

**Our reference:** COM607454606

**Application number:** 2024/0122

**Application address:** Burhill Golf Club Burhill Hersham Walton-On-Thames Surrey KT12 4BX

**Name:** Mr Clarke

**Address:** The National Golf Centre The Broadway Woodhall Spa LN10 6PU

**Comment type:** You support the planning application

**Date of comment:** 19 Apr 2024

**Comment:** England Golf is the governing body for amateur golf in England. Golf is the fifth largest participation sport in the Country, with around 720,000 members belonging to one of 1750 affiliated clubs and a further 3.5 million people playing golf independently outside of club membership.

I am writing in respect of the planning application submitted recently by Burhill Golf Club for the formation of an irrigation reservoir. I felt it was important to make you aware of the fantastic work that has been carried out by the club recently on their sustainability plan as well as supporting the development of the game.

England Golf recognises sustainability as a crucial priority and acknowledges the role that golf has to play in the global sustainability effort – we have a responsibility to work on the positive contributions that golf can have on the environment, society and the economy.

To date, the Burhill Group Limited (BGL) has shown continued commitment to sustainability and the environment through their GEO certifications, this status demonstrates a commitment to the continuous improvement around nature, resources, climate and the community.

The application has many positive reasons for the scheme:

- Capturing excess water from the regularly flooded River Mole (particularly during the winter months) will benefit the local community, helping them view the golf club as a community asset.
- The plan put forward avoids putting further strain on finite drinking water supplies.
- By mid-summer, the golf club's inadequate reservoir normally runs low leading to restricted irrigation and the loss of turf, a cycle that appears to be worsening with ever hotter summers. Maintaining adequate irrigation levels will also prevent soil loss, which will further enhance the club's ability to maintain water in the soil and reduce local flooding. This could also reduce their reliance on fertilisers which will benefit local water sources.
- In addition to the wildlife benefits of more open water, the club have included a comprehensive plan to improve biodiversity. There is already an abundance of bird species utilising the facility thanks to their pecking posts and the addition of an open body of water such as an irrigation reservoir could further increase the range of species that travel through the site.

England Golf are advocating for more golf clubs to utilise alternative sources of rainwater and irrigation water. This project will be another great example of a golf club diversifying away from

mains drinking water.

The proposal that the club is making will enable it to build on this success and reinforce its strong commitment to sustainability by enhancing the natural environment of the golf course that will benefit the members and the wildlife.