GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report
Milltown Golf Club

Prepared by independent verifier Maurice J Bergin

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2026
Recertification due: 2031

GEO Foundation
Sustainability in and through golf

"Milltown Golf Club has a strong sustainability foundation and has built on its previous GEO Certification. The verification visit identified sound chemical storage controls, very low pesticide use, extensive conversion of greens and utility equipment to electricity, a "carry in–carry out" approach with no bins on the course, established biodiversity work, water-efficiency investment, habitat areas, bird and bat boxes, and an active sustainability structure embedded in club governance. The challenge is to build on this further with the new building development projects and drive the club towards a very low Scope 1 & 2 carbon emission base."

Maurice J Bergin
(GEO accredited independent verifier)

Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Milltown Golf Club 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.

Milltown Golf Club 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, Milltown Golf Club should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Milltown Golf Club 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.isealalliance.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	**CIP: Please implement the Biodiversity Management Plan over the next few years.**
	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	Not applicable for this course.
	N1.1.3 Sound understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site, if applicable	Not applicable for this course.
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 club continues to monitor this and make incremental changes where they do not negatively impact on the speed of play.
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	The club has a new Biodiversity Plan (August 2026). As per N1.1.1, this needs to be converted into an action plan and implemented over the next few years. It is noted that there is extensive habitat along all course boundary areas providing extensive fauna and flora protection and growth. There is a tree management plan in place also to remove non-native trees and invasive species. **CIP: Please consider developing a plan to remove all Poplar trees within a short time period.**

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	Club has a Bird Survey and actively monitors activity on the course.
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	This is actively managed. Pesticide use has been reduced over the years.
	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	Club minimises pesticides and fertilisers and adopts spot spraying to preserve soil condition and deliver good growth for turfgrass.
	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 Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment Regularly calibrate and test applicators	Club fully aware of regulations and staff trained and soil monitored annually.
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	Good practice in place. Minimal use of chemicals is the focus.
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	Good practice in place. Active course inspections for any disease and very limited chemical use.

	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	Eyewash station installed beside the chemical dilution area following immediate improvement point. Training, PPE, Calibration, etc. in place.
N3 Pollution Prevention			
N3.1 Prevent pollution across the entire site	**N3.1.1 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from golf course operations**	Document procedures for emergency spill responses ; 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	Emergency Spill response plan uploaded to OnCourse Documents Library following immediate improvement point. **CIP: Please add a No Spray zone map to the OnCourse Documents Library.**
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable	Discharge licence in place. Wastewater to main sewer. Clubhouse in compliance with all regulations.
	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	Good Practice in place with a waste2water washing system and concrete surface.

	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	Facility has appropriate storage for chemicals and hazardous substances.
		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	All in order. Secondary containment in place.
	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	All areas in order here – full grass separation and oil separation. Waste discharge license in place for clubhouse, not required for course.

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	Grass species under consideration consistently and more so in recent years with increasing climate issues. Changes will be made as required. Full irrigation is now in place on all tees, fairways and greens as part of this process and monitored.
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.; Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Adjust sprinklers to playing surfaces only	Fully managed irrigation system is in place and managed daily.
	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	Clubhouse is planned to undergo a major refurbishment within the next 12-24 months – as part of this best practice water management will be implemented across toilets, urinals, wash basins, etc.
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	Registered with EPA for water abstraction.

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	Under regular discussion, with a caveat to ensure smooth flowing golf, for a course under severe pressure for rounds.
	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.)	New Academy building will be A+ rated. Main clubhouse upgrade is also planned for A+ energy rating.
	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	Club plans to purchase renewable electricity to complement new academy and clubhouse developments. The key opportunity is to eliminate Fossil Fuels from the clubhouse and purchase 100% green electricity – thereby delivering zero carbon Scope 1 & 2. Course vehicles are transitioning towards electric and interim opportunity is to convert diesel machines to HVO- delivering a 90% reduction in carbon emissions.
	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	Use of wood and recycled materials in operation.
	R3.2 Purchase responsibly	**R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices**	Favour responsible, lower impact products	Clubhouse promotes purchasing of local and responsible food and beverages.
	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.	Club has waste separation process. Waste output is monitored from bills for clubhouse and facility building. **CCIP**: **Please upgrade the Recycling Stations for golfers coming off the course, as the existing setup is poor and leads to contamination. A second station also needs to be planned for the new Academy, with excellent signage and Return.ie opportunities included.** **CIP**: **Please develop better separation processes and continuous employee training and monitoring and publication of KPI's for the**

			clubhouse Clubhouse. Residual waste is too high as a % of total waste.
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	Confirmed.

COMMUNITY

C1 Health & Wellbeing

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	In place.
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	In place.
C1.3 Employ fairly, safely and provide career opportunities	**C1.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and professional development**	Adopt an equal opportunity recruitment and hiring policy; Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for hiring and employment; Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for worker safety	In place.

C2 Outreach & Inclusion

C2.1 Diversify access and provide multifunctionality	**C2.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility**	No specific international requirement, however, identify	Club has a number of active social activities such as a Bridge club.

			multifunctional activities and look for continual improvements	
	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	The club works with local schools, Special Olympics and the local river/community group and intends to host knowledge-sharing with neighbouring clubs.
	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	The club works with local schools, Special Olympics and the local river/community group and intends to host knowledge-sharing with neighbouring clubs.
	C3 Communications & Advocacy			
	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	Sustainability is included in newsletters. **CIP: Please consider creating a "Sustainability" board near the 1st tee and pro-shop. Highlight the fauna and flora on the course and communicate the Leave no Trace and Separate your waste messaging.** **CIP: Additional signage on the course could highlight Specimen flora. Consider using QR codes to enable detailed information to be communicated.** **CIP: Please develop a sustainability section within the club website.**
	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	The club could share the following: - Bird Survey and engagement with Bird Watch - Use of electric machines - Renewable energy improvements – solar pv New Academy as a low energy A+ rated building.
	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	**CCIP: Please update performance data annually from original sources—meter readings, supplier invoices, waste reports, fuel purchase records, chemical and fertiliser logs—rather than dividing multi-year totals or repeating prior-year figures.**

				CIP: Please assign operational ownership to the office/management team, with named contributors for course, clubhouse and sustainability data and a single annual approval by the General Manager. **CIP: Please retain an evidence index covering water abstraction registration (and any applicable permits), waste collector authorisations, chemical inventory and SDS, emergency procedures, health and safety documents, ecological reports and utility data.** **CIP: Please record explanatory notes for drought, project works, membership/activity changes or meter changes that materially affect year-on-year trends.** **CIP: I would recommend a quarterly data check and an annual OnCourse sign-off meeting before submission. The Sustainability Committee should review trends and actions; responsibility for accurate source data should remain with the relevant operational owner.**

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,

