



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report Golf Club Havelte

Prepared by independent verifier Ewout Sala

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2026
Recertification due: 2031

GEO Certified®

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

"With a golf course located in a very natural environment where there is room for more nature in many places, there is a nice basis for nature and golf together. With the development of a nature management plan, it can be seen where there are even more opportunities and possibilities for the preservation and enhancement of nature. With a newly integrated irrigation system, the green team involved is making a sustainable effort to reduce the demand for water, which will only become more relevant after the dry summer of 2026. The adjustments to the driving range with robot grass and ball machines as well as robot mowers on the fairway are also sustainable steps. Now that the recycling of the waste stream has been initiated, it is also good to start thinking about the incoming waste stream from the clubhouse.

With a future plan for possible water storage on the golf course, more support can be created with the surrounding residents of the course."

Ewout Sala
(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Golf Club Havelte has successfully achieved GEO Certified® status for its outstanding work to foster nature, conserve resources and support the community.

GEO Certified® is the most respected certification for golf, based on a credibly and transparently developed modern sustainability Standard of best practice.

Golf Club Havelte has:

1. Met the required certification criteria for sustainable golf operations
2. Successfully completed the official third-party verification process
3. Successfully passed the final evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd. (autonomous subsidiary of GEO Foundation)

GEO agreed with the conclusions of the official verification report, that, having achieved all mandatory criteria; and with specific Continual Improvement Points (CIP) set for the future and Critical CIP's (CCIPs) to be reviewed at recertification, Golf Club Havelte should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Golf Club Havelte can therefore claim a position as a leader in advancing sustainability in golf – making important contributions in protecting nature, conserving resources and strengthening communities.

The GEO Certified® Report that follows comments on the actions undertaken against the criteria, as observed by the independent verifier during the assurance process.

Certification is nearly always the result of a dedicated team effort resulting in many practical and valuable social and environmental results around the golf course, maintenance facility and clubhouse. These dedication and leadership qualities are an important part of ensuring the resilience of the golf facility and the golf industry into the future and also as part of society's wider effort to pull together for people and planet.

We congratulate all involved.

Jonathan Smith
Founder and Executive Director, GEO Foundation
GEO Certification Ltd. Board Member

Kelli Jerome
Executive Director, GEO Foundation

Carole Kerrey
Director, Certification and Credibility,
GEO Certification Ltd.



Verification and Certification

Verification

The official third-party audit was carried out by an independent verifier, accredited by GEO to undertake verifications of golf facilities applying for certification.

Verification involves reviewing practices and data, using the International Voluntary Standard for Sustainable Golf Operations as the guide to ensure comprehensive and consistent evaluation of performance. A detailed verification report is submitted for evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd, a subsidiary of GEO Foundation.

Certification

GEO Certification Ltd, an autonomous subsidiary of GEO Foundation [both not-for-profit entities], undertook a full review of all content submitted through the OnCourse® online platform and the report submitted by the verifier, ensuring:

- Comprehensiveness – activities undertaken touched on all elements of the Standard
- Consistency – that the verification approach was balanced, well weighted and with consistent depth of evaluation across each theme
- Accuracy - matching the verification report with evidence submitted by the golf facility to ensure statements and claims were accurate

GEO Foundation is an international not-for-profit founded to advocate, support and reward sustainability in and through golf. Over more than ten years, the group has worked collaboratively with dozens of golf industry associations and government and non-government organisations around the world, to help golf become a sustainability leader, striving for a net positive social and environmental impact. In addition to managing and assuring GEO Certified®, GEO Foundation also provides a suite of credible, practical programmes for golf facility management, new golf developments and golf tournaments called OnCourse®, often delivered in partnership with national golf bodies. Find out more at www.sustainable.golf

Credibility

GEO Certified® is part of the ISEAL Alliance, a group of the world's foremost credible certification systems including Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, Forest Stewardship Council, Marine Stewardship Council and many others. GEO Foundation earned and retains full membership of the ISEAL Alliance global association following a rigorous evaluation against the ISEAL Codes of Credibility in Sustainability Standards and Certification. The ISEAL Codes cover standard-setting, assurance, and monitoring and evaluation. Find out more at www.isealliance.org



Verifier's Report

The Sustainability Agenda for golf covers the following themes and action areas:

THEMES	ACTION AREAS
Nature	• Habitats & Biodiversity • Turfgrass management • Pollution prevention
Resources	• Water • Energy • Materials
Community	• Partnerships & Outreach • Golfing & Employment • Advocacy & Communications

Included below are the observations made by the Independent Verifier against each item in the Standard.

NATURE			
N1 Habitats and Biodiversity			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
N1.1 Understand the site and surroundings	N1.1.1 Sound understanding of the nature and landscape value of the site	General knowledge of the wildlife and habitats on the site	Golfclub Havelte is an 18-hole course located between the Holtingerveld nature reserve and the village of Havelte. Part of the course and the driving range are situated between built-up areas. Daily maintenance of all areas of the course is carried out by the external contractor Vos Ruinerwold. The head greenkeeper (Hans Mom) has worked at this golf course for more than 15 years, providing thorough knowledge and understanding of the course and the work required. The support from Vos Ruinerwold also appears to be very thorough, as was evident during my audit. A nature management plan identifying the habitat types on the golf course is not available. CCIP: Please prepare a nature management plan with habitat types, target species and future management measures.
	N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species	Identify rare, protected or endangered species found on the golf course; Understand legal responsibilities for landscape protection and special area designations, if applicable	The golf course is located next to the Holtingerveld which has been designated as an N2000 area. Parts of this N2000 area are on the golf course. People are well aware of this. On the map and during the tour we saw that these are pieces of natural forest. These parts are kept out of the track and also not managed. Various inventories have been carried out, such as for the birds but also for other fauna. The next step is to integrate these data into a nature management plan to be prepared.
	N1.1.3 Sound understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site, if applicable	No cultural-historical and archaeological elements present on the course. However, a bomb crater from WWII element is preserved with an explanatory sign.

N1.2 Opportunities to naturalise the golf course	N1.2.1 Measures taken to identify and minimise the required area of managed turfgrass	Monitor patterns of play to identify underutilised areas of turfgrass	The golf course is in the process of creating natural parts such as new heathland, water feature and the less played areas along the fairway. During the tour we saw beautiful examples of the roughs where there were low, middle and high rough.
N1.3 Actively create and manage habitats for wildlife	N1.3.1 Projects to create and manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf	Prioritise native species of varying size and structure when planting Prioritise native trees and shrubs when planting Prioritise native aquatic species of varying size and structure when planting Establish mowing buffer zones next to water bodies and wetlands	Development of some natural parts of the course has arisen from a thorough renovation of the parts of the course where, for example, flooding in the wet season has been addressed. Plan that is now planned also has to do with water. And specifically water buffering of extreme precipitation from the track, but especially from the adjacent buildings. CIP: Please include these aspects in the nature management plan to be developed.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species	Follow local best practice to protect or attract endangered, protected or rare species found on site	It is not known exactly which species are present at habitat level. This is also good to include in nature management plan.
N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turfgrass and soil health	N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors	Select appropriate grass species for the climate	Types of grass are adapted to the prevailing climate, discussed and seen in overviews. Attention is also paid to where which species is used, such as red fescue and bentgrass on the greens.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition	No specific international requirement, however, identify course management and agronomic activities and look for continual improvements	The maintenance plan provides a thorough approach to turf management, with an annual soil survey forming the basis of the maintenance plan and the choices made within it.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Test and monitor soil pH; Follow legal requirements when timing fertiliser applications Ensure staff are fully qualified to use fertilisers	The use of fertilisers and soil amendments is specifically managed to prevent the development of fungal diseases, thereby reducing the need for plant protection products.

		Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment Regularly calibrate and test applicators	
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Change hole locations frequently	See 2.1.3. Since 2024, the course has switched to robotic mowers on the fairways in addition to the regular mowers.
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues	Identify and track pest and disease hotspots, including sensitive areas Scout the course daily for early signs and symptoms Accurately diagnose to determine the cause of weeds, pests and diseases	There is a clear understanding of the way to deal with common fungus like 'dollar spot'. As much as possible is done preventively, so that a remedy against this is now used from 2x a year to 1x a year.
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	Use legally registered and approved products; Prefer products for the specific weed, pest or disease; Follow legal requirements; Ensure staff are fully qualified to use pesticides; Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment; Regularly calibrate and test applicators; Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of amenity turfgrass	Discussed and during a tour in the work shed of the track looked at matters regarding resources. Crop protection products cupboard seen. All in order according to legal rules. Seen spray license from Hans Mom. Use of the product Exteris was recorded in the plant protection products logbook.
N3 Pollution Prevention			
N3.1 Prevent pollution across the entire site	N3.1.1 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are	Document procedures for emergency spill responses ;	Document describing what to do in the event of pollution was reviewed.

	minimised from golf course operations	Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer areas next to water bodies and wetlands; Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer zones in and around ecologically sensitive areas	
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable	Wastewater agreement seen from Teeuwissen, including inspection report of the floor. Machine washing area at work shed seen, neat. Container cleaning document with clear explanations.
	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	Wash machinery over an impermeable, leak-free surface; Mix and load pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable, leak-free surface; Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	See also 3.1.2.
N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances	List of hazardous substances, made available to authorised staff; Product and material data safety sheets; Well ventilated concrete or metal building; Impermeable, leak-free flooring; Sufficient storage capacity; Spill containment kits; Secondary containment e.g., bunds or drip trays; Emergency wash area, as per local requirements (body shower and / or eye wash station); Hazardous substances safely collected by a registered company or body ; Follow any additional legal requirements	List of hazardous materials seen in Oncourse. Storage area of the crop protection products visited during the tour, agreed.

	N3.2.2 Legal compliance in the storage and handling of fuels and gases	Tank secured to a horizontal, flat, non-combustible surface; Secondary containment of fuel in the event of spills e.g. bunds and drip trays; Inspection of storage tank(s) at least quarterly, if required; Fire extinguisher in the immediate area	Fuel tank is a double-walled tank where a drip tray is not required. Inspection reports are available.
N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water	N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage, treatment and discharge	Impermeable, leak-free surface; Treatment as per local requirements (oil, grease and / or clipping separation); Formal discharge agreement, if applicable	Wastewater is collected at the machinery facility; rainwater partly drains into surface water.

RESOURCES

R1 Water

Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
R1.1 Minimise water demand	R1.1.1 Measures to reduce the need to consume water	Select appropriate grass species for the climate e.g., drought and disease tolerance; Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces; Prioritise native, drought tolerant species for landscaping and planting	The use of native tolerant species is applied.
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course	Schedule irrigation based on informed assessment of soil moisture and weather forecasts; Evaluate new irrigation technologies e.g., central control, precision sprinklers etc.;	With a recently newly installed irrigation system, watering is much more targeted in the playing fields. Together with a management system 'Toro Links' and a weather station and the use of a moisture meter, it is very targeted whether or not to administer water.

		Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Adjust sprinklers to playing surfaces only	Highlight: The new irrigation system is a sustainable step forward.
	R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings	Monitor and record water consumption (bills, flow meter etc.); Encourage water conservation practices amongst players and staff	Not discussed.
R1.3 Source water responsibly	R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water	Water abstraction permit, if required; Report water consumption to environment agency, if required	A water abstraction permit is available.
R2 Energy			
R2.1 Reduce energy demand	R2.1.1 Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed in golf course maintenance	Naturalise non-playing areas to reduce mowing and other energy intensive inputs	The course has been designed very efficiently, meaning that mowing is only carried out where necessary.
R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency	R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings	Monitor and record energy consumption (bills, meters etc.)	Contract from energy supplier Engie, which seems to mention wind energy. Electricity monitoring is tracked.
R2.3 Source energy responsibly	R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy	Understand the energy mix of your electricity supplier; Explore possible greener energy providers	CIP: Please look at opportunities to optimise the use of renewable energy, and better understand the energy mix of your energy supplier.
R3 Materials			
R3.1 Reduce materials demand	R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on necessity, including opportunities for recycled, reused and locally sourced alternatives	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to reduce the demand for materials and look for continual improvements	Discussed, because the caterer is hired, there is no clear view of this at the moment. CIP: Please consider how you, as a golf course, want your tenant to deal with purchasing and packaging material more sustainably.

R3.2 Purchase responsibly	R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices	Favour responsible, lower impact products	Discussed, because the caterer is hired, there is no clear view of this at the moment.
R3.3 Reuse and recycle	R3.3.1 Waste stream separation for maximum recycling and re-use opportunity	Put in place a recycling separation system, according to local rules and availability; Clear, simple and visible bin signage; Monitor and record weight of waste for each stream e.g. invoices, bills etc.	Waste separation is arranged for glass, paper and residual waste, which are provided in separate containers.
R3.4 Demonstrate legal compliance	R3.4.1 Compliance with all local and regional waste management regulations	Authorised waste collector for general, hazardous, industrial and green waste, if required	Contract with waste processor PreZero is available.

COMMUNITY			
<u>C1 Health & Wellbeing</u>			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
C1.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C1.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities	Plans in place to respond to incidents and emergencies	Risk Inventory and Evaluation (RI&E) was reviewed.
C1.2 Be open and inclusive	C1.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Membership policies free from discrimination across age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnic background	The club is open and welcomes everyone.
C1.3 Employ fairly, safely and provide career opportunities	C1.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and	Adopt an equal opportunity recruitment and hiring policy;	Working conditions and workplace health are evaluated annually in consultation with the staff. During the annual performance reviews, the training wishes of the employees are discussed. These wishes are almost without exception honoured.

	professional development	Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for hiring and employment; Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for worker safety	
<u>C2 Outreach & Inclusion</u>			
C2.1 Diversify access and provide multifunctionality	C2.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility	No specific international requirement, however, identify multifunctional activities and look for continual improvements	Last year after the snow, a winter walk was organized on the track where everyone was welcome and villagers also came. There is a person with a distance to the labor market who is given the opportunity to work at the facility.
C2.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C2.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to support volunteering and charity and look for continual improvements	Many of the committees are filled in by voluntary contribution from the golfers. The birders from Uffelte have and will have the space for their nest boxes, research of the nest boxes hung by this club. The Stefan Bokaal competition is held annually to raise money for the Prince Máxima Foundation. A new charity is also determined every year.
C2.3 Establish active community partnerships	C2.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups	No specific international requirement, however, identify partnerships and community activities and look for continual improvements	A local school visits the golf course to experience the sport.
<u>C3 Communications & Advocacy</u>			
C3.1 Engage staff and golfers	C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and understanding amongst members and visitors	Involve staff and committees in sustainability efforts; Involve golfers in sustainability efforts; Post sustainability information in the clubhouse and / or on the golf course	There is no protocol yet on how members, guests and employees are informed about sustainable initiatives. However, such matters are discussed in the members' meeting, the club news and on the website. And whether the GEO allocation is also mentioned on the website, this has not yet been carried out by the new site.

C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability	C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community	Share at least 3 Highlights on sustainable.golf	Highlights include the following: ~The successes that are achieved with the hung bird nesting boxes. ~Robotic lawnmowers on the fairways. ~The new irrigation system. ~the driver range with robots for mowing and balling. ~toilets on the track. With the preparation of a nature management plan, the course can focus even more on the preservation and mitigation of existing natural parts as well as the associated habitat species.
C3.3 Follow a journey of continuous improvement	C3.3.1 Measures to help track, review and improve sustainability and climate action	Put measures in place to ensure that OnCourse can be updated annually	It has been agreed who manages Oncourse. A useful tip here can be the completed verification report in addition to the known data to be entered. Please note that old documents lose their relevance.

Golf and Sustainability

Among all sports, golf has a particularly close relationship with the environment and communities, golf facilities can bring many benefits to people and nature - from the protection of greenspace and conservation of biodiversity; healthy recreation for all ages; local supply chains; and jobs, tourism and other forms of economic value.

Adopting a more sustainable approach is also good for golf. It's about presenting a high-quality golf course and providing a memorable experience in natural surroundings. It's about being as efficient as possible. And it's about supporting the community in a range of ways that bring increased recognition, respect and contact.

At a broader level, it's important that golf credibly demonstrates its commitment, and its social and environmental value – strengthening the sport's image and reputation for the long term.

Golf facilities that participate in OnCourse®, an international sustainability initiative assured by the non-profit GEO Foundation, are taking a comprehensive approach and striving to be leaders in the community.

Find out more at www.sustainable.golf