

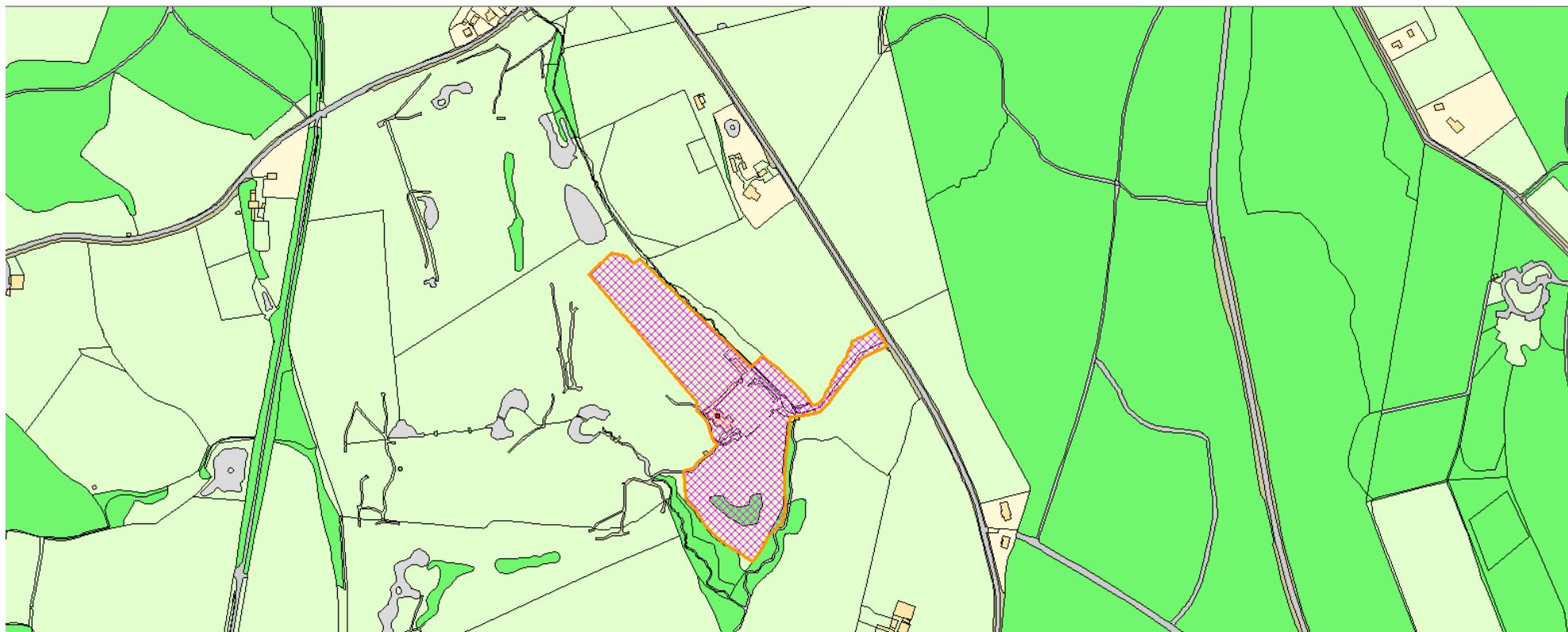
Agenda Item 7
Report PC25/26-02

Report to	Planning Committee
Date	10 July 2025
By	Director of Planning
Local Authority	Hampshire County Council
Application Number	SDNP/24/05322/FUL
Applicant	360 Beech Limited
Application	Erection of 2 pickleball courts with PV panels, and extension of walkway. Erection of 2 padel courts with canopy roof. Alterations to clubhouse to convert function room into sports bar, convert stores into games room and covered trolley store, and associated external and internal alterations. Erect new covered buggy store. Installation of family putting course to replace putting green. Alterations to 10 consented cabins, erection of 7 additional pre-fabricated eco-cabins with associated footpaths and landscaping. Extension to facilities outbuilding for laundry room. Alterations to Greenkeepers shed and yard. With associated demolitions, landscaping works, footpaths and other associated works.
Address	Blacknest Golf Centre, Blacknest Road, Binsted, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 4QL

Recommendation:

- 1) It is recommended that Planning Permission be granted 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**
 - a. Biodiversity Net Gain Plan to secure a minimum of 16% net gain in habitat units and a minimum 18% net gain in watercourse units as set out within the Ecological Statement and a Monitoring Fee of £35,000**
 - ii) The conditions as set out at Section 9.**
 - 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to make minor amendments to conditions pursuant to ii above as required, subject to the resolution of the s106 agreement.**
 - 3) 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 10 July 2025 Planning Committee meeting**
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Site Location Map



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Executive Summary

Key Matters

- Blacknest Golf Club is an existing 18 hole Golf Club on the outskirts of Binstead, it is set in the open countryside. In addition to the Golf Course there is also a substantial clubhouse, driving range and event TiPi. The site is set within the open countryside and accessed via a driveway from Frith End Road.
- The history of the site is pertinent, please see section 2, below, the most recent application SDNP/24/02624/FUL, being a refusal of planning permission in July last year.
- This application is submitted following this refusal and the proposals have been markedly reduced in scale from those previously before the Authority. The most significant differences are the reduction in number of proposed 'eco pods', from 56 to 27 and the removal of the previously proposed new car park. Members should note that, whilst this consent seeks permission for a total of 27 eco pods, 20 of these have already been consented by the Authority as set out in the history section below. This consent has been implemented and the club has begun installing some of the pods consented under SDNP/24/00921/CND.
- The application which is before members now proposes minor changes in the layout and spacing of the 20 already approved pods plus an additional 7 pods. The location of these structures, the way that they are accessed and the design of them is substantially the same as that shown by the approved drawings under Ref SDNP/24/00921/CND. The additional 7 pods (therefore 27 pods in total being sought under this application) will be located to the east of the already existing ones and on low value amenity grass to the south of the existing car park, as set out further in the report below.
- Given the significant changes made to the scheme since it was refused in July 2024, the reduction in the quantum of development, the fact that the applicant has addressed all other outstanding reasons for refusal and that the new built structures are located close to the already existing clubhouse and driving range, it is considered that, on balance, the application conserves and enhances this part of the National Park and it is supported by officers.
- The application is before members due to the level of public interest

I. Site Description

- I.1 Blacknest Golf Centre is located north of Bordon, south of Blacknest, southwest of Alice Holt Forest and east of Binsted, a little over 2km south of the northern boundary of the National Park at Bentley. It is accessed via a private track from Frith End Road, which meets the A325 approximately 1km south of the site. The A31 is 3km to the north. The site lies in an area of low-lying but gently undulating open countryside interspersed with established woodland blocks. The larger areas are designated Ancient Woodland and Open Access land and are crossed with an established network of rights of way.
- I.2 The site consists of an 18-hole golf course, driving range, 6 hole Academy course and supporting clubhouse which provides accommodation and leisure facilities. Due to various factors including topography, woodland, the long drive and location of facilities within the site, it is discretely located in landscape and visual terms from public vantage points.
- I.3 The nearest residential property is Woodland Farm Cottage, approximately 170 metres from the furthest southern boundary of the application site. Also located here is Woodland Farm and Woodlands Farm Bungalow, all shown on the submitted location plan.
- I.4 Planning permission was granted in May 2023 for 20 glamping pods and associated works (see planning history). These are located in an area of managed grassland to the south of the existing clubhouse that wraps around pockets of woodland. The majority of this part of the site is no longer in active golfing use; the main golf course is to the northwest and the Academy course to the northeast
- I.5 The woodland to the southwest is designated Ancient and Semi Natural Woodland. The connecting woodland to the south and east is not designated nor are the copses of trees

between the pod location and the clubhouse. There are watercourses running through the golf course and the woodland to the southwest.

2. Relevant Planning History

- 2.1 SDNP/18/03009/FUL Erection of 3 linked tipis, associated facilities building and pavilion, Change of Use and conversion of first floor gym, function room and multi-use rooms in clubhouse to 7 hotel rooms, alterations to first floor gym changing room to form open plan gym, conversion of first floor offices over pro-shop into security staff flat associated with proposed hotel rooms, Change of Use and conversion of part of driving range to 3 hotel rooms (2 x Part M compliant) with associated raised access path. - Allowed on appeal 15th April 2020 (Conditions secured ancillary use to golf centre use).
- 2.2 SDNP/21/00335/CND Variation of Conditions 6, 8 & 10 of permission SDNP/18/03009/FUL (Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/W/19/3235127) to allow substitution of plans to facilitate the alteration of the facilities building and the discharge of conditions relating to the foul drainage and lighting. Approved 6th April 2021. SDNP/21/03012/DCOND - Discharge of Condition 2 for 21/00335/CND - Variation of Conditions 6, 8 & 10 of permission SDNP/18/03009/FUL (Appeal Ref: APP/Y9507/W/19/3235127) to allow substitution of plans to facilitate the alteration of the facilities building and the discharge of conditions relating to the foul drainage and lighting. Approved 20th September 2021.
- 2.3 SDNP/22/05710/FUL - Erection of 20 pre-fabricated glamping pods and associated footpaths, retrospective alterations to previously consented raised timber decking adjacent to driving range with addition of pergola and associated alterations, and erection of pergolas over clubhouse rear patio. Approved 18th May 2023.
- 2.4 SDNP/24/00921/CND - Variation of Condition 2 (Plans and Documents), Condition 3 (Ecology), Condition 4 (Construction Method), Condition 5 (Ecosystem Services and Landscaping) and Condition 7 (EV Charging and Bicycle Store) of Planning Approval SDNP/22/05710/FUL. Approved 10th July 2024.
- 2.5 SDNP/24/02624/FUL Erection of 2 pickleball courts with bar and PV panels, and extension of covered walkway to link with Clubhouse. Erection of padel court with canopy roof. Installation of family putting course. Alterations to clubhouse to convert pro-shop into function room with new porch, erection of single storey extension in servicing yard, conversion of function room into changing rooms, conversion of storage rooms to sports reception and covered trolley store, and erect new covered buggy store, with associated internal alterations. Erection of 56 pre-fabricated eco-cabins and 11 associated canopies and reception building with associated footpaths and landscaping. Extension to facilities outbuilding for laundry room. Convert events office outbuilding into luggage store. Relocation of car park, alterations to existing overflow car park with 2 new bridges. Landscaping alterations to existing car park to create the courtyard. Alterations to Greenkeepers shed and yard. With associated demolitions, landscaping works, footpaths and other associated works. Refused 3rd October 2024.
- 2.6 The above application was refused on the following grounds;
 1. The proposals would fail to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Park by virtue of its location and incongruous scale and form of development and with particular reference to the car park adjacent to Frith End Road and the proposed 'eco lodges'.
 2. Insufficient ecological information submitted to demonstrate the potential impact of the proposed development on existing habitat or protected species (Great Crested Newts).
 3. The application did not satisfactorily demonstrate that it has minimised harm to existing trees or that the proposed planting would be able to thrive.
 4. Insufficient information received in relation to drainage.

- 2.7 Whilst there were four reasons for refusal in relation to the above application the fundamental one was the first reason, that due to the location, quantum of development and layout, the proposals failed to adopt a landscape led approach and did not make a positive contribution to the natural beauty of the National Park. In particular, officers considered that the number of eco pods proposed (56) and the proposed new car park (mainly to accommodate parking for the additional pods) had resulted in an unwelcome 'sprawl' of development into the countryside.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 Following the refusal of the previous application in 2024 the applicant has significantly revised the application, removing the previously proposed new car park (which was located at the entrance to the site and directly adjacent to Frith End Road), reducing the number of eco pods from 56 to 27 (noting that, as set out above, consent already exists for 20) , and seeking to cluster development around the nucleus of the Clubhouse and as advised by officers and in order to reduce its impact on the wider landscape.
- 3.2 Internal and external alterations are proposed to the clubhouse, which sits at the centre of the application site. The design and access statement describes this element of the proposals; "The existing clubhouse will be transformed into a Country Inn and Restaurant. The existing golf pro shop and changing rooms will be retained and refurbished. No extensions to the building are proposed but the existing events space will be converted to a new sports bar".
- 3.3 The driving range building and greenkeepers building will remain as existing and unaltered. A new golf buggy store is proposed to the northeast of the Driving Range. This will be a steel framed structure with corrugated sheet roofing and solar PV's . The applicant proposes, as part of their overall plan for the site, to reduce the number of holes on the Golf Course from 18 to 12. However, these works can be undertaken without the requirement for planning permission and are also located outside of the red line and not part of this application.
- 3.4 The application also proposes two Padel Courts and two Pickleball Courts/Barns. These are located in the centre of the site and on the northern edge of the existing car park. They are approximately 230 metres away from Willow Fold Farm and approximately 330 metres away from the residential properties at Woolands Farm. Additionally the courts are screened to views from the north by the existing mature hedge and tree line along the eastern boundary of the site in this location.
- 3.5 Each Padel Court is 202m² and they are located in the western corner of the existing car park area, immediately to the South of the green keepers building. The Padel Courts are under an open-air steel framed building, which resembles a Dutch Barn, this structure is 8 metres at the highest point and the roof is made of corrugated sheet roofing
- 3.6 The Pickleball Courts are approximately 9 metres wide by 16 metres in length, two are proposed, one immediately to the east of the Padel Courts and 1 immediately to the east of the Greenkeepers store. These structures are enclosed, with pitched, standing seam metal roofs and a mixture of timber and glazing. Pickleball barn 1 is 149m² and Pickleball barn 2, which also has a store attached to it, is 192m².
- 3.7 PV Panels are shown on the drawings and the applicant has stated they wish to use PV panels on all south facing roofs. They also cite other sustainability measures including high levels of insulation and air tightness for all new buildings, surpassing building regulations, the implementation of a sustainable drainage system and a natural ventilation strategy utilising high level rooflights on actuators.
- 3.8 The applicant seeks consent for 27 cabins in total as part of this application. As noted within the history section, there already exists permission for 20 cabins, the application before members now is intended to replace planning permission SDNP/24/00921/CND (which has been implemented) and it is the applicant's intention to proceed with the works shown on the drawings as part of the application before members, should they receive permission. The total number of cabins allowed on this site, if this consent is granted, will be 27.

- 3.9 The submitted drawings show all cabins located in almost exactly the same locations and positions as those cabins which were consented under SDNP/24/00921/CND and the applicant could not physically implement both applications. In a situation like this it is established by case law that one cannot implement two mutually incompatible consents on the same site and therefore members can be reassured that the applicant must choose between the consents they decide to carry forward to full implementation. There will only ever be 20 OR 27 eco pods on this site should members determine to approve this application.
- 3.10 The application also proposes alterations to the existing car park and the number of car parking spaces available across the site. There are currently 119 spaces in the main car park, an additional 15 north of the green keepers store and 70 in the form of overflow car parking, making a total of 204. The application proposes that 87 spaces will remain in the central car park, proposes 25 north of the green keepers store, 4 next to the padel court and 73 in the form of overflow car parking, making a total of 189. During the course of the application the plans have been updated to confirm the overflow area will only be used as such in the future and no change is proposed to its surface treatment, which will remain as is (grass). The application also proposes an additional 66 cycle parking spaces, where currently there are none.
- 3.11 The applicant has already implemented the historical consents referenced as paragraphs 2.1-2.4 above and work is continuing on site at present.

4. Consultations

4.1 SDNP Design - Support subject to revisions/clarification.

- Clarification required regards to illumination of the padel courts and the surface proposed for the overflow car parking areas.
- EV charging points would be best located in the existing car parking area.

Officer comment: There is no objection from the SNDP Dark Night Sky officer and it is considered that conditions could be attached to ensure the submission of a sensitively design internal lighting system for the padel and pickle courts. The applicant has clarified (and annotated the plans) to show no change in the proposed surfacing to the car parking area, i.e. it will stay as grass. EV charging points have been relocated.

4.2 SDNP Landscape – Neutral.

- Status of category A and category B trees as noted should be confirmed prior to works starting.
- Proposed overflow spaces should be limited as such.
- Light spill should be managed via condition and external lighting should be kept to a minimum.
- A characteristic Landscape Plan should be conditioned

4.3 SDNP DNS consultant – Neutral

- The proposed lighting design is interesting as it avoids bright floodlights. Lumens per m would be useful to fully assess.

Officer Response: It is considered that a DNS compliant lighting scheme, including lumen

calculations, can be secured via condition.

4.4 **HCC Lead Local Flood Authority** – No objection

4.5 **HCC Highways** – No objection.

- Comments regarding information submitted to discharge CMS prior to decision.

4.6 **HCC Countryside Service** – No objection

4.7 **HCC Ecology** – No objection subject to conditions

4.8 **Thames Water** – No objection

4.9 **EHDC Drainage** – No objection.

4.10 **EHDC Environmental Health** – No objection

- Hours of work should be 0800hr to 1800hr Monday to Friday, 0800hr to 1300hr.

4.11 **EHDC Trees** – No objection

- Condition required to provide tree protection during works.

4.12 **Naturespace District Licensing Officer (Great Crested Newts)- Hampshire and the Isle of Wight** – No objection

- Concurs with ecologist. Given the work left to complete, I agree with the ecology report and that these can take place under a precautionary working method statement.

4.13 **Natural England** – No objection

5. Representations

5.1 **Binsted Parish Council:** Objects on the grounds of;

- Highways impact
- Overdevelopment and orientation of golf club away from its primary use.
- Adverse impacts on tranquillity and light pollution.
- Insufficient information regarding drainage, foul water and sewage.
- Risk of irreversible adverse effects on red list biodiversity.

5.2 There have been 65 contributors to the application from members of the public. Of these 44 have written in support and 21 have written in objection.

5.3 It should be noted that the overwhelming majority of the support 'letters' are actually in postcard form. These postcards were provided by the applicant to visitors to the Golf Club, however it should also be noted that each post card has a space for comments and many of the respondents have chosen to give their reasons for support in this space. The reasons for support include;

- Eco methods and materials used for building
- Good health and happiness benefit
- New jobs
- New activities and amenities in the area.
- A Local place to visit for entertainment and functions would be good

5.4 21 letters of objection have been received, including one from the Friends of the South Downs. The comments made within these objections relate to the following issues;

- Fail to conserve or enhance landscape and scenic beauty of national park
- Insufficient ecological information
- Application does not demonstrate its minimised harm to trees

- Insufficient information on drainage
- Light pollution and noise disturbance
- Overdevelopment
- Increased traffic
- Will put more demand on Binsted and Bentley pumping stations which are already at capacity.
- Loss of golf course (reduction in holes from 18 to 12.)
- Will result in increased run off into existing water course
- Will change the outlook from surrounding houses.
- Loss of tranquillity
- Adverse impact on red list biodiversity
- State of the local roads (potholes, insufficient drainage, limited pedestrian access). Increase in visitors will make this worse.

Officer Response: During the course of the application the applicant has provided additional information to resolve concerns raised in regard to ecological matters, foul drainage, trees and light pollution and SUDs and conditions are recommended where required to secure the measures to protect trees, the dark night sky and red list biodiversity (great crested newts). It is officers' opinion that the application now conserves and enhances, through an increase in biodiversity and watercourse quality, the qualities of the National Park.. There is no objection from HCC Highways to this application and the applicant has demonstrated that there will not be an adverse impact upon the highway or residential amenity as a result of the proposed development and changes to the parking provision on site. The loss of holes on the golf course is outside the remit of this planning application.

6. Planning Policy

- 6.1 The most relevant policies of the adopted South Downs Local Plan (2019) (a longer list of other relevant policies and applicable legislation can be found in Appendix 1)
1. Core Policy SD1 - Sustainable Development
 2. Core Policy SD2 - Ecosystems Services
 3. Strategic Policy SD4 - Landscape Character
 4. Strategic Policy SD9 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 5. Development Management Policy SD11 - Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
 6. Strategic Policy SD19 - Transport and Accessibility
 7. Strategic Policy SD20 - Walking, Cycling and Equestrian Routes
 8. Strategic Policy SD23 - Sustainable Tourism
 9. Strategic Policy SD17 - Protection of the Water Environment
 10. Development Management Policy SD50 - Sustainable Drainage Systems
- 6.2 The South Downs Local Plan is undergoing a period of review and the First Publication (Regulation 18 Consultation) is underway. This is the first publication of the Local Plan Review and therefore can only be attributed very little weight. As it progresses through the consultation system the plan will gain more weight.
- 6.3 Most relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024
1. Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
 2. Section 12: Achieving well designed and beautiful places

3. Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

6.4 Most relevant policies of the South Downs Management Plan (2020-2025)

1. Policy 1 – Landscape
2. Policy 3 – Dark Night Skies

7. **Planning Assessment**

Principle of development

7.1 The site lies in the countryside outside of the built-up area boundary where the countryside is protected for its own sake. Paragraph 84 of the NPPF seeks to support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings, and the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. Sustainable rural tourism, which respects the character of the countryside, is also supported, including the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities.

7.2 Paragraph 7.10 of the Local Plan notes that Policy SD25 acknowledges exceptional circumstances whereby development outside settlements may be acceptable and goes on to state that other exceptions to the development strategy are set out in other policies in this Local Plan, for example Policies SD23: Sustainable Tourism.

Sustainable Tourism

7.3 The development proposes the creation of additional tourism and leisure. Strategic Policy SD23 relates to the sustainable delivery of development proposals for visitor accommodation, attractions and recreation facilities.

7.4 The policy outlines a range of criteria to assess proposals for tourism uses including additional accommodation and states (SD23(1)); "Development proposals for visitor accommodation, visitor attractions and recreation facilities will be permitted where it is demonstrated that:

- a) The proposals will provide opportunities for visitors to increase their awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities.

Officer response: This criterion can be met, the applicant has sought to make visitors aware of this via their submitted Visitor Information Pack. There are footpaths which lead to the Shipwrights Way and the applicant has set out that they intend to promote local food and attractions as part of their offer.

- b) Design and location of development minimises need to travel by private car and encourages access and/or subsequent travel by sustainable means, including public transport, walking, cycling or horse riding;

Officer response: Blacknest Golf Club is located outside of the settlement boundary. Given the site's location and nature of the scheme, it is accepted that there would be a reliance on the use of private vehicles. Farnham Rail Station is approximately 6 miles away and Bentley Rail Station is 2 miles away. Whilst Bentley is linked via footpaths (including Shipwrights Way) to the site this is not an easy walk, nor is it considered realistic to expect all visitors to the golf course (with golf clubs etc or visitors to the new proposed eco cabins (with overnight bags etc) to walk from the station.

However, the applicant has submitted a visitor information pack which provides information on sustainable methods of transport including taxi options from Farnham Station, Bentley Station and the locations of bus stops to Farnham and Bordon. Multi use cycle stand points are provided. It is considered that, on balance, the applicant has minimised the need to travel by private car as much as feasibly possible in this instance and Criterion (b) is met.

- c) Development proposals will not detract from the experience of visitors or adversely affect the character, historical significance, appearance or amenity of the area.

Officer response: This revised scheme has been considerably scaled down from that previously refused and this criterion is now met as detailed below under the landscape section of the assessment

- d) Development proposals make use of existing buildings, and, if no suitable existing buildings are available, the design of any new buildings are sensitive to the character and setting;

Officer response: The proposals make use of the existing buildings and, more importantly the existing hardstanding on site. With the exception of the 7 additional cabins and the proposed new buggy store, no new structures in the landscape are proposed and the car park is retained, albeit reduced in size, where it currently is. This criterion is met.

- e) Ancillary facilities are not disproportionately large in relation to the rest of the visitor facilities;

Officer response: New structures are located on the existing hard standing or amenity grass. The location of the new buildings allows for a natural cluster of development around the existing car park, clubhouse and driving range. As such the new facilities are read, in landscape terms, as an extension of the existing complex in terms of built form. This criterion is met

- f) f) Any proposal does not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of town or village centres or assets of community value;

Officer response; This criterion is met.

- g) Where proposals are located outside settlement policy boundaries as defined on the Policies Map, they:
 - i. Positively contribute to the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and
 - ii. Are closely associated with other attractions/established tourism uses, including the public rights of way network; or iii. Are part of farm diversification schemes or endorsed Whole Estate Plans.

Officer response: The application is considered to comply with SD23(g). The golf club is an established tourism use and located in the open countryside in a rural setting. The amount of and the location of the proposed development at the site has been reduced from that previously proposed and is now confined to the existing hard standing already on site or clustered around the (existing) clubhouse and driving range or on existing low value amenity grass to the south of the clubhouse and car park. The overall character of the club, a relatively 'quiet' facility in the open countryside is maintained and proposed new buildings are well screened from the road and unlikely to be appreciated by those not visiting the golfclub.

Landscape impact

- 7.5 The landscape officer has no objection to the revised scheme although has made comments regarding the amount of overflow car parking proposed and has noted that tree protection measures should be required.
- 7.6 The proposed alterations to the clubhouse, the 2 Pickleball Courts and the two Paddleball Courts will occupy part of the area currently covered in tarmac and used as the car park. The location of the new structures on this existing hard standing is not objected to. The proposed cabins will be located within close proximity to the existing clubhouse, where the topography of the site is lower and they cannot be seen from the road, and, once established, will be screened from public view by the extensive tree planting proposed.
- 7.7 Whilst the provision of the additional pods and new facilities would result in a further intervention in this rural landscape, the location of these structures mitigates against the impact of this intervention and the scenic quality of this part of the Park is conserved. Additionally, the introduction of native trees and understory planting in place of the low

value amenity grass and the increase in biodiversity as a result of improvements to the watercourse will enhance wildlife in this part of the Park.

Design

- 7.8 There are no objections from the Design Officer to the scheme. As noted within the planning history section permission already exists for 20 lodges, located to the southwestern corner of the site and set down within the topography of the landscape. During the course of the s.73 application (SDNP/24/00921/CND) a new design approach to these cabins was considered and found to be acceptable. If approved, this application would result in a total of 27 cabins on site, this application proposing an additional 7 on top of the already approved cabins. The additional 7 cabins will be of the same design as those shown within the s.73 application and they will form an extension to the area of land given over to holiday accommodation.
- 7.9 As noted by the Design Officer, keeping the proposed Pickleball and Padel courts close to the existing built forms keeps the proposal as a collection of buildings, preventing wider sprawl into the rural landscape. The new buildings have also been positioned on lower ground compared to the clubhouse which assists with reducing the impact of their height. Overall the agricultural appearance of the structures is welcomed.

Drainage

- 7.10 As noted by the February 2025 Foul Drainage assessment by Jubb, the site does not have any Thames Water foul water sewers within the site boundary. All drainage on site is private and maintained by the site owner. The site has an existing foul water pumping station located near the greenkeepers shed which discharges to the Thames Water system in Binstead Road.

- 7.11 The below extract is taken from the Foul Drainage and Utilities statement as submitted by the applicant.

“Clubhouse alterations:

The alterations to the clubhouse do not increase GIA. The conversion of the internal layout of the clubhouse is to reuse the existing foul disposal system. The proposals for the clubhouse are not anticipated to create a significant increase in foul drainage. There is likely a minor increase in foul drainage from WCs utilised by guests and employees, and the kitchen and bar for washing of crockery and glasses.

Pickleball & Padel Courts:

These new outbuildings and courts do not have any facilities other than the provision of a sports court. Therefore no direct increase in foul drainage in relation to these new outbuildings. There may be a minor increase in foul drainage through guests using WCs, showers and/or bar and restaurant facilities as part of their visit to utilise the courts.

The new eco cabins have shower rooms which require foul drainage disposal. The additional foul waste from the eco-cabins is standard bathroom waste.”

- 7.12 The approved pumping station is located outside of the tree groups’ RPAs and is linked to the existing foul sewage manholes in the car park which the foul waste is pumped up to, which in turn flows via gravity into the main private pumping station through the site’s existing foul network.
- 7.13 It should be noted that the proposals do not significantly increase impermeable area, 3 of the proposed courts being entirely located on existing hardstanding and 1 (Pickle 2) of the pickleball courts being located over an area of hardstanding and amenity grass that forms part of the driving range outfields.
- 7.14 There are objections from neighbouring occupiers on the grounds that the proposed development will increase the pressure on the Thames Water station at Binstead,
- 7.15 Although there will be an increase to the foul water volume produced on site as a result of the new cabins and visitors attending the site to use the new facilities, the proposed pumping

station, which will outfall to the Thames Water network as per the existing situation, will maintain the same flow rates as the existing pumping station. Therefore, although the volume of foul water leaving site will increase as a result of the development, there will not be an increase in the rate at which it leaves site. This should therefore mitigate any risks in regard to exceeding the capacity of the off-site network during periods of full occupancy on the site. There is no objection to the scheme from Thames Water, the LLFA or EHDC to the scheme.

Ecology, BNG, and ecosystems services

- 7.16 HCC Ecology and the HCC District Licensing Officer have no objections to the scheme subject to appropriate conditions (7 & 8) and safeguarding the BNG. The application proposes significant tree and hedge planting and would exceed the required statutory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain providing a 16% net gain in habitat units and an 18% net gain in watercourse units. Additionally, 10 bird boxes and 10 bat boxes will be installed in suitable trees around the site.
- 7.17 The application, whilst proposing additional built structures, sites all of these on existing hard surfaces or low value amenity grass. The application demonstrates that it will protect and support recovery of rare, notable and priority species and also proposes a BNG increase over the statutory required amount. The submission has demonstrated that it can have an overall, positive impact on the ability of the natural environment to contribute goods and services. It therefore complies with policies SD2 and SD9.
- 7.18 The landscape officer has requested a landscape condition and this is considered reasonable, additionally the section 106 agreement will secure the BNG gain, and monitoring.

Trees

- 7.19 A total of 202 trees and 2 groups have been detailed as part of the survey works. Only 3 trees will need to be removed, T25 (category C1), T90 (category B2) and T91 (category B1). There is no objection from the EHDC tree officer to the proposals, and it is recommended that the required tree protection measures be secured via condition (17). TPO's are recommend for the larger, category A oak trees that are on the boundary of the overflow car parking. The application satisfactorily demonstrates that it has minimised harm to existing trees and therefore is in accordance with policy SD11.

Impact on amenities

- 7.20 Whilst the comments of neighbouring occupiers in relation to noise and disturbance and light pollution have been taken into account it is not considered that, given the overall distance between the site and the location of neighbouring properties, that a reason for refusal could be sustained upon these grounds.

Dark night skies.

- 7.21 Whilst there is some concern from the landscape and design officer regarding light spillage from the proposed new Padel courts, the SDNP dark night sky consultant has confirmed that this would not result in materially significant light pollution which would impact the dark night sky. In response to the concerns regarding the potential 'glow' that would emanate from the building, the SDNP dark night sky consultant has suggested that the applicant consider the lowest possible transmission level that they can feasibly use and also that they consider a small level of cover along the very bottom of the glazing (say 1m) to acts as a shield. This would further reduce the impact and probably restrict the playing surface from direct view. The applicant has agreed to look into these measures and it is recommended that the lighting scheme (secured via condition (16) provides further details.

Highways, access and parking.

- 7.22 Whilst the Parish Council have raised objections regarding the trip rates and survey data used these objections are not considered sustainable. A detailed transport assessment has been submitted with the application. The transport assessment has based analysis on considering parking and traffic generation implications on a land use by land use basis, not taking into account the potential linked demand nature of the land uses. This maintains a

‘worst case scenario’ approach rather than assuming that the land uses are linked – i.e., that a golfer may bring his/her family to play pickleball whilst they play a round of golf.

- 7.23 There is no objection from HCC highways. HCC highways have confirmed that, even if the highest rate of trips was used instead of that used by the applicant, there would still be no objection from the Highways Authority on Highways Grounds.
- 7.24 Policy SD19 permits development proposals where they are located and designed to minimise the need for travel and to promote a more sustainable approach to Travel. Blacknest Golf Club is not sustainably located. However, it is an existing facility. In contrast to the previously proposed (and refused) scheme, this application does not propose any ‘new’ car parking, the club will continue to use the existing overflow spaces in the summer months, as it does currently. In addition, the club has submitted, as part of the application documents, a visitor information pack which sets out modes of sustainable travel as required by SD23.
- 7.25 The development provides parking in accordance with the Supplementary Planning Document Guidance for Parking for Residential and Non-Residential Development and is considered to comply with SD19 and SD22.

Conclusion

- 7.26 Overall, the scale and design of the proposals are acceptable having considered consultee responses, representations, and the landscape character and appearance of the immediate and surrounding area.
- 7.27 There are no impacts upon surrounding amenities as a direct result of these proposals which would justify a refusal of Planning Permission.
- 7.28 The NPPF outlines overarching economic, social and environmental objectives to sustainable development. In these respects, the scheme would deliver an enhanced tourism facility on a site already used for tourism and leisure. Environmentally the scheme would provide ecosystems services enhancement and meet the sustainability credentials of the Local Plan.
- 7.29 The proposals comply with the Local Plan and the NPPF, National Park Purposes and Statutory Duty under LURA 2023, and relevant legislation.
- 7.30 The application is, therefore, recommended for approval subject to the conditions as set out under section 9 below.

8. Reason for Recommendation

- 8.1 It is recommended that.
 - 1) It is recommended that Planning Permission be granted 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
 - a. Biodiversity Net Gain Plan to secure a minimum of 16% net gain in habitat units and a minimum 18% net gain in watercourse units as set out within the Ecological Statement and a Monitoring Fee of £35,000
 - ii) The conditions as set out at Section 9.
 - 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to make minor amendments to conditions pursuant to ii above as required, subject to the resolution of the s106 agreement.
 - 3) 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 10 July 2025 Planning Committee meeting

9. Conditions

- 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans listed below under the heading "Plans Referred to in Consideration of this application".

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning

Holiday accommodation

3. The tourist accommodation hereby permitted shall be used for holiday accommodation ancillary to the use of the Golf Centre only and shall at no time be operated or managed independently, nor shall it be used for any other purpose (including any other purpose within Class C3 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, or any Order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification). No guest shall stay in excess of 28 consecutive nights in any one calendar year. The operator shall maintain a record of the names, permanent addresses and duration of stay of all adults staying in the pods and make this record available for inspection by the Local Planning Authority within 30 days of any written request.

Reason: To accord with the terms of the planning permission by restricting use to short term guest accommodation only and maintain the availability of short-term tourist accommodation.

4. A guest information pack, the contents of which shall include (but not be exclusively limited to) the information within the submitted Visitor Information Pack including Sustainable Travel Plan, shall be provided within each cabin at all times.

Reason: To ensure that the use of the accommodation minimises any risk of disturbance to the natural environment including in relation to the requirements of policies SD6, SD8, SD9 and SD11, or other guests, and that sustainable access options are promoted.

5. No unit of guest accommodation hereby permitted shall be first used until the proposed informal footpath route across the golf course and its connection to the public right of way network identified by the pink line on approved plan 20-2487-PX08 Rev C has been made available on site. The footpath route shall be thereafter retained and maintained in accordance with the terms of the permission including guests being made aware of this provision in their Visitor Information Pack and Travel Plan. For the avoidance of doubt no changes to surfacing are required or permitted herein.

Reason: To encourage access into the surrounding countryside and to local facilities on foot

Materials

6. No development above slab level in respect of the following structures, as shown on drawing 2639-PL-110 Rev 01, shall be commenced unless and until a schedule of all external materials along with samples of such materials (including finishes and colours) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be implemented in full accordance with the approved details.

a) Pickle 1 and Pickle 2

b) Padel 1 and 2

c) Buggy Store

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of the character and appearance of the area and the quality of the development

Landscape & Ecology

7. No development above slab level shall be commenced unless and until a further detailed Scheme of Soft and Hard Landscaping Works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include (but not be limited to):
 - a) Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment;
 - b) Planting methods, tree pits & guying methods;
 - c) Schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
 - d) Retained areas of trees and hedgerows;
 - e) Details of all hard-surfaces, including paths, kerb edges, access ways, boundary treatments, bin and cycle stores and parking spaces, including their appearance, dimensions and siting;
 - f) Details of the siting, specifications (including sections through) and management of the Sustainable Urban Drainage system including pipe diameter and size and construction materials of any outfalls required;
 - g) A landscape schedule for a minimum period of 10 years including details of the arrangements for its implementation;
 - h) A timetable for implementation of the soft and hard landscaping works;
 - i) A landscape plan with services shown; and
 - j) Details of bird and bat boxes

The scheme of Soft and Hard Landscaping Works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved timetable. Any plant which dies, becomes diseased or is removed within the first ten years of planting, shall be replaced with another of similar type and size, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To achieve an appropriate landscaping scheme to integrate the development into the landscape and provide a setting for the new development.

8. Excepting works to the clubhouse, no development shall be commenced until a Precautionary Working Method Statement for Great Crested Newts has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This document should provide full details in relation to the size and type of habitats to be affected by the proposals and their suitability for herpetofauna, shown on an appropriate plan. Then a detailed strategy to avoid and mitigate impacts on herpetofauna will be required, along with enhancement measures and the procedure in the event reptiles or great crested newts are found on site

Reason: To protect and enhance biodiversity in accordance with the Habitat and Species Regulations 2017, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, NERC Act, NPPF and Policy SD8 and SD9 of the South Downs Local Plan.

Thames water

9. No development shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided to the Local Planning Authority that demonstrates either:
 1. Foul water Capacity exists on site to serve the development, **or**
 2. A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with the Local Authority in consultation with Thames Water. Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed, no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan, **or**
 3. All Foul water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed.

Reason - Network reinforcement works may be required to accommodate the proposed development. Any reinforcement works identified will be necessary in order to avoid sewage flooding and/or potential pollution incidents. The developer can request information to support the discharge of this condition by visiting the Thames Water website at thameswater.co.uk/preplanning.

Construction

10. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) as dated January 2025

Reason: To protect the amenity of residents living in the vicinity of the site

- 11 Construction hours shall be limited to between 08.00 hrs – 18.00 hrs Monday to Friday, 08.00 – 13.00 on Saturdays with no works taking place on Sundays or Public Holidays.

Reason: To minimise potential noise impacts to residents.

12. No development shall start on site until a construction method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which shall include:

- (a) A programme of and phasing of demolition (if any) and construction work;
- (b) The provision of long-term facilities for contractor parking;
- (c) The arrangements for deliveries associated with all construction works;
- (d) Methods and phasing of construction works;
- (e) Access and egress for plant and machinery;
- (f) Protection of pedestrian routes during construction;
- (g) Location of temporary site buildings, compounds, construction material, and plant storage areas;

Demolition and construction work shall only take place in accordance with the approved method statement

Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority can properly consider the effect of the works on the amenity of the locality.

Parking and Cycling

13. Before use of the development is commenced provision for cycle parking and car parking shall have been made within the site in accordance with the approved plans and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason - To ensure adequate on-site cycle parking and car parking provision for the approved development.

Lighting

15. No development shall commence above slab level until an external lighting scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include;
- a. Details of the mitigation screen at 1m height from the court finish along the external glazed walls of the padel courts, consisting of a face applied vinyl in a translucence finish (obscure glazing effect), or a solid/opaque vinyl with a pattern/wording and;
 - b. Internal lighting in the padel courts to be on a timer that switches on the lights at dusk and switches them off automatically at the end of opening hours.

The submitted scheme shall specify the type and location of all external lighting to be installed throughout the site. All external lighting on the dwellings shall be restricted to down lighters that do not exceed 1000 lumens, which shall be designed and shielded to

minimise upwards light spillage. The measures shall thereafter be implemented in full accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve dark night skies

Trees

16. Protective measures, including fencing and ground protection, in accordance with the Arboricultural Assessment and appendices by Woods's Tree Consultancy dated 20 December 2024 and drawing numbers tree protection plan reference WTC/Blacknest/TPP/002, WCT/Blacknest/TPP/003 (Tree Protection Plan) as submitted to the Local Planning Authority, shall be installed prior to any demolition, construction or groundwork commencing on the site. Works shall be carried out in accordance with the methods stated within this approved statement, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity and the landscape character of the area and to ensure protection and long term viability of retained trees and to minimise impact of construction activity.

Informatives

Ecology

The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation.

Should great crested newts be found at any stage of the development works, then all works should cease, and a professional and/or suitably qualified and experienced ecologist (or Natural England) should be contacted for advice on any special precautions before continuing, including the need for a licence.

Thames Water

A Groundwater Risk Management Permit from Thames Water will be required for discharging groundwater into a public sewer. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. We would expect the developer to demonstrate what measures he will undertake to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Permit enquiries should be directed to Thames Water's Risk Management Team by telephoning 020 3577 9483 or by emailing trade.effluent@thameswater.co.uk. Application forms should be completed on line via www.thameswater.co.uk. Please refer to the Wholesale; Business customers; Groundwater discharges section.

TIM SLANEY

Director of Planning

South Downs National Park Authority

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Appendix: Appendix I – Information concerning consideration of applications before

committee

SDNPA Consultees: Legal Services, Development Manager

Background Documents: [All planning application plans, supporting documents, and consultation and third party responses](#)

[National Planning Policy Framework \(2025\)](#)

[South Downs Local Plan \(2014-33\)](#)

[South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan](#)

[Adopted Parking SPD - South Downs National Park Authority](#)

[Adopted Design Guide SPD - South Downs National Park Authority](#)

[Adopted Sustainable Construction SPD - South Downs National Park Authority](#)

[Biodiversity Net Gain Technical Advice Note \(TAN\) - South Downs National Park Authority](#)

[Ecosystem Services Technical Advice Note \(TAN\) - South Downs National Park Authority](#)