomes would inform future decision-making should a further application be submitted at the end of the temporary period.
- It was confirmed that the Authority had undertaken the necessary assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Confirmation was provided that the assessment was available to view and that statutory duties had been met.

- Officers suggested an informal update could be provided to Members on an annual basis reporting any issues raised and any resulting changes required.
 - Clarification was provided regarding public rights of way. It was acknowledged that access management needed to ensure restrictions were limited to what was necessary.
 - It was advised that lighting impacts were controlled through annual submission and assessment of an Event Management Plan (EMP). Lighting proposals were considered alongside ecological information, with specialist advice sought where required to address potential impacts.
 - It was reported that Winchester City Council had Officers in attendance to monitor noise levels. Notices could be issued if noise levels exceeded the permission and licence and home visits offered if complaints arose. The need for flexibility to respond to changing wind conditions was highlighted.
 - An informative encouraged the applicant to prepare an active travel assessment. A permanent walking and cycling route between Winchester and the site had been considered but would introduce a permanent element for a temporary permission and so was not recommended.
 - It was confirmed that Officers had seen no evidence of any increase in Road Traffic Accidents during the festival and no objection had been raised by the Highway Authority.
 - Officers were of the opinion that the impact of the temporary structures was modest, that they were used by other low-key events on the site and that they should be regarded as 'de minimis'.
 - It was confirmed that a further temporary permission, whilst unusual was acceptable
 - The five-year temporary period had been proposed specifically to address acknowledged limitations in the ecological evidence base. The previous consent had been limited to one year due to the absence of a Biodiversity Enhancement and Landscape Management Plan (BLEMMP).
 - It was acknowledged that the report adopted a cautious approach to economic benefits due to the difficulty of quantifying that benefit. While a detailed economic and social benefit study by Turley Economics had been provided by the applicant, only limited weight had been attached to this evidence.
149. It was proposed, seconded and agreed that a condition requiring an Independent Economic Assessment be added, the final form of words to be agreed by the Director of Placemaking in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee.
150. **RESOLVED:**
- 1) That permission be granted to vary condition 1 and 2 of permission reference SDNP/24/05303/FUL (which would grant temporary planning approval for 5 years) subject to:
 - I. A Section 106 Agreement, the final form of which is delegated to the Director of Placemaking, in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Committee to secure:
 - A Biodiversity Net Gain, Landscape and Ecology Mitigation and Management Plan (BLEMMP) securing benefits in relation to onsite Biodiversity Net Gain, Habitat Management and Monitoring, a fee of £41,000 to monitor on-site Biodiversity Net Gain, the landscape and ecology of the application site; and the purchase of offsite Biodiversity Gain Units/statutory credits;
 - Retention of all the improvements and obligations secured as part of Planning Application SDNP/24/05303/FUL and through the Section 106 Agreement dated 27 June 2025;
 - An updated Wastewater Strategy (from the strategy secured through the June

2025 planning agreement) together with monitoring regime and evidence ensuring scheme achieves nutrient neutrality;

- II. The conditions set out in Section 9 which may be amended by the Director of Placemaking in consultation with the Chair to accommodate any necessary minor changes, and the additional condition associated with the Independent Economic impact assessment agreed in the meeting;
- 2) That the Committee confirm in reaching their decision that they have taken into account:
 - The environmental information as required by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017;
 - All matters referred to in the Director of Placemaking's report including comments received from statutory consultees and other interested parties, and
 - All other material considerations
- 3) That authority be delegated to the Director of Placemaking 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 2 months of the 9 April Planning Committee meeting.

ITEM 7: SDNP/25/04920/FUL - CORHAMPTON GOLF CLUB. CORHAMPTON

151. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-45) and the update sheet.
152. The following speakers addressed the committee in against the application:
 - Cllr Danny Lee, speaking as a Droxford Parish Councillor and Winchester City Councillor.
 - Penny Stokes, representing herself and local objectors.
 - Cllr Matt Avison, representing Droxford Parish Council
153. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:
 - Rob Bailey, representing the applicant.
 - Jonathan Gaunt, representing the applicant.
 - Alison Crooks, speaking as the agent.
154. The following SDNPA Member addressed the committee:
 - Jerry Pett
155. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Placemaking (Report PC25/26-45), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
 - Clarification was requested on how this application differed from the application for Hockley Golf Club.
 - Sought confirmation of enhancement measures that that applicant had delivered on the site.
 - Acknowledged that evolution in golf had led to balls being struck harder and further, and the resulting safety concerns. Noted that courses did not need to be longer and wider to be challenging.
 - Reference was made to the presence of a Bronze Age barrow within the application site, and it was felt that this was an opportunity missed to enhance a heritage asset.
 - Expressed disappointment at the lack of information provided on aquifer impact. The introduction of an irrigation pond and extensive earthworks within a chalk landscape

raised concern regarding groundwater sensitivity and aquifer protection, with insufficient certainty provided to demonstrate that risks would be avoided or that it was of a suitable size to serve as an irrigation pond for the site.

- Were sceptical that the proposed landform engineering mimicked local natural landform patterns.
- Clarification was sought on any increased risk to users of the nearby public right of way.
- Noted that three years of HGV traffic raised the question of what could be considered temporary works.
- Questioned the assumption that the site was, in principle, suitable for use as a golf course as it would significantly alter the natural rolling form of the downland character within the National Park. The sensitivity of the chalk landscape within the National Park was emphasised, with the engineered appearance of the proposals considered visually intrusive.

156. Members were advised:

- The proposal differed from Hockley's application in that it was a more visible site that involved more extensive soil importation and engineered landform changes that would permanently alter the character and appearance of the chalk downland landscape. This application was in a more rural location, without easy access to the M3.
- It was acknowledged that the proposed scheme offered ecological benefits, including natural woodland regeneration and improved Biodiversity Net Gain for the whole golf course. Officers were of the opinion that, on balance, the benefits did not outweigh the harm caused by the application.
- Hampshire Highways were of the opinion that risks from the proposal to users of the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network could be mitigated by condition, through a management and risk operation plan.

157. **RESOLVED:**

That planning permission be refused for the reasons set out in paragraph 9.1 of this report.

ITEM 8: SDNP/25/04030/FUL - LAND SOUTH OF ROTHERMEAD, ROTHERMEAD, PETWORTH

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

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

- Colin Nutt, representing himself and his wife, owners of number 9 Rothermead

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

- Katie Sharp, speaking as the Agent.

161. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Placemaking (Report PC25/26-46), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:

- It was recognised that the site was allocated for housing within the Petworth Neighbourhood Plan and that the principle of residential development was established.
- Concern was expressed about the close proximity between the proposed access road and the neighbouring property at No. 9 Rothermead, including the difference in ground levels and the consequence of vehicles passing at a higher level and in close proximity to the dwelling. It was noted that the submitted plans lacked sufficient clarity on how the neighbouring property would be protected physically or acoustically, and that responsibility for the long-term maintenance of any retaining structures or boundary treatments was unclear.

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- Further concern was raised about the safety and practicality of the access arrangement, including visibility for vehicles entering and exiting Rothermead, the presence of on-street parking, and the implications for refuse collection and emergency vehicle access. The suitability of proposed traffic-calming measures, such as speed humps, was questioned due to the potential for noise, vibration and disturbance of amenity to the neighbouring property.
- The siting and relationship of plots 1 and 2 relative to No. 9 Rothermead were considered in detail. It was noted that the proposed dwellings would be positioned directly in front of the bungalow with a relatively limited separation distance. Although separation distances were acknowledged, concern was expressed that the scale, orientation and proximity of the dwellings could result in an overbearing impact, particularly when considered alongside the alignment of the access road.
- Concern was expressed that approval of a full application would fix the layout and access arrangements in their current form, potentially creating ongoing amenity and access issues that could not be adequately resolved through conditions alone.

162. Members were advised:

- It was explained that access from Station Road was not available due to land ownership constraints and that the potential for access from Rothermead had been anticipated as part of the Neighbourhood Plan allocation.
- It was confirmed that swept-path analysis had been undertaken and accepted by the highway authority, demonstrating that refuse and emergency vehicles could enter, turn and exit the site.
- Final detailed design of the access arrangements would require approval by the highway authority, including matters such as kerbs, markings and highway protection measures. It was confirmed that the highway authority had raised no objection to the proposed access on safety grounds.
- It was confirmed that minor revisions had been undertaken during the application process to reposition plots 1 and 2 slightly further away from No. 9 Rothermead. However, no further revisions were pursued by the applicant at a later stage. Boundary treatment details between the access road and the neighbouring property were proposed to be secured by condition.
- While scope for changing the access arrangement itself could be limited due to highway requirements, there might be greater flexibility to explore improvements to the siting and orientation of plots 1 and 2 should the application be deferred to allow further refinement.

163. It was proposed, seconded and approved that consideration of the application be deferred to address the relationship between Units 1 and 2 and 9 Rothermead and to reconsider access issues.

164. **RESOLVED:**

That the decision on the application SDNP/25/04030/FUL be deferred to allow the applicant to address the Committee's concerns in relation to:

- 1) The relationship between Unit 1 and Unit 2 and number 9 Rothermead and consideration of repositioning, and
- 2) The access road so far as was practicable.

165. The committee adjourned for lunch at 12.58pm.

166. The meeting resumed at 1.30pm.

ITEM 9: SDNP/24/03582/FUL- NORTH MARDEN FARM, NORTH MARDEN

167. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-47) and the update sheet.
168. The following speakers addressed the committee in against the application:
- Edward Cottrell, representing objectors from Marden Parish.
 - Anne Judd, representing objectors from Marden Parish.
 - Ian Partington, representing himself.
169. The following speakers addressed the committee in support of the application:
- Natalie Fellows, speaking on behalf of the applicant as the planning consultant.
170. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Placemaking (Report PC25/26-47), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
- It was noted that the South Downs was a farmed landscape and Members acknowledged the applicant's regenerative farming aspirations and the aims of the Authority's Partnership Management Plan to support farming.
 - Considered the location and layout of the scheme.
 - Members acknowledged the stated need for the proposals but questioned the robustness of the justification provided. It was also observed that the fact the barns were being proposed, given the scale of investment involved, in itself suggested an identified need.
 - Requested clarification on what would be done with the excavated soil and expressed a preference for detail prior to granting any consent.
 - Noted the concerns raised by consultees regarding drainage and the site being located within a source protection zone, and requested confirmation on means of safeguarding ground water and details of the SUDs scheme.
 - Further detail was requested on who would be providing the written confirmation to support the technical drainage information and any necessary environmental permit for the discharge of wastewater to ground, in relation to condition 16 on the Update Sheet.
 - Sought justification for the scale of development, given the concerns raised by the landscape officer.
 - Raised the issue of the Authority using an external independent agricultural advisor to appraise the need for the barns.
 - Requested further detail of any proposed lighting, having regard to the potential impacts on ecology and tranquillity of any lighting, given the site's location in a Dark Night Skies reserve.
 - Clarification was sought as to whether roof lights were proposed to the barns.
171. Members were advised:
- Waste soil issues would be addressed through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (condition 17, criterion O).
 - Source Protection Zone issues were addressed through condition 16 regarding achieving an appropriate surface water drainage scheme and the Environment Agency had raised no objection, subject to condition.
 - The applicant had been challenged on the need for the barns during the application process and additional information had been provided. The Defra guidance cited in third

party representations had also been considered. Officers were satisfied with the justification provided.

- The Authority had previously used an independent agricultural advisor on an ad hoc basis, but Officers were not of the view that it was necessary for this application.
- The Environment Agency would be consulted in regard to providing written confirmation for any necessary Environmental Permit, as would the Lead Local Flood Authority and the District drainage engineer, in regard to the applicant seeking the discharge of condition 16.
- A lighting plan had been submitted which showed lighting on the buildings only, which provided officers with sufficient detail at this stage to recommend condition 13.
- It was confirmed that no roof lights were proposed in the barns.

172. It was proposed, seconded, but not approved that a decision be deferred to allow an opinion to be sought from a relevant professional on the question of need.

173. **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That Planning Permission be granted subject to the conditions set out at paragraph 9.1 of the report, the Update Sheet, and any amendments or other conditions required to address technical matters.

ITEM 10: SDNP/25/00799/FUL – WOODSYARD, LAND EAST OF ROSE COTTAGE, RACKHAM

174. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-48)

175. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Placemaking (Report PC25/26-48) and commented as follows:

- Welcomed the sympathetic design, the incorporation of sustainable features and the location of the setting.
- Expressed concern with Condition 5 and requested clarification as to whether it would satisfy the requirements of SD32.
- Noted that rural workers were often required to work outside of their specific area.

176. Members were advised:

- The applicant's work was not linked to a single enterprise, as anticipated by Policy SD32.
- Condition 5 could be amended to remove '*a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality in agriculture as defined in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, or in forestry*' and replaced with '*a rural worker*'.

177. It was proposed, seconded and approved that Condition 5 be amended to remove '*a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality in agriculture as defined in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, or in forestry*' and replaced with '*a rural worker*'.

178. **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 8.2, the amended Condition 5, and any amendments or other conditions required to address technical matters.

179. Vanessa Rowlands joined the meeting at 2.45pm

ITEM 11: COMMUNITY PLANNING UPDATE

180. The Officer reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-49)

181. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Placemaking (Report PC25/26-49), commented as follows:

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- Members welcomed the update and noted the progress made on neighbourhood planning across the National Park.
- Questioned whether the apparent reduction in the number of new neighbourhood plans coming forward indicated a loss of interest at parish level or whether plans were likely to resume after periods of inactivity.
- Members expressed concern about the impact of legislative changes on the role and status of Village and Parish Design Statements. Clarification was sought on the extent to which these documents would continue to carry weight in planning decision-making once the new Local Plan was adopted.
- Requested detail on whether parishes with existing Village Design Statements could transition these into Neighbourhood Plans in order for them to retain policy weight.
- Members suggested that an update on this issue be included in the next Planning newsletter to capture any parishes that missed the last parish workshop.
- Noted the benefits of a Neighbourhood Plan in regard to Community Infrastructure Levy receipts, which could support local infrastructure and projects.

182. Members were advised:

- Periods of apparent inactivity in neighbourhood planning did not necessarily indicate abandonment, and that a number of plans had resumed after extended pauses. Officers were unable to confirm whether the current slowdown was a new trend.
- Whilst Village and Parish Design Statements would lose formal policy weight following adoption of the new Local Plan, their descriptive and evidential content would remain capable of being treated as a material consideration in planning decisions.
- It was confirmed that parishes could transition existing Design Statements into Neighbourhood Plans, but that this was not a simple or easy process to complete.

183. **RESOLVED:**

The Planning Committee noted the progress to date on the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans, Parish and Village Design Statements, and Parish Priorities Statements across the South Downs National Park.

184. The Chair closed the meeting at 2.57pm

CHAIR

Signed: _____