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Dear Graeme,

### **PLANNING RESPONSE - THE QUEENS, SELBORNE (SDNP/20/04118/FUL)**

Having reviewed the planning file it seems we are now in receipt of the lion's share of public and statutory consultee comments in respect to the Queens, Selborne. As such, this seemed an appropriate point to provide a summary response to the comments raised.

For the benefit of this note I have split the comments into three broadly interrelated categories; the principle of development (Policy SD43), the tourist accommodation (SD23) and the design and scale of the proposals. I have covered these in turn below.

#### **Principle of Development (Policy SD43)**

Given the recent planning history of the application site, there is clearly an element of skepticism from some corners of the Village that the proposals will not provide for an 'equivalent or better quality' community facility to that lost (as per Policy SD43).

To assuage these concerns, the Applicant is working hard with the proposed occupier of the 'new Queens', the Gilbert White Museum (GWM), to formalise a business plan detailing how the Queens will be operated on a day to day basis. This will be submitted to the Council in due course but I have summarised the key elements below.

Subject to securing planning consent, it is proposed that the ground floor of the Queens be leased to the GWM for use as a Field Study Centre and Tap Room on a 'peppercorn rent' for a period of 99 years. As detailed in the submitted Planning Statement the addition of this space is imperative for the ongoing financial sustainability of the GWM who have been present in the village since 1955.

#### The Field Study Centre (FSC)

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.

#### The Tap Room & Community-Shop

It is proposed that during the day the balance of the ground floor will be used as a small community-shop and tap room in the evenings:

- 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,

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local suppliers etc. The GWM consider that they have built up the trust and support of the local community as demonstrated by their continued patronage of the shop during the November lockdown period. The Queens will provide a permanent home for this facility.

- The Tap Room would operate in the evening selling Gilbert White beers from the '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

- FSC: The FSC area would prioritise 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 and for other interested groups (hours to be confirmed).
- Shop: 0800 – 1400 Monday to Saturday and Sunday 0900 -1200
- Tap Room: Monday – Saturday 6 -10pm and closed on Sunday

The judgement as to whether the proposed use of the ground floor constitutes an 'equivalent or better quality' community facility will ultimately fall to the SDNPA, however, I hope the above goes some way to evidencing the extensive benefits the conversion will deliver for both the GWM and the local community.

I am encouraged to read the comments of the SDNPA Policy Officer who reports that, taken together, 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.

#### **Tourist Provision (Policy SD23)**

As detailed later in this note and in the updated drawing pack the proposals have been amended to remove the proposed two-storey extension in favour of retaining the existing single-storey 'function-room'. The two aparthotel suites which would have been accommodated on the first floor of the extension are now proposed to be accommodated within a purpose built outbuilding within the grounds of the Queens. The quantum of accommodation units therefore remains at 5, as previously submitted.

Policy SD23 of the Local Plan seeks to protect against development proposals which would result in the loss of visitor accommodation. As set out within the Planning Statement and as verified by the SDNPA Policy Officer, the development proposals do not comprise the loss of any tourist accommodation, rather they make provision for an alternative style of visitor accommodation in the form of 5no. 'Aparthotel Suites' (Use Class C1) providing 11 individual bed-spaces. These provide a hybrid hotel and self-catering style visitor accommodation which makes a contribution to meeting the visitor accommodation provision needs of the National Park and the PMP outcomes.

As part of the conversion an internal lift will be installed into the Queens. As a result, 4 of the 5 proposed tourist units will be accessible for wheelchair users. This is a marked betterment over existing.

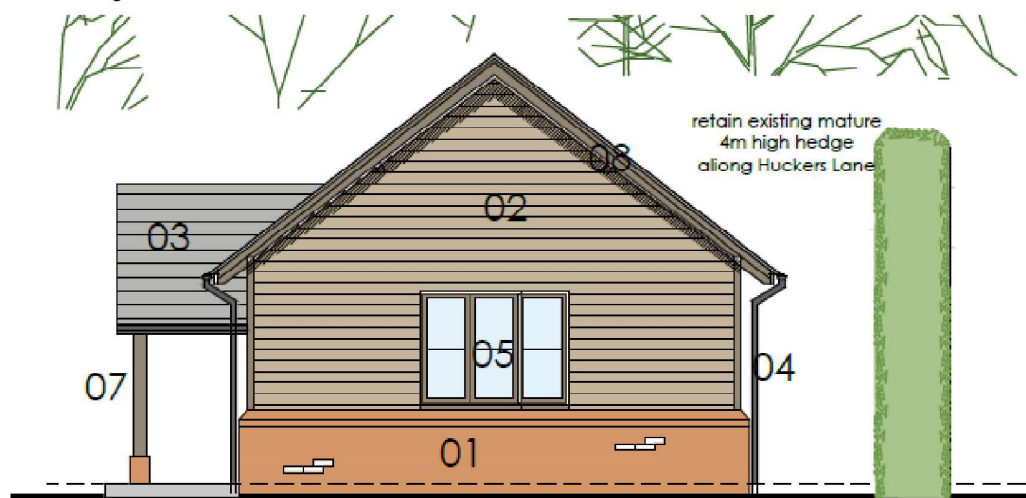
As part of the ongoing discussions between the Applicant and the GWM it is proposed that the GWM Team will manage the accommodation and utilise the ground floor as an informal reception area. This will allow the synergies between the tourist accommodation and the Tap Room to be fully realised.

## Design and Scale

Having reviewed the comments it is clear that whilst there is broad support for the principle of the proposals from the Council's statutory consultees there is concern surrounding the scale and massing of the scheme and its relationship with its local landscape setting.

To this end, we have gone back to first principles and redesigned the proposals from a landscape-first approach. The amended proposals are detailed in the submitted drawing pack and on the updated 'Landscape Principles' plan appended to this note. In summary:

- The two-storey extension has been removed from the plans in favour of retaining the existing single-storey 'function-room'. The retained function room will be refurbished and become the field-study centre for use by the GWM. As detailed in the Landscape Officer's comments, the current single-storey structure allows for characteristic views over the Site to the Hanger Woods. The retention of the function-room would tally with the comments of the Council's Conservation Officer who considered that its loss would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Selborne Conservation Area.
- The two aparthotel suites which would have been accommodated on the first floor of the extension are now proposed to be accommodated within a purpose built outbuilding within the grounds of the Queens. The new accommodation block has been consciously designed so as to present as an ancillary outbuilding to the main Queens building. As detailed in the Conservation Officer's comments, much of the Selborne Conservation Area is characterised by buildings interspersed with ancillary outbuildings which are more humble in scale and materials of construction. These buildings are reflective of Selborne as an historic working village.
- The scale and orientation of the outbuilding is intended to preserve the character of Huckers Lane. As detailed in the revised plans (excerpt shown in Figure A) the outbuilding will run parallel to Huckers Lane and sit largely behind the existing 4m mature hedgerow with only the roof pitch being visible. The pitch has been consciously designed to sit below the ridge of the retained function room.
- The accommodation block employs a traditional palette of materials with a Flemish bond brick course, horizontal oak boarding and slate roof. Windows have been used sparingly and where they have been shown they will be timber framed.
- The retention of the function-room will serve to preserve views into the site from the High Street exactly as existing.



## **08 South West Elevation**

*Fig A: South-West Elevation of Accommodation Block (Drawing P18-014-02-05-006b)*



- The outbuilding will present a gable end in views from the east and west which is typical of buildings within the vicinity and on the site as existing (See Fig B).



*Fig B: Views along Huckers Lane*

- In recognition of the 'countryside edge' that forms the eastern edge of the development site and the designated greenspace immediately beyond this, the car parking for the tourist accommodation has been brought internally to the site to protect this sensitive rural 'interface'. The new integrated car parking court will sit behind the belt of mature Cyprus, Holly, Ash and Spruce trees which will serve to shield the cars from longer distance views.

#### Parking and Access

- Much has been made in the consultee comments in respect to a perceived 'intensification' in the use of Huckers Lane resulting from the proposals. This is simply not the case. As demonstrated in the Transport Statement, using the TRICS database it is estimated that the existing use generates 103 two-way movements per day. The proposed uses will generate 81 two-way movements.
- As existing, there is a total of 24 car parking spaces available on Site. The frontage car park provides 10 spaces and is accessed directly from High Street. To the rear there are a further 14 spaces accessed from Huckers Lane. Under the development proposals the 10 car parking spaces to the front will remain in situ and will serve the GWM elements of the scheme (Tap Room and FSC). To the rear spaces are being redistributed to accommodate the development proposals (2 spaces to serve the proposed dwelling and 12 spaces to serve the proposed tourist accommodation within the rear parking court).
- As it can be seen there will be no net increase in parking provision nor will there be an increase in vehicular movements resulting from the proposed use.

#### **Summary**

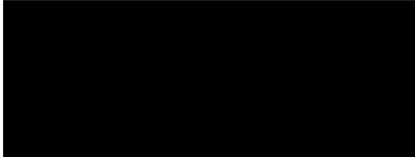
As detailed by the Council's Economic Development Officer, the proposals would have a regenerative impact supporting local business, tourism and the visitor economy in the area. In this respect the proposals sit squarely



within the requirements of Policies SD23, SD34 and SD43.

The scheme has been consciously amended to reflect the comments of the Council's Conservation, Design and Landscape Officers. If you have any queries or require clarification on any element of the scheme please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely



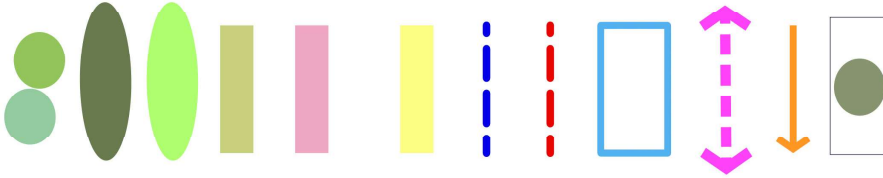
Jim Beavan  
**Savills Planning**

c. Guy Macklin, Derek Warwick Developments

# 6.0 Design Principles

## 6.4 Landscape

### Biodiversity Net Gain Enhancement



- Use native/wildlife-friendly shrubs and trees in the planting proposed around the dwelling
- Extend the hedge planting around boundary
- Native hedge/shrub planting along the north boundary around the proposed car park
- Green roofs above the bin/ cycle stores
- Seed at least a 1 metre wide area around the boundary of the communal garden space with Emorgate E1 - Flowering Lawn Mixture, to improve plant diversity and allow this grassland to grow long.
- Single storey accommodation block proposed to sit behind existing mature hedge.
- Existing views into the site from the high street unaffected by the proposals.
- Mature trees retained to screen the development from long distance views from the East.
- Parking for the tourist accommodation brought internally to the site within the tree belt to protect the 'rural edge' of the site. Gravel finish with gravel board edging
- Accommodation block to follow the existing building line along Huckers Lane
- Views along Huckers Lane unaffected by the proposals
- Low level native trees in metal planters to frontage

