

Report to	<b>Planning Committee</b>
Date	<b>9 September 2021</b>
By	<b>Director of Planning</b>
Local Authority	<b>East Hampshire District Council</b>
Application Number	<b>SDNP/20/04118/FUL</b>
Applicant	<b>Derek Warwick Developments</b>
Application	<b>Conversion and extension of the existing Queens building and barn to form 5no. Aparthotel suites (C1), a Field Study Centre and Tap Room (Mixed Class F.1 and Sui Generis) and 1no. Detached dwelling (C3) within the grounds, with associated parking and landscaping.</b>
Address	<b>The Queens Hotel, High Street Selborne, Alton GU34 3JH</b>

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**Recommendation: That planning permission be granted subject to:**

- 1) The completion of a legal agreement to secure the following to be delegated to the Director of Planning:**
    - The use of the Queens Hotel tied to the Gilbert White Museum and the wider community.**
  - 2) The conditions as set out in paragraph 9.2 of this report. (awaiting further)**
  - 3) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse the application with appropriate reasons if the S106 Agreement is not completed or satisfactory progress is not being made within 6 months of the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021 Planning Committee meeting.**
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## Executive Summary

- The current permitted use for The Queens is as a public house and it is noted that the first floor of the property was previously used to provide visitor accommodation in the form of en-suite letting bedrooms.
- The development proposals are for equivalent or better community facilities, tied in with use by the Gilbert White Museum that will provide a bar, educational and community space which is supported by planning policy.  
The proposal of a hybrid 'Apart-Hotel' type accommodation means that there are clear similarities, and indeed overlap, in the nature of the tourism accommodation on offer.
- The scale and design of the scheme is also acceptable insofar as it is in keeping with the character of the area (subject to conditions relating to materials, parking and landscaping). It is also acceptable in regard to other matters such as highway safety, impact on surrounding amenities, as well as providing visitors with opportunities to enjoy the National Park.

In all of these respects, the scheme accords with the relevant Local Plan policies as well as National Park Purposes and Duty.

The application is before Members due to the nature of the proposals and level of public interest.

### 1. Site Description

- 1.1 The Queens Hotel in Selborne is located on the north-east side of the High Street. It is situated within the Settlement Policy Boundary and within Selborne Conservation Area.. To the west of the public house is a separate barn building with car parking to its front and rear. Access to the site is available both from the High Street and from Huckers Lane.
- 1.2 The former hotel comprises a three storey building located within the centre of the plot with its south-west elevation fronting the High Street. To the north-west is a barn used by the former public house for ancillary storage and car parking. The rest of the site comprises the former pub garden and parking areas associated with the previous use. Beyond the barn to the north-west, the site adjoins the residential curtilage of Whites Cottage and Plum Tree House. The site is bounded to the south-east by Huckers Lane and to the north by a row of car parking bays and the access track to Plum Tree Cottage.

### 2. Relevant Planning History

- 2.1 **SDNP/16/05403/FUL** *Change of use from public house (Use Class A4) to 6 residential units (Use Class C3) (five X 2 bed apartments and one X 3 bed dwelling), with demolition of single-storey structures.* Withdrawn 28 April 2017.
- 2.2 **SDNP/17/04753/FUL** *Demolition of the contemporary single storey extensions, an application was submitted for the erection of a stand-alone three bedroom dwelling in replacement of the proposed function room. Refused 21.11.2017*
- 2.3 **SDNP/18/02564/FUL** *Conversion and alteration of the existing Queens building and barn to form 4 residential dwellings, including demolition of single storey structures, and the erection of 1 detached dwelling within the grounds, with associated parking and landscaping. Refused 15.02.2019*
- 2.4 The single reason for refusal was:  
*“The application is not supported by sufficient information to satisfactorily demonstrate that the requirements of policy CPI6 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy and policies SD 23 and SD43 of the emerging South Downs Local Plan have been met. Specifically, it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that:*
  - *the community facility (public house) and associated tourist accommodation use is no longer required,*
  - *there are alternative facilities which are easily accessible for the community,*
  - *through a rigorous marketing exercise that the existing public house / tourist accommodation use is no longer viable and that all reasonable efforts have been made to retain it, and,*

- *there is no market demand for the existing use or an equivalent community or tourism use.*
- *In consequence, the proposal would result in the loss of a community facility and associated visitor accommodation, to the detriment of the local community, and contrary to the aims of policy CPI 6 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy and policies SD 23 and SD43 of the emerging South Downs Local Plan.'*

Planning Appeal (APP/Y9507/W/19/3229374)

- 2.5 An appeal was made against the LPA's refusal planning application SDNP/18/02564/FUL in May 2019. The Inspector dismissed the appeal in a letter dated 11 October 2019. The substantive reason for dismissal was:

*'For the foregoing reasons, I conclude that the proposal would not be acceptable, having regard to local and national planning policies in respect of community facilities and sustainable rural tourism. The appeal scheme would result in the loss of a valued community facility and associated visitor accommodation, which would be harmful to the surrounding community and would not be outweighed by the provision of five additional dwellings. The appeal scheme would therefore conflict with LP Policies SD23 and SD43, as well as the Framework.'*

Asset of Community Value

- 2.6 On 11 May 2018 EHDC confirmed in writing that the applicant's listing review had succeeded and the Queens would be removed from the Council's ACV List and would be placed on the Unsuccessful List. An ACV is defined as land or property of importance to a local community which is subject to additional protection.

**3. Proposal**

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the redevelopment of the former Queens to deliver an alternative community facility, tourist accommodation and a single residential dwelling. The proposed uses and the needs case for each is outlined in this section:

Amended Plans were received which included the following changes to the scheme:-

- The external accommodation block has been moved to sit parallel with Huckers Lane with reinstatement of grass verge
- Suite 5 has been converted to a 1 bedroom unit – allowing the accommodation block to be reduced in length by 2m (21m to 19m)
- The highways improvements on Huckers Lane have been pared back to only those strictly necessary (i.e. visibility splay into the site). There is no longer any widening of the highway in order to maintain the local road hierarchy and the rural nature of the Lane itself.

Field Study Centre and Tap Room (Ground Floor)

- 3.2 It is proposed to convert and extend the ground floor of the former Queens to provide a new flexible-use space in which to relocate the Gilbert White Museum's Field Studies Centre and create a Tap Room and shop from which to sell 'Gilbert White's' beer.
- 3.3 The extended ground floor will create 234 sqm of floor space to be used flexibly through the day by the Museum Trust. Parking for the Field Study Centre is provided within the existing car park, accessed off the High Street. Bicycle storage for the commercial space will be made available within the communal garden area.
- 3.4 In consideration of need, the proposals for the ground floor of the former Queens have been formulated in close liaison with the Gilbert White's Museum Trust ('the Trust') who have struggled to achieve financial sustainability in recent years. Significant investment has improved the quality of the visitor experience and helped the Trust to develop new sources of income, however, growing visitor numbers and income from visitors to the museum and garden have remained stubbornly difficult. Patronage of the house and gardens is affected by many factors beyond the Trust's direct control and the Trust cannot rely on this as their main source of income in the future.

- 3.5 Whilst the Trust will continue to invest in its visitor facilities to ensure that it's competitive as a museum and historic garden, they need to develop a new business model that secures income streams will secure their long term future.
- 3.6 The relocation of the Field Study centre into the former Queens and the creation of a tap room are proposed to deliver financial sustainability and greater resilience for the museum, whilst also addressing the concerns of the Authority in respect to heritage and landscape. The development will extend the museum's capacity to deliver its aims and charitable objectives by expanding the museum's education programme.
- 3.7 The museum currently hosts a large number of school groups in the Field Studies Centre throughout the year, including many children who do not frequently encounter the natural world. The building is also used for weddings and other events that financially support the museum, and while the building suits both uses, the dual use is to the detriment of both. The time required for setup and takedown for both limit the number of sessions and events that can be offered. A separate education centre will allow an increase in the number of education sessions able to be offered for school groups as well as allowing for educational events outside of school hours. It will also allow the existing Field Studies Centre to be used primarily for events, increasing income to directly support the museum's financial sustainability.
- 3.8 The proposed development would benefit the village and the wider area by increasing opportunities for visitors to enjoy and stay within the National Park.
- 3.9 The proposed Tap Room will provide a venue from which to sell the beer and serve to further diversify the Trust's income. The provision of a Tap Room within the former Queens will pay homage to the historic use of the building as a public house and will allow the Trust to utilise many of the remaining features of the former public house (i.e. the retained cellar).

#### Apart-hotel Tourist Accommodation (First and Second Floors)

- 3.10 At first and second floor it is proposed to convert and extend the former Queens to provide 5no. self-catering 'aparthotel suites', totalling 11 bedrooms of CI tourist accommodation (296 sqm).
- 3.11 In consideration of need, an evidence base for the SDNP Local Plan, a Visitor Accommodation Review was published. The executive summary to that review document states that visitor accommodation in the National Park is performing very strongly at weekends and during the week in peak summer months and that there is a strong demand for high quality accommodation, which generally trades at the highest levels of occupancy and price. The assessment identifies clear prospects for future growth in the demand for all types of visitor accommodation in the National Park, alongside good potential for the South Downs to expand on many of the current and emerging rural visitor accommodation development trend.
- 3.12 Supporting the development of visitor accommodation provides opportunities to improve the vitality of the National Park's villages, particularly boosting the evening economy and creates local employment and sustains existing businesses. It is a clear and longstanding ambition of the Museum Trust to develop their wedding business. The Trust report that wedding bookings reached 20 in 2018, 15 in 2019 and enquiries for the next 2 years are strong. However, the Trust list the lack of proximate and high quality accommodation as a key barrier in allowing their wedding business to develop even further.

#### The Barn (Grounds)

- 3.13 The barn to the north of the former Queens is proposed to be redeveloped and extended to create a 185sqm 3 bedroom detached family home with associated parking and amenity space.

## **4. Consultations**

### **4.1 Policy: No objection**

- There are similarities, and overlap, in the nature of the tourism accommodation offer.

- Policies are broad and do not specify precise parameters for defining 'loss' or 'equivalence' of these uses, the proposals would not appear to be a loss but rather a variation or reconfiguration of tourism accommodation and community facility provision.
- 4.2 Arboriculture: No objection, subject to conditions.
- 4.3 **Ancient Monument Society – Objection**
- Overall impact of this development does not benefit the area.
  - Concerns with the demolition of the single storey wing and construction of replacement with new two storey extension. The footprint of the new extension is approximately two-thirds that of the original building, and at double the existing height, it creates a particularly large mass that will dominate this part of the conservation area, and harm views along the High Street and appearance of the conservation area
  - An 'aparthotel' would represent a net loss to the community with an overall reduction in bar, event and accommodation facilities proposed.
- 4.4 **Ecological Officer - No objection subject to conditions.**
- 4.5 Design & Landscape Officers (joint response) No Objection subject to revised access, parking and conditions.
- 4.6 Drainage: No objection, subject to conditions
- 4.7 Ecology: No objection, subject to conditions.
- 4.8 Environmental Health: No objection, subject to conditions.
- 4.9 Highways Authority: No objection subject to condition.
- 4.10 Historic Environment Officer: No objection subject to revised, access, parking and conditions.
- 4.11 Regeneration Officer and Placemaking Team - No objection subject to condition.
- 4.12 Selborne Parish Council: Objection.
- No viability report or evidence of robust marketing has been submitted before this application for change of use.
  - The village pub and hotel will still be lost and facilities not fully available to the local community.
  - The new Landscape plans still show almost the whole of the pub garden will be hard landscaped or built over which is uncharacteristic of the village and of the Conservation Area.
  - The new plans now show that the access track is to be widened and a swathe cut through the boundary hedge.
  - The removal of T5 holly tree would be detrimental to the tree belt and to the appreciation of LGS8.
  - LGS8 was designated because of its natural beauty and tranquillity. The proposed new tree planting within the LGS, although it would screen the development to some extent, would block the views across the LGS and change its character.
  - Concern about loss of hedging, replacement planting and ecology.
  - Concern about views of the site and street scene impact and access
  - The provision of a local shop will provide competition to existing provision.
  - There remains no provision for coaches to stop safely or to park for the Field Studies Centre (FSC), contrary to SD21.

The amended plans still show the FSC will have no kitchen and only one small toilet, which would be inadequate for a classroom of children.

## **5. Representations**

5.1 65 third party objections and a 118 **signatures** in support of the "Save the Queens" has been received which raise the following issues and summarised as follows:

- The proposal continues to require the wholesale alteration and over development of The Queens Hotel site resulting in overdevelopment and hard landscaping.
- The proposal is seen as an "unreasonable reduction or shortfall in the local service provision" as per the terms of SD 43 and thus requires robust marketing prior to any alternative use being considered.
- The property needs to be marketed in line with SDNP Policy
- Views of and into the site are not in keeping with the street scene and Conservation Area.
- The only justification for this development seems to be that it appears to provide a purpose for the pub/hotel,
- Parking & access for visitors, second vehicular access required, parking obtrusive and should be disguised in street scene, proposed access inadequate and narrow, concern of overflow parking, pedestrian access, visibility splays.
- More tree planting/landscaping, open space, and a reduction in hardstanding required. Planting strips required. Native trees, need to be considered; more detail required.
- Noise and disturbance and an over intensification of use.

5.2 23 letters of support raising the following issues can be summarised as follows:

- This application has addressed the reasons for refusal by the planning inspector of the last application in consideration of community facilities and tourist accommodation.
- An increase in the number of beds available for needed tourist accommodation from 7 to 11.
- Extensions will increase the ground floor space available for use.
- Repositioning has allowed Huckers Lane to be widened to the benefit of current residents of the lane as well as the guests of the holiday accommodation.
- The new extension is only visible from the road within 40 metres being screened by the main building from the north and the Forge and it's evergreen hedge from the south. It is not visible from behind due to the existing evergreen trees.
- The proposal for the Gilbert White Museum to take over the ground floor and provide service to the tourist accommodation will not only help viability of the Museum in the future and giving a great offer to their customers and to increase much needed employment.

## **6. Planning Policy Context**

6.1 Applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant statutory Development Plan comprises the South Downs Local Plan (SDLP) 2014-2033 and the particularly relevant policies are set out below.

### National Park Purposes

6.2 The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of their areas;
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

- 6.3 There is also a duty in pursuing National Park purposes to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local community.

National Planning Policy Framework and Circular 2010

- 6.4 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) which was issued and came into effect in July 2021. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection and the NPPF states at paragraph 176 that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks. It also states that the scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited.

Major development

- 6.5 Paragraph 177 of the NPPF 2021 outlines that “when considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.

Footnote 60 to paragraph 177 provides further clarification; “*For the purposes of paragraphs 176 and 177, whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined*”.

- 6.6 Having assessed the application and considered relevant case law, the scheme is not major development for the purposes of paragraph 177 of the NPPF and policy SD3 as the development of pub within a small village will have a minimal impact on wider character of Park. This is a matter of judgement based on the scale, character, nature and setting of the development and whether there would be a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the National Park has been designated or defined. Given the existing built form and extant uses and relatively modest scale of the proposals having regard to the area as a whole, regardless of the decision there is unlikely to be a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the National Park has been designated or defined.

Relationship of the Development Plan to the NPPF and Circular 2010

- 6.7 The Development Plan policies listed below have been assessed for their compliance with the NPPF and are considered to be compliant with it.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

- 6.8 The NPPF has been considered as a whole and its following sections are particularly relevant in the assessment of this application:

- Achieving sustainable development
- Decision making
- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Making effective use of land
- Achieving well-designed places
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment



### The South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan 2020-2025

- 6.9 The Environment Act 1995 (as amended) 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 2020-2025 on 19 December 2019, sets out a Vision, Outcomes, Policies and a Delivery Framework for the National Park over the next five years. The policies of particular relevance include: 1, 3, 5, 9, 24, 25, 38, 39, 40, 44, 50.

### The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

- 6.10 As Competent Authority, the South Downs National Park Authority has undertaken a Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening to determine whether the proposed development will result in significant effects on the integrity of the European site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The Screening decision is that:
- 6.11 The proposal is for a development of 20 or less (net) dwellings within the 400m to 5km buffer zone of the Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA. There is currently sufficient capacity within the strategically assessed (JCS Appropriate Assessment) and permitted allowance of 846 unmitigated new dwellings within the 400m to 5km zone. Therefore, it can be determined that proposed development of this scale will not result in significant effect either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. As a result, no appropriate assessment is required.

### Legislation for Heritage Assets

- 6.12 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states “in considering whether to grant planning permission 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 architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 6.13 Section 72 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 relates to conservation areas. It requires “special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.” The Site is within the Selborne Conservation Area.

### Other relevant material considerations

- 6.14 The following are relevant considerations:
- Adopted Sustainable Construction SPD.
  - Adopted Parking for Residential and Non-Residential Development SPD.
  - Ecosystems Services Technical Advice Note 2019.
  - Dark Night Skies Technical Advice Note 2021.
  - Habitats Regulations Assessment Technical Advice Note 2021.
  - Draft Design Guide SPD. This draft document is currently undergoing public consultation and has limited weight in decision making.

### Planning Policy

- 6.15 Whilst the SDLP must be read as a whole, the following policies are particularly relevant:
- SD1: Sustainable Development
  - SD2: Ecosystems Services
  - SD4: Landscape Character
  - SD5: Design
  - SD6 Safeguarding Views.

- SD8: Dark Night Skies
- SD9: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- SD10: International Sites: Wealden Heaths Phase II
- SD11: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
- SD13 Listed Buildings
- SD14 Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation of Historic Buildings
- SD15 Conservation Areas
- SD19: Transport and Accessibility
- SD21: Public Realm, Highways Design and Public Art
- SD22: Parking Provision
- SD23 Sustainable Tourism
- SD25: Development Strategy
- SD34: Sustaining the Local Economy
- SD43: New and Existing Community Facilities.
- SD48: Climate Change and Sustainable Use of Resources
- SD50: Sustainable Drainage Systems
- SD54 :Pollution and Air Quality

## **7. Planning Assessment**

### Principle of development

- 7.1 The site falls within the settlement policy boundary of Selborne where the principle of development is generally accepted. Policy SD25 supports development within settlement boundaries providing that this is of a scale and nature appropriate to the character and function of the settlement in its landscape context; makes best use of suitable and available previously developed land in the settlement; and makes efficient and appropriate use of land.
- 7.2 The overall acceptability of any scheme is dependent on a design response that is appropriate to the site's context, in particular the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and the setting of the nearby Grade II listed buildings. This and other matters are considered in more detail below.
- 7.3 Policy SD43 (New and Existing Community Facilities) states that Development proposals for new and/or expanded community facility infrastructure will be permitted 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
  - e) Appropriate consideration has been given to the shared use, re-use and/or redevelopment of existing buildings in the host community.

The Inspector's previous appeal decision stated

'The appeal scheme would result in the loss of a valued community facility and associated visitor accommodation, which would be harmful to the surrounding community and would not be outweighed by the provision of five additional dwellings. The appeal scheme would therefore conflict with LP Policies SD23 and SD43, as well as the Framework.'  
(APP/Y9507/W/19/3229374)

- 7.4 Policy SD43 lists community facilities as Cultural facilities, Education, Healthcare, Libraries, Public houses, Recreational open space, Sports pitches, pavilions, leisure centres and Town

and village halls. The provision of an Educational Field Study Centre and Tap Room fall within the 'new and/or expanded community facility' provision of Policy SD43. The proposed Field Studies Centre, as well as for education of school age children, will also be 'available for hire outside of traditional school/operating hours for the use of the local community', providing cultural and education facilities. These uses and the relationship with the Gilbert White Museum can be formalised through a s106 agreement. Therefore, the second part of Policy SD43 which guards against the loss of community facilities is not enacted in this case. This view is reiterated by Policy consultee comments.

- 7.5 In Policy terms development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have an unacceptable adverse impact upon, an existing community facility, will not be permitted unless:
- a) For commercially run community facilities, evidence is provided of a robust marketing campaign of at least 24 months that clearly demonstrates there is no market demand for the existing use or an equivalent community
  - b) use; or
  - c) For community- or publicly-owned or managed facilities, it can be robustly demonstrated that there is a lack of need for the existing facility, or an equivalent community use; or
  - d) Alternative community facilities are provided that are accessible, inclusive and available, and of an equivalent or better quality to those lost, without causing unreasonable reduction or shortfall in the local service provision.
- 7.6 SD43 (2)(c) allows for the provision of alternative community facilities that are inclusive, available, accessible, of equivalent or better quality and do not cause an unreasonable shortfall in provision. The key reference is for facilities to be 'equivalent or better quality'
- 7.7 Policy SD43 does not demand a like for like replacement – it requires an equivalent or better quality alternative community facility. Paragraph 7.227 of the South Downs Local Plan lists the types of community infrastructure facilities for the purposes of Policy SD43 which includes cultural facilities, education and public house. Note 'community facilities' may be a combination of different types.
- 7.8 Objectors are particularly concerned about the loss of public house, however, the uses of this space will be more wide ranging and the benefits felt by the local community will be multifaceted.
- 7.9 During the application process Officers requested to see sight of a business plan. The plan highlights that the Queens will become a community hub offering benefits to a wider demographic within the local community. Officers consider the plan offers a practical tie up of use by the GWM whilst incorporating benefits for the wider community.

Below are some key considerations from the Business Plan:

The Field Study Centre (FSC)

- 7.10 *By day the FSC will provide a classroom facility equipped with the latest audio-visual and learning equipment. During the evenings, weekends and school holidays the FSC would be made available for hire for talks, groups, exercise classes and school holiday activities to the benefit of the local community. It is proposed that during the day the balance of the ground floor will be used as a small community-shop and tap room.*
- 7.11 *The community-shop would sell Gilbert White home grown vegetables and also beers produced by the Gilbert White nano-brewery plus other wines and seasonal spirits. Both the local shop and village post office have been closed recently and during the Covid -19 lockdown the GWM ran a 'pop-up' shop from its existing premises to serve the community and has learnt what is required by way of local demand, local suppliers etc.*
- 7.12 *The Tap Room would operate selling Gilbert White beers from the GWM 'nano-brewery' and selected wines and spirits including "Selborne wine". It is proposed that a small food offering would*

also be available for either a sit-down meal or take away. Food would be transferred to the Queens from the White's Cafe in suitable containers and served from the Queens Kitchen area.

#### Proposed Hours of Operation

- 7.13 FSC: The FSC area would house school parties and children's groups during the day 9am - 5pm. Any time/space that is not taken up with these activities could be used for hire during the day and school holidays to other groups – e.g. children's parties, yoga and other groups such as summer school activities.

The evening and weekends would be hired out as a venue for talks, classes, community events and for other interested groups.

Shop: 0800 – 1400 Monday to Saturday and Sunday 0900 -1200

Tap Room: Monday – Saturday 6 -10pm and closed on Sunday

*The facility will to a large extent be 'demand led'. If there is the demand within the community for longer opening hours or extended opportunities to hire spaces within the building this can readily be facilitated by the GWM.*

#### Community Function Room

- 7.14 The development will not preclude the beneficial use of the Queen building by the local community. The use of the Tap Room and FSC for live music groups, exhibitions or quizzes will be entirely within the gift of the local community to arrange.

#### Overnight Accommodation

- 7.15 5 Rooms (6 beds) 5 Suites (11 Beds) Whether the Council chooses to assess the proposals on 'units' or 'bed-spaces' there is clearly no loss as per Policy SD23.
- 7.16 In respect to the other criteria of Policy SD43 it is evident that there is a demonstrable local need through the involvement and endorsement of the project by the Gilbert White's Museum. It's considered that the proposals comply with Policy SD43.

#### Tourist Accommodation

- 7.17 Policy SD23 (Sustainable Tourism) seeks to guard against the loss of visitor accommodation within the National Park. The Policy sets out that development proposals for visitor accommodation will be permitted where, amongst other things, it is demonstrated that:
- a) *The proposals will provide opportunities for visitors to increase their awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities;*
  - b) *The design and location of the development minimises the need for travel by private car and encourages access and/or subsequent travel by sustainable means, including public transport, walking, cycling or horse riding;*
  - c) *Development proposals will not detract from the experience of visitors or adversely affect the character, historical significance, appearance or amenity of the area;*
  - 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;*
  - e) *Ancillary facilities are not disproportionately large in relation to the rest of the visitor facilities;*
  - f) *Any proposal does not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of town or village centres or assets of community value;*
- 7.18 *The Council's Visitor Accommodation Review shows that there is a strong demand for high quality accommodation within the National Park. There is also a demonstrable need for additional visitor accommodation to support the growth and development of the Gilbert White Museum and it's wedding business. Another part of the policy advises:*

*'Development proposals that would result in the loss of visitor accommodation, visitor attractions and recreation facilities will not be permitted unless:*

- a) *Evidence is provided that the current use is financially unviable and a robust marketing campaign of at least 12 months has been carried out that clearly demonstrates there is no market demand for the existing use or an equivalent tourism use; or*
- b) *The current use or related development harms the special qualities'*

Centrally, no loss of visitor accommodation would arise from this development.

- 7.19 The building has historically provided a total of 5 'units' of tourist accommodation (i.e. rooms) and 6 'bed spaces' plus a managers flat. At first floor level there are four en-suite letting bedrooms. Second floor provides a suite which comprises two letting rooms and a bathroom. There is also a manager's/owner's apartment comprising of a double bedroom, single bedroom, lounge and bathroom.'
- 7.20 When measured against the previous level of provision the application proposals result in no net loss of tourist rooms (5 remaining as 5) and represent a marked increase in the provision of available 'bed spaces' (6 to 11), To add, disabled access will be provided to 4 out of the 5 suites i.e. 9 out of 11 bed spaces. This is considered an improvement over existing where disabled access isn't provided to the upstairs accommodation.
- 7.21 To summarise the proposals would not be a loss but rather a reconfiguration of tourism accommodation and community facilities SD23 and SD43 are broad, and do not specify precise parameters for defining 'loss' or 'equivalence'. The FSC and Tap Room will make educational, tourism, cultural, heritage and land-use enterprise/economy connections with the area, contributing to priorities of the South Downs Partnership Management Plan (PMP) and the requirements of Policy SD34. The hours of use are broadly equivalent. The key difference being that the proposed uses will be more wide ranging. It is envisioned that the Queens will become a community hub, offering multiple benefits to a much wider demographic. Continued use will be secured via a S106 agreement.

#### Design, Heritage and Landscape

- 7.22 Policies SD13, SD14 and SD15 require development to conserve and enhance the historic environment; preserve and enhance the significance of listed buildings and their setting; and preserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest, character or appearance of conservation areas.
- 7.23 The Conservation Area is characterised by an established landscape setting, historic buildings, narrow winding streets, use of local materials, viewpoints and spaces which combine to create the character and setting of Selborne. Development proposals are required to respect the details, materials and pattern of existing buildings in the village.
- 7.24 Proposals must also comply with policies SD4 and SD5, which require the design of development to adopt a landscape-led approach in order to conserve and enhance existing landscape character features. SD6 requires new development to preserve the visual integrity, identity and scenic quality of the National Park in particular by conserving and enhancing key views and views of key landmarks within the National Park.
- 7.25 The Queens is a non-designated heritage asset within the Selborne Conservation Area and is located close to a number of listed buildings. The former pub is of local historic interest and it contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The contribution the former pub makes derives from its form, materials and elevational treatment. The proposed redevelopment of the pub for apartments would maintain these elements of significance, thus preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 7.26 The refurbishment of the former pub, the removal of the unsympathetic single-storey additions and tarmac hardstanding, and the introduction of traditional boundary treatments would be an enhancement to the conservation area. The conversion of the barn for residential use would see this building given a new lease of life and ensure its retention and long-term conservation.
- 7.27 The function room is a post-1933 structure that has been significantly altered and does not represent a good example of its era or type such that its replacement with a building of

good quality materials or design, i.e. the proposed extension, would not cause harm to the Conservation Area.

- 7.28 The merits of retaining the function room were raised by the Heritage Officer in regard to the previous application and have been addressed in the submitted Heritage Statement. The Heritage Officer previously raised concern with the efficacy of the piecemeal redevelopment of the site and consequently that the redevelopment or reinstatement of the land could be guaranteed.
- 7.29 Under this proposal the proposed extension in place of the function room would be of high quality design and materials, and would be sympathetic to its surroundings and would guarantee the sensitive reuse of the previous function room area.
- 7.30 It is considered that the proposals would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Selborne Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings in accordance with policies SD4, 5, 13, 14 and 15 and the national policies contained within the NPPF and Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act (1990).

#### Ecology and Trees

- 7.31 Policies SD2, SD9 and SD11 require proposals to identify and incorporate opportunities for net gains in biodiversity; conserve and enhance trees and hedgerows; and have a positive impact on the ability of the natural environment to contribute goods and services. The Ecological Impact Assessment submitted with the application demonstrates that the development can proceed with minimal impact to ecological features. New developments are required to comply with the NPPF and local policy. Enhancements will therefore be provided as follows:
- a) Native/wildlife-friendly shrub/hedging to be planted around the proposed dwelling and along the north and west boundaries.
  - b) 1m wide strips of infrequently managed/long grassland at various locations across the development. Grassland to be seeded with Emorsgate EL1 – Flowering Lawn Mixture. The grassland shall be cut once or twice/year i.e. in spring and autumn.
  - c) Green roofs above the bin/cycle stores.
  - d) A row of four swift bricks will be installed c. 5m above ground level onto the southwest gable of the proposed single-storey block.
- 7.32 The mitigation measures outlined, will be secured via an appropriately worded condition in order to ensure compliance with Policy SD2.
- 7.33 There are a number of mature trees located within the site including along the boundaries and particularly along the north-eastern boundary of the site. The implementation of the measures shown on the submitted Tree Protection Plan will minimise the impact of the proposed development on trees to be retained on the site. The viability of the retained trees can therefore be assured in both the short and the long term. The arboricultural and ecology specialist consider the details submitted are acceptable subject to conditions 14, 15, 16

#### Surface Water and Drainage

- 7.34 Policies SD2 and SD50 seek to ensure that proposals ensure against increase of surface water runoff, taking into account of climate change, and deliver sustainable drainage solutions. A drainage report has been included in support of the application. The provision of on-site solutions are secured through a suitably worded landscaping condition 14 and 18

#### Highways & parking

- 7.35 The Highways Authority have not raised any concerns about increased traffic or use of the accesses in relation to highway safety matters. The scheme accords with SD19. Subject to conditions 11 and 12
- 7.36 The proposed car parks would be sufficient to meet the needs of the development, in accordance with policy SD22 and the Parking SPD. Three new electric vehicle charging

points are proposed and secured via condition 13 and to ensure that they are delivered. This is sufficient to accord with SD22.

#### Impact on surrounding uses and amenities

- 7.37 Third party objections received have raised concern about the impact from more intense activity on site. There would be additional activity created on site and that has the potential to cause noise and disturbance from comings and goings, but the scheme has been designed so that additional parking would also be well contained within the site and screened by buildings.
- 7.38 Any impact on noise could also be seen in comparison with the application site having previously been used for a pub / hotel use. Notwithstanding, there is not considered to be a significant material increase in noise disturbance. The scheme therefore would not materially impact upon the amenities of other surrounding uses and properties. Environmental Health have raised no objections to the proposals.

#### Dark Night Skies

- 7.39 Dark Night Skies Policy SD8 requires proposals to demonstrate that all opportunities to reduce light pollution and ensure that the measured and observed sky quality in the surrounding area is not affected. The site is located within the Dark Skies Intrinsic Zone of Darkness (E1a). It is considered that harmful light spill could be adequately mitigated through the use of blackout blinds and low transmittance glass. Details of these will be secured via an appropriately worded condition. (Condition 17)

#### Sustainability

- 7.40 The Sustainable construction SPD provides further guidance to support the implementation of the South Downs Local Plan policies, in particular Policy SD2: Ecosystem Services, Policy SD22: Parking Provision (where it relates to electric vehicle charging), Policy SD48 Climate Change and Sustainable Use of Resources.
- 7.41 Through negotiation and subject to conditions, the site layout and design, ecological enhancements and community use of the proposals which are retained albeit in a differing form respond positively to the principles of sustainable development and the needs of the local community as well as support the wider local economy.

#### CIL

- 7.42 The development is considered to be CIL liable, however, further assessment and discussion with the Applicant will be needed to ascertain the exact contribution.

### **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1 The proposals are acceptable in principle for the reasons outlined above. They have been the subject of lengthy discussions on a range of considerations and particularly regarding the community nature of the facilities, use of the assets, design, layout and landscaping. The revised proposals are now more appropriate in the context of the surrounding character of the area and have the ability to deliver community benefits as highlighted. Consequently, the proposals would accord with the First Purpose and relevant Local Plan policies. In addition, given the nature of the scheme it would also meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Purpose and statutory Duty.

### **9. Reason for Recommendation and Conditions**

- 9.1 **Recommendation: That planning permission be granted subject to:**
- 1) **The completion of a legal agreement to secure the following to be delegated to the Director of Planning:**
    - **The use of the Queens Hotel tied to the Gilbert White Museum and the wider community.**
  - 2) **The conditions as set out in paragraph 9.2 of this report. (awaiting further)**
  - 3) **That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse the**

**application with appropriate reasons if the S106 Agreement is not completed or satisfactory progress is not being made within 6 months of the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021 Planning Committee meeting.**

9.2 The conditions below

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.

Use

3. The apart-hotel accommodation hereby approved shall not be used at any time for any purpose other than as holiday accommodation. The lodges shall not be used as permanent residential accommodation or for any other purpose in Use Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification.

Reason: This development is only acceptable as holiday accommodation for use by short term visitors to the area.

Holiday Monitoring:

4. Prior to occupation of the use hereby approved the owner/site operator shall keep a record of all persons who have occupied the apartments for holiday purposes including details of the duration of their stay on the form attached. Such records shall be kept on the attached form and made available for inspection by the Local Planning Authority within 28 days and upon prior written request.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to ensure that the premises are occupied strictly in accordance with the restrictions imposed.

5. The holiday accommodation hereby approved shall not be occupied by any person, group or their dependants, for a period of more than 28 days in any twelve month period. A register of the occupancy of the apart hotel accommodation shall be maintained and kept up-to-date by the operator of the units, and shall be made available to the Local Planning Authority upon request (within 14 days of a written request being made). It shall record the names and addresses of all visitors and their arrival and departures dates.

Reason: This development is only acceptable as holiday accommodation for use by short term visitors to the area. There is a need to ensure that practical and permanent management measures are in place to control the short term visitor accommodation

Materials & construction

6. No development above slab level shall be commenced unless and until a schedule of materials and samples of such materials, finishes and colours to be used for external walls, windows and doors, roofs, and rainwater goods, vents and meters have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All materials used shall conform to those approved in full.

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.

7. No development shall commence until a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The



approved Plan shall be adhered to in full throughout the construction period. The Plan shall provide for but not be limited to:

- a) An indicative programme for carrying out of the works and methods and phasing of construction works;
- b) Construction work shall only take place in accordance with the approved method statement.
- c) The arrangements for public consultation and liaison during the construction works;
- d) Measures to minimise the noise (including vibration) generated by the construction process to include hours of work, proposed method for constructing foundations, the selection of plant and machinery and use of noise mitigation barrier(s);
- e) Details of any floodlighting, including location, height, type and direction of light sources and intensity of illumination;
- f) The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- g) The arrangements for deliveries associated with all construction work;
- h) Loading and unloading of plant, machinery, and materials and access and egress;
- i) Storage of plant and materials used in demolition (if any) and constructing the development;
- j) Location of temporary site buildings and compounds;
- k) Protection of pedestrian routes during construction.
- l) The erection and maintenance of security hoarding, where appropriate;
- m) Wheel washing facilities;
- n) Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction;
- o) A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste, including spoil, resulting from demolition and construction works;
- p) Construction working hours.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the amenities of the area.

#### Sustainability

8. No development above slab level of the buildings shall commence until written documentary evidence has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority demonstrating that the dwelling will achieve a minimum 19% improvement over the 2013 Building Regulations Part L Dwelling Emission Rate (DER)/Target Emission Rate (TER), a further 20% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions through the use of renewable sources and a maximum of 110 litres/person/day internal water use in the form of a design stage SAP calculations and a water efficiency calculator. The dwellings shall thereafter be constructed in accordance with these details.

Reason: To ensure the development has minimised its overall demand for resources and addresses climate change mitigation.

9. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted detailed information in a design stage sustainable construction report in the form of:
  - a) SBEM calculations
  - b) product specifications
  - c) Grown in Britain or FSC certificates;
  - d) sustainable material strategy
  - e) building design details

demonstrating that the development will:

- a) reduce predicted CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by at least 19% due to energy efficiency and reduce predicted CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by a further 20% due to on site renewable energy (both metrics compared with the maximum allowed by building regulations)
- b) provide an EV charge point with a minimum power rating output of 7kW and a universal socket
- c) for all timber used, selected the use of certified 'Grown in Britain' timber where possible, and where not possible, FSC or PEFC certified.

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be built in accordance with these agreed details.

Reason: To ensure the development demonstrates a high level of sustainable performance to address mitigation of, and adaptation to, predicted climate change.

Verification condition

10. Within 3 months after the development hereby permitted is brought into use, detailed information in a post construction stage sustainable construction report demonstrating how the development has been carried out in accordance with all of the requirements set out in condition 8 and 9 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This documentary evidence shall include, but not be limited to, interim stage certification and associated assessment report together with post construction calculations.

Reason: To ensure the development demonstrates a high level of sustainable performance to address mitigation of, and adaptation to, predicted climate change.

#### Highways and Parking

11. Prior to occupation provision for 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 car parking provision for the approved development.

12. No development shall start on site until the access, including the footway and/or verge crossing shall be constructed and lines of sight of 2.4 metres by 17 metres provided in accordance with the approved plans. The lines of sight splays shown on the approved plans shall be kept free of any obstruction exceeding 1 metre in height above the adjacent carriageway and shall be subsequently maintained so thereafter.

Reason: To provide satisfactory access and in the interests of highway safety.

13. Prior to the development being brought into use, provision of a minimum of 3 electric vehicle charging spaces within the approved car park shall be provided. These shall thereafter be maintained and retained for use.

Reason: To provide on-site sustainable parking facilities.

#### Landscaping and ecology

14. No development above slab level shall take place until a detailed Scheme of Soft and Hard Landscape 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
- b) Planting 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 and management of the Sustainable Urban Drainage systems.
- g) A landscape schedule and management plan designed to deliver the management of all new and retained landscape elements to benefit people and wildlife for a minimum period of 5 years including details of the arrangements for its implementation;
- h) A timetable for implementation of the soft and hard landscaping works.

The scheme of Soft and Hard Landscaping works shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved details and timetable. Any plant which dies, becomes diseased or is removed within the first five 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.

15. Development shall proceed in accordance with the measures set out in Sections 6 and 7 of the Ecological Impact Assessment report by Eclipse Ecology (March 2021) unless varied by a European Protected Species (EPS) license subsequently issued by Natural England. Thereafter, the existing and compensatory bat roost and swift nest box features shall be permanently maintained and retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to ensure the favourable conservation status of bats and to conserve and enhance biodiversity in accordance with Policy SD9 of the South Downs Local Plan.

#### Trees

16. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) 2247/1B and accompanying Tree Protection Plan. During the course of development, written and photographic evidence of contemporaneous supervision and monitoring of tree protection measures stipulated in these documents, by a suitably qualified and pre-appointed tree specialist, must be kept, and these must be submitted to the LPA for approval.

Reason: To ensure that the trees on and around the site are adequately protected from damage to their health and /or amenity value.

#### Dark Night Skies

17. No development shall commence beyond slab level until a detailed external lighting scheme that accords with the SDNPA Dark Night Skies Technical Advice Note (2021) has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The external lighting scheme shall thereafter be implemented in full prior to the site being brought into use and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of nearby residential properties and dark skies.

#### Drainage

18. No development shall commence on site until details of a scheme for foul and surface water drainage has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Such details should include provision for all surface water drainage from parking areas and areas of hardstanding to prevent surface water from discharging onto the highway and should be based on site investigation and percolation tests. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details before any part of the development is first occupied and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure adequate provision for drainage.

## Contamination

19. If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until a remediation strategy detailing how this contamination will be dealt with has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not contribute to, is not put at unacceptable risk from, or adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of water pollution from previously unidentified contamination sources.

## **10. Crime and Disorder Implication**

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

## **11. Human Rights Implications**

- 11.1 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.

## **12. Equality Act 2010**

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

## **13. Proactive Working**

- 13.1 In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the NPPF.

## **TIM SLANEY**

### **Director of Planning**

### **South Downs National Park Authority**

Contact Officer: Graeme Felstead  
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Appendices I. Site Location Map  
SDNPA Legal Services, Development Manager.

Consultees  
Background Documents

All planning application plans, supporting documents, consultation and third party responses

<https://planningpublicaccess.southdowns.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

South Downs National Park Local Plan 2019

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/national-park-local-plan/>

Revised National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework-2>

South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan 2020-2025

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/partnership-management-plan/>

South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment 2005 and 2011

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/planning-advice/landscape/>

South Downs Supplementary Planning Documents.

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents/>