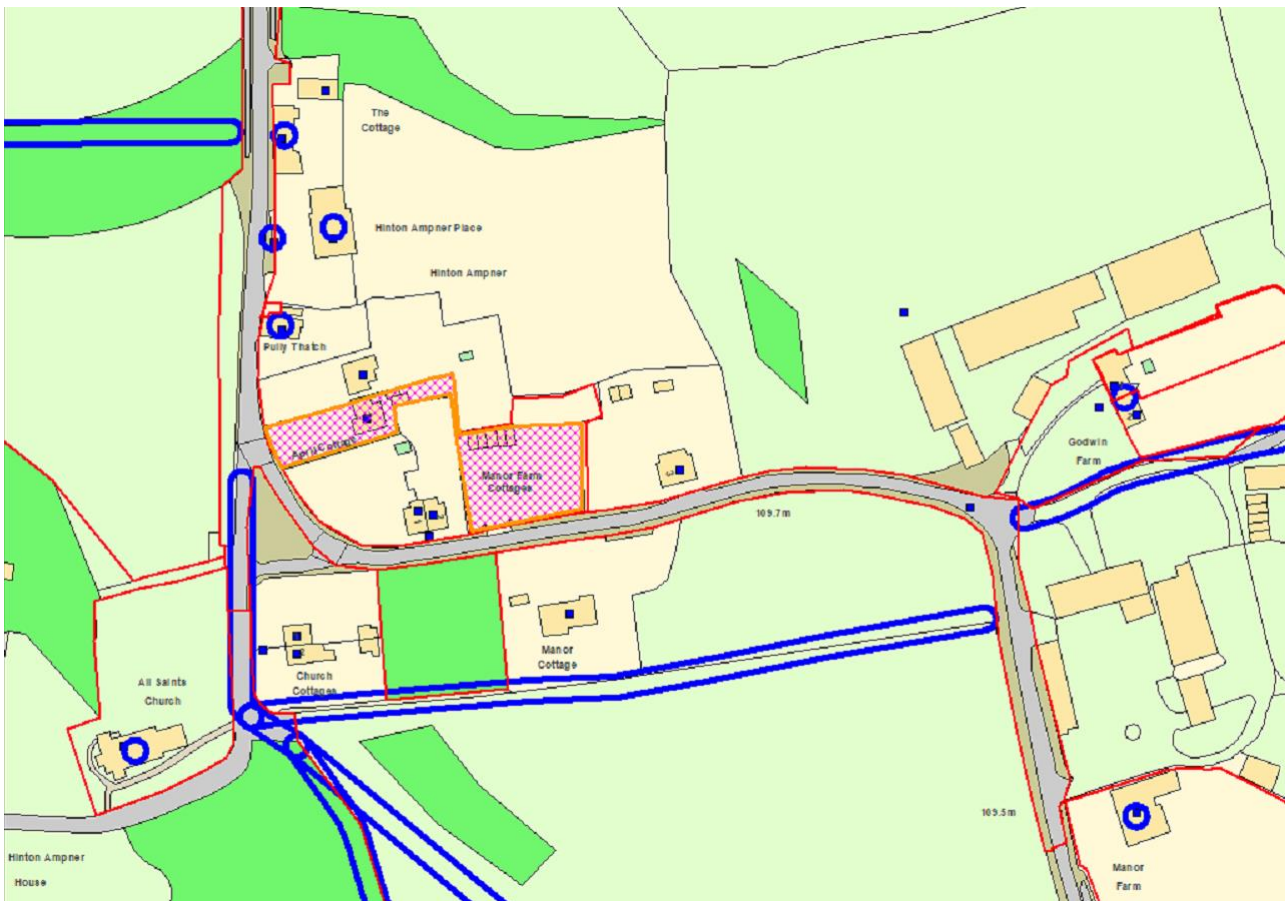


WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL
Proposal Description: (April Cottage) Proposed change of use from C3 to E(f) with associated parking.
Address: 1 Hinton Hill Cottages, Hinton Hill, Hinton Ampner, Hampshire, SO24 0JZ
Parish: Bramdean & Hinton Ampner Parish
Applicants Name: Alison Pearce, Hummingbirds Nursery
Case Officer: Tania Novachic
Date Valid: 01 December 2025
Recommendation: Permit
Pre Application Advice: Yes (on car park only)

Link to Planning Documents

[SDNP/25/04792/FUL | \(April Cottage\) Proposed change of use from C3 to E\(f\) with associated parking | 1 Hinton Hill Cottages Hinton Hill Hinton Ampner Hampshire SO24 0JZ](#)



© Crown Copyright and database rights Winchester City Council License 100019531

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE****Reasons for Recommendation**

The development is recommended for approval, as the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Development Plan Policies of the South Downs Local Plan (2014-33).

General Comments

The application is reported to Committee at the request of the Parish Council.

Amendments to Plans Negotiated

Further information was required by HCC Highway Authority and a briefing note was submitted by the agent to cover the queries raised.

Site Description

The existing dwelling is a detached building, built using brick in a traditional cottage style. The property is owned and operated by National Trust Hinton Ampner and has been unused and has recently been renovated to allow the property to be reused.

The parking area to the rear of April Cottage is situated on a rural lane Hinton Hill. The existing use of the parking field is used by 1, 2 Hinton Hill Cottages, with access to 3 Hinton Hill Cottages, and as an overflow staff parking area for National Trust Hinton Ampner. There are also a row of 3 garages which are brick built and flat roof situated towards the rear of the parking area.

April Cottage front West boundary is adjacent to Hinton Hill. The East boundaries back on to shared parking area and woodland. The side South and North boundaries of the property back on to the side and rear gardens of the neighbouring properties.

The access to the parking area on the South boundary is adjacent to Hinton Hill. The rear North boundary of the parking area backs on to woodland. The side West and East boundaries back on to the side gardens of the neighbouring properties.

Proposal

(April Cottage) Proposed change of use from C3 to E(f) with associated parking

Relevant Planning History

None

Consultations

Hampshire County Council (Highway Authority) –

- Further information submitted

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- No objections subject to conditions (3, 4)

Service Lead – Public Protection (Environmental Health) –

- Requested further information regarding the use of the garden and noise.
- Officer comment: Further information was gained from the agent and as the facility will be used by newborns to 3 years and that the main usable garden area is right at the back of the site and it will be of least impact to the neighbours amenities in terms of noise, this request was not considered necessary.

Representations:**Hinton Ampner Parish Council**

The Council wish to object to the planning application with regards to road safety issues and traffic concerns and, having heard the significant concerns from residents, the PC would expect the planning officer to take these all into consideration when making a decision.

It was noted the comments on the planning portal that support the application are not local residents. Hinton Hill is essentially one lane – despite the approach from the A272 being two lanes it quickly narrows. In addition, some residents parking protrudes into the lane. There is concern – as noted in other objection letters – that this will cause congestion and need for cars to reverse etc to allow passing at busy times. The junction has a blind spot and this will also increase chances of accidents coming out of the lane. There is also concern about the blind corner at the top of the lane where cars cannot be seen until the last moment and the speed that cars will be driving especially with drop off and pick up times – as is witnessed at the other nursery within the parish.

The National Trust tenants and residents who currently live in the lane will lose use of the garages which they have relied on for years and there is concern that a family home will now become a commercial business taking away one of very few family dwellings.

There is concern about noise from the increased traffic. The Council wish that these issues be thoroughly looked at and would happily meet the planning officer on site to discuss the traffic issues. Due to the number of local objections, the Parish Council ask that it go to committee.

5 Objecting Representations received from different addresses within the Winchester City Council administrative area citing the following material planning reasons:

- Loss of parking for visitors
- Loss of rented garage (in tenancy agreement/lease)
- Not appropriate site for the use
- Additional cars/traffic
- Highway Safety
- Narrow roads

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- Cars parked on road from local residents and Wayfarer's Walk users cause obstruction

14 Supporting Representations received from different addresses within the Winchester City Council administrative area citing the following material planning reasons:

- Much needed resource
- New early years childcare provision hard to organise in rural areas
- Help parents return to work and get childcare support
- No provision in area/nurseries at capacity - strain on families
- Hummingbirds have been very respectful to neighbours at their current site
- will help families continue to live, work and be happy in the local area
- proposal feels well thought through, well-suited to the location
- parking for 8 cars on-site for nursery - with range of drop-off/pick-up times seems ample
- Valuable addition to local community
- May have to move from local area as no provision

Relevant Government Planning Policy and GuidanceRelevant Government Planning Policy and Guidance

Government policy relating to National Parks is set out in English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated December 2024. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection, and the NPPF states at paragraph 189 that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in national parks and that the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations and should be given great weight in National Parks.

The development plan policies listed below have been assessed for their compliance with the NPPF and are considered to be compliant with the NPPF.

The following policies of the **South Downs Local Plan** are relevant to this application:

- Core Policy SD1 - Sustainable Development
- Core Policy SD2 - Ecosystems Services
- Strategic Policy SD4 - Landscape Character
- Strategic Policy SD5 - Design
- Strategic Policy SD8 - Dark Night Skies

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- Strategic Policy SD9 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Strategic Policy SD19 - Transport and Accessibility
- Development Management Policy SD22 - Parking Provision
- Strategic Policy SD25 - Development Strategy
- Development Management Policy SD43 - New and Existing Community Facilities

The South Downs Local Plan Review is currently being consulted upon (a Regulation 18 consultation). At this point in time the policies of the emerging plan do not carry weight in the decision-making process. The weight will increase as the plan progresses.

Partnership Management Plan

The Environment Act 1995 requires National Parks to produce a Management Plan setting out strategic management objectives to deliver the National Park Purposes and Duty. National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) states that Management Plans "contribute to setting the strategic context for development" and "are material considerations in making decisions on individual planning applications." The South Downs Partnership Management Plan as amended for 2026-2031 in December 2025, sets out a Vision, Outcomes, Policies and a Delivery Framework for the National Park over the next five years. The relevant policies include:

- Partnership Management Plan Planning Principle 1
- Partnership Management Plan Planning Principle 10

Supplementary Planning Document

Parking SPD April 2021

Ecosystems Services TAN

Dark Skies TAN May 2021

Planning Considerations**Principle of development**

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Paragraph 48 of the NPPF (2024) requires that applications for planning permissions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Policy SD43 of the SDLP allows for new community facilities where:

- a) They demonstrate a local need;
- b) The scale of the proposed infrastructure is proportionate to the local area;
- c) There has been prior local community engagement;
- d) They are accessible and inclusive to the local communities they serve; and

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

e) Appropriate consideration has been given to the shared use, re-use and / or redevelopment of existing buildings in the host community.

Policy SD43 of the South Downs Local Plan is applicable to the proposal for a children's day nursery as it relates to new community facilities. It is considered that the need for infant and toddler care has been established by the existing Hummingbirds nursery in Bramdean, which cannot fulfil demand for local parents. This is apparent from the number of letters of support.

Concern has been raised that the nursery would not be serving local children as there are not many children in the village, and most of the support letters are from families outside of the area /National Park so there isn't a local need. However, children often go to nursery close to where their parents live, or en-route to their workplace, rather than close to where they actually live. As this is an extension to an already thriving nursery in Bramdean it is considered that there is a proven need for the facility, which will re-use an underutilised building.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development is in accordance Policy SD43 of the SDLP and the principle of development is acceptable.

Assessment under 2017 EIA Regulations.

The development does not fall under Schedule I or Schedule II of the 2017 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, therefore an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

Impact on character and appearance of area

Policy SD5 of the SDNP Local Plan seeks to ensure that development make a positive contribution to the overall character and appearance of the area. Proposals should integrate with the landscape and should be sympathetic to the setting in terms of height, massing, roof form and materials.

The site currently consists of a dwelling that is owned by the National Trust and is no longer needed for ancillary accommodation by them. It has recently been refurbished and the applicants are seeking to change the use of the property to provide a small nursery for early years (birth - 3 years). There is an existing garden with patio, storage building and further small garden area beyond the storage building. The existing parking area will be upgraded and reconfigured, with the garages to be demolished, to allow for drop off spaces, parking for staff and visitors, parking spaces for adjacent dwellings that currently park there and overflow for the National Trust when needed. Pedestrian access will be from the parking area and children will be dropped off using the rear of the property.

There will be no physical alterations to the existing property, but the existing parking area will be upgraded using a geotextile grid base which is gravel filled. Parking spaces will be more formalised.

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

There will be very little visual alterations from the proposal, with additional planting proposed along the parking area frontage and within the car park itself. A landscape condition (7) has been added to ensure details of hard and soft landscaping are submitted to ensure that species are native, and hardstanding is porous.

It is considered that the overall scheme is in keeping with the character of the area, it will have limited visual impact on the landscape and will increase biodiversity through the additional planting. Although there will be some intensification of use, this is restricted to limited daytime hours Monday-Friday, with any additional traffic being staggered for drop offs. Therefore, the proposal complies with policy SD4, and SD5 of SDLP.

Development affecting the South Downs National Park

The application site is located within the South Downs National Park.

Government policy relating to National Parks is set out in English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) updated December 2024. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection, and the NPPF states at paragraph 189 that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in national parks and that the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations and should be given great weight in National Parks.

Taking account of the Park's purpose to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area and promote understanding of its special qualities, the development has a neutral impact and does not therefore adversely conflict with the statutory purposes of the SDNP designation.

Historic Environment

The site is sited close to a number of listed buildings, but none are immediately adjacent to the property. It is not in a Conservation Area.

Relevant Legislation

The preservation of the special architectural/historic interest of the listed building and its setting (S.66 P(LBCA) Act 1990; SD12 and SD13 (South Downs Local Plan); NPPF (2024) Section 16.

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that when considering whether to grant listed building consent for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Considerable weight and importance must be given to this duty.

The NPPF requires local authorities to take account of all heritage assets in making planning decisions, with an aspiration to sustain or enhance their significance. Any harm to designated heritage assets must be justified or balanced by a wider public benefit. This harm is categorised as total loss, substantial harm, or 'less than substantial harm'. The greater the level of harm, the more substantial the benefits are required to justify it. This attracts great weight in the planning balance.

Policy SD12 and SD13 of SDLP ensure that development preserves and enhances heritage assets and their settings.

It is not considered that there will be any impact on the adjacent listed buildings or their setting as there are no material changes proposed to the land use of the site that would affect their heritage value. In addition, there are no changes to the existing access arrangements.

It is considered that the proposals will preserve the significance of the listed building and its setting. The proposals would accord with the requirements of S66 of the P(LBCA) Act 1990, Section 16 para 212 of the NPPF (2024), Policy SD12 and SD13 of the South Downs Local Plan and the historic environment section of the Planning Practice Guidance.

Neighbouring amenity

The nearest neighbouring properties to the site are the dwellings Pully Thatch and 1 and 2 Manor Farm Cottages to the south of April Cottage. There will be no physical changes to the property that will impact on neighbouring amenity, but in regard to noise and disturbance, it is noted that the nursery is only for infants from newborn to the age of 3 years old who will be at the nursery within day time hours. Parents drop their children at staggered start times and are generally between 8am to 8.30am with pick-up times between 4.30pm to 6pm. Visiting time is short, generally around 5 minutes per visit. The number of children will be between 6-15, with an average of 12 per day and a maximum of 6 staff (depending on the requirement each day), plus a cleaner between 6pm and 7pm. As the children are very young there will be limited noisy outside play compared to older children. Vehicle movements will be staggered and will be just for dropping off and picking up, with a dedicated wait zone. It is not anticipated that this will result in a detrimental impact on the amenities of the neighbouring properties. The rest of the car park will be used as it currently is for parking for the neighbouring dwellings and over-flow for the National Trust. HCC Highways have thoroughly assessed the application and, subject to conditions does not raise an objection (Conditions 3, 4).

The use and numbers of children and staff is secured by condition 6 and the hours of operation by condition 5.

Having regard to the above, the proposal is compliant with the NPPF and Policy SD5 of the South Downs Local Plan.

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE****Sustainable Transport**

Access to the car parking area is from an existing access from the main road (Hinton Hill) This area is already used for the purposes of parking, and although there would be an increase in the car parking area itself, development of the site would result in less visual impact on the area as a whole, due to increased planting along the road boundary, removal of the garage block and a more uniform surface.

The proposed scheme will provide 21 'allocated' spaces with a further 3 'unallocated' spaces compared to 18 unallocated spaces. It is understood that the existing 18 unallocated spaces provide parking for neighbouring residential properties and National Trust staff and volunteers. Of the nursery spaces allocated, 4 spaces are retained for Nursery staff, 1 space is allocated as a 'disabled' space for nursery visitors and a further 5 spaces for Nursery visitors.

These further 5 spaces for nursery visitors will operate as 'flexible' spaces, as visitor numbers are anticipated to be low and will in practice amount to short periods where parking spaces are used for the purpose of pick up and drop off at nursery peak arrival and departure times i.e. 0800-0830 and 1630-1830.

Outside of these peak arrival and departure periods and throughout the evenings and weekends, those 'flexible' nursery visitor spaces will be available for use by neighbouring residential properties and for overspill parking by National Trust staff and volunteers. Hence, in practice, the proposed allocation of parking will maintain the equivalent parking provision for the existing users of the shared car parking area.

Site Access and Visibility

The access is as existing.

The parking, access and highway safety have been assessed by HCC Highways, after requesting further information a Traffic Note was submitted. The information provided demonstrated that suitable passing places are available to facilitate two-way movements on Hinton Hill at peak nursery arrival and departure times. These passing places are also shown to be suitable in terms of length, width, spacing and forward visibility to accommodate peak nursery related movements. Plans and drawings have been provided to justify this conclusion. In addition, the proposed arrangement for the shared parking area provides more spaces overall, with an improved design that has sufficient flexibility to accommodate the parking demand for the nursery and the equivalent existing parking provision for neighbouring residential properties and National Trust staff and volunteers.

HCC raised no objections subject to conditions requiring details of highway construction traffic routes and a parking management plan. (Conditions 3, 4)

Therefore, the proposal complies with policies SD19 and SD22 of the South Downs Local

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Plan and the degree of harm and general impact on highway safety, accessibility and parking is in line with Local Plan Policies.

Sustainable Drainage

It is proposed to use a sustainable drainage system to dispose of surface water to prevent surface water from entering the highway. Details of this have been conditioned (Condition 8).

These arrangements are acceptable and therefore the proposal complies with policy SD50.

Other Topics**Dark Night Skies**

The South Downs National Park has been designated an International Dark Skies reserve. As such, it is sought to reduce any light pollution associated with new development. Particular care will be taken where sites are within sensitive areas, for example where located in one of the three core zones of the Dark Night Skies Reserve.

The application site is located within Dark Night Sky Zone E1a - Intrinsic Zone of Darkness. No external lighting has been proposed as part of the submission. However, should any lighting be required a condition has been applied to ensure that a comprehensive external lighting scheme is submitted and should be designed to avoid obtrusive light with the potential to adversely affect residential and ecological receptors. It adds that measures proposed to mitigate impacts on ecological receptors will overlap with measures for minimising the effects of lighting on the dark night skies in accordance with SDLP policy SD8 (Condition 9).

Ecology and Biodiversity**Biodiversity Net Gain**

The development is subject to the de minimis exemption (development below the threshold) Under 25 square metres.

There are no other ecology issues. Further planting will contribute to the biodiversity of the area.

Therefore, the proposal complies with policy SD02 and SD09 of the SDLP.

Equality

Due regard should be given to the Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty. Public bodies need to consciously think about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. The weight given to the Equality Duty, compared to the other

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE

factors, will depend on how much that function affects discrimination, equality of opportunity and good relations and the extent of any disadvantage that needs to be addressed. The Local Planning Authority has given due regard to this duty and the considerations do not outweigh any matters in the exercise of our duty.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

The principle of the development within the countryside is acceptable and the development would not have a significant adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the site and wider area. The proposal is considered to not lead to an adverse impact upon the amenities of the neighbouring properties.

In conclusion and based on the upon the above assessment, the proposal is acceptable and will not have an adverse impact upon the site and surrounding area. The development therefore complies with policies SD4, SD5, SD19, SD22, SD25 and SD43 of the SDLP.

Based on the evidence submitted and the consultation responses, the application is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the Development Plan and is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Permit subject to the following 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 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

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.

3. Prior to commencement of development hereby permitted a Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to ensure appropriate routing/delivery schedules and ensure no obstruction to the public highway. Construction shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

4. Prior to commencement of development hereby permitted a Parking Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

ensure sufficient parking spaces are provided and can be appropriately managed, and that passing places remain unobstructed. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

5. The use hereby permitted shall not take place other than between the hours of:
- (i) 08:00 to 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays
 - (ii) Not at any time on Saturday's Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays

No other activity other than set-up and clearing by staff shall take place between the hours of 07:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday only.

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of the locality.

6. The site shall be used solely as a non-residential, early years day nursery (Use Class E(f)) for a maximum of 15 pupils and 7 staff members on site at any one time, and for no other purpose (including any other purpose within Use Class E of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the use remains appropriate to the site's rural location and in the interests of residential amenity, highway safety, and the tranquillity of the National Park.

7. A detailed scheme for hard and soft landscaping, tree and/or shrub planting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development of the parking area commences. The scheme shall specify species, density, planting, size and layout. The scheme approved shall be carried out in the first planting season following the occupation of the building or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner. If within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, any trees, shrubs or plants die, are removed or, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, become seriously damaged or defective, others of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, in the next planting season. Surfacing shall be porous and the use of grass fill option is recommended.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development and in the interests of amenity and landscape character.

8. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until details of surface water drainage, which shall follow the principles of sustainable drainage as far as practicable, have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter all development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details. The surface water drainage system shall be retained as approved thereafter.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory surface water drainage.

Case No: SDNP/25/04792/FUL

**WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

9. Details of any external lighting of the site shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of the development. The lighting scheme should be in accordance with Guidance Note 08/18 produced by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals. This information shall include a layout plan with beam orientation and a schedule of equipment in the design (luminaire type, mounting height, aiming angles and luminaire profiles). The lighting shall be installed, maintained and operated in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the appearance of the area, the environment and protected species from light pollution.

Informatives**Crime and Disorder Implications**

It is considered that the proposal does not raise any crime and disorder implications.

Human Rights Implications

This planning application has been considered in light of statute and case law and any interference with an individual's human rights is considered to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised.

Equality Act 2010

Due regard has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010.

Proactive Working

The application required additional information and the Local Planning Authority worked with the agent to achieve a positive solution after amended plans were requested and received which were acceptable.

Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application

The application has been assessed and recommendation is made on the basis of the following plans and documents submitted:

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date Received	Status
Plans -	All proposed plans and elevations including proposed parking plan		01.12.2025	Approved

Reasons: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.