

Bush House  
High Street  
Selborne  
ALTON  
GU34 3JP

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Appeal Reference APP/Y9507/W/21/3289423**  
**The Queens Hotel, High Street, Selborne GU34 3JH**

I write on behalf of the committee of Selborne Stores Ltd (Financial Conduct Authority no 8332, registered February 2020). The Society was set up to establish and run a not-for-profit community shop within the village. It would carry a wide range of products and services to fulfil the needs of our residents and visitors. We currently have 62 share holding members.

There is considerable confusion about the possible provision of a community or village shop within The Queens and it might be helpful to you if I clarified some issues.

A community shop is not within the title of the application. There is no designated area shown on the plans for a shop.

There was no mention of any shop in The Queens in the application forms or the Design and Access statement in Sept/Oct 2020. It first appeared in the Gilbert White House Comments 10/2/21, and it then became included in later documents. The report for the planning committee meeting on 9/9/21 stated that there would be a "community-shop" open for much of the day, albeit with some confusion as to what it might sell.

The Statement of Case 18/1/22 states that there will be a "community-shop" (seemingly to be run by the Gilbert White Museum), and that it would be open 0800-1400 Monday to Saturday and Sunday 0900-1200. This is not possible, now or even if the Appeal is successful. The GWM is not a "community organisation". Running a village shop is not one of the charitable aims of the GWM; therefore, it could only operate a shop in The Queens as a commercial enterprise but there has been no application for retail use class E. The Statement of Case (18/1/22) makes it clear that "the planning application does not seek consent for a discrete Class E retail use".

The village shop area in White's, started in covid, has largely reverted to café use. The GWM trustees have told my committee that they wish us success with our bid to run a community shop, and that they want to use all the space in White's for their café, as the village shop enterprise is not profitable for them.

Members of Selborne Stores Committee were recently shown around The Queens by the developer as it appeared there may be some space for us to establish a community shop within the site after all. Below is some recent correspondence.

**From: Andy Martin** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Thu, 28 Mar 2024 at 09:07  
**Subject:** Shop at the Queens  
**To:** [REDACTED] >

Dear Guy,

We were surprised to see the post from Lucy Macklin on the Selborne village facebook page that there is a "completed shop ready to open at the Queens" and that it just needs dialogue to move it forwards. We are confused as you have not raised this directly with us at all.

We had understood that the museum already has a long lease from you for the whole of the ground floor and therefore we have been in communication with the chair of the trustees. He has told us that there is no space available for us in The Queens.

It would be very helpful if you could clarify the position for us.

Many thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Andy

Chair: Selborne Stores Ltd

**From: Guy Macklin** [REDACTED] >  
**Date:** Tue, 9 Apr 2024 at 09:32  
**Subject:** Selborne Shop availability  
**To:** Andy Martin <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** Robert Ainslie <[REDACTED]>

Dear Andy

Further to your recent emails with regards to availability at the Queens development, we would be delighted to engage with you to hopefully create a mutually beneficial working relationship.

There are several options for delivering your proposed village store at the Queens and please do call when convenient to progress. I understand there is a meeting today in regard to this and you were requesting our position prior to the meeting.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Guy Macklin

**From: Andy Martin** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Mon, 6 May 2024 at 08:03  
**Subject:** Re: Selborne Shop availability  
**To:** Guy Macklin <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** Robert Ainslie <[REDACTED]>

Dear Guy,

Thank you very much for your kind offer of space within The Queens for a community-run village shop and for showing members of the committee around the site on 17/4/24. It was heartening to hear of your support for our project. However, having carefully considered the options you suggested, the committee has concluded that none of these would be viable for a long-term community-run village shop. I thought it may be helpful if I explained some of the reasons.

### *1. The Barn.*

*You thought that your planning issues may take a further year to resolve and you suggested that we could have a "pop-up shop" in the barn for the interim. The building is in a poor state of repair. You estimated it would cost about £100,000 to put it back into use, which we would need to pay for, in addition to the cost of shop fittings. You explained that if you succeed in your planning aims, you will require the barn back for your own development. If your planning bid is not successful, you said that you may be open to further discussion.*

*I hope you will understand that we cannot commit shareholder or company funds to such a risky, and possibly extremely short-term, undertaking.*

*You said that there would not be any storage area, refuse area or access from the rear. It is not known whether the Gilbert White Museum (GWM) would allow any access to the barn across the small front car park which you lease to them, or if there would be any specified parking for the shop or any staff access to a WC.*

### *2. The Back Room.*

*This room is not financially viable for a village shop, as it is far too small. The room was part of the old public bar but is now very small, due to the redesign of the internal layout, new kitchen area and access for the apartments. You thought the remaining back room to be about 20-25sq m; an L shape, including an internal door, external door and window. Both doors open inwards. The external door is only 72cm wide, with pillars on both sides. It is insufficient access for a shop. Both doors are marked as fire exits from the new kitchen on the Tap Room alcohol licence, diminishing the usable space still further and making the room insecure. There would be no storage or refuse space. It is not known if there would be any shop parking or staff WC access.*

*You said that both the back room (currently used for GWM storage) and front car park are leased to the GWM but did not wish to tell us the length of the lease as it is commercially sensitive. You said that sub-letting could be permitted with the landlords' agreement. The shop committee has been in correspondence with the trustees of the GWM over the past couple of years, but they have been resistant to all our approaches for a community-run shop on any site within their control.*

### *3. The Buttery.*

*You said that this room remains retained by you, and is not leased to the GWM. It is in a poor state of repair. You explained that if your planning is successful, you may wish to offer it to the GWM. If you are not successful, you may be open to further discussion.*

*You are not currently offering the Buttery to our committee.*

*May I thank you once again for your time,*

*Kind regards*

*Andy Martin*

*Chairman Selborne Stores Ltd*

*As a not-for profit, correctly constituted community benefit society, we need to raise funds for our project from local authorities and charitable/trust funds in addition to*

those from within the community. We cannot do this unless we can demonstrate that our business is sustainable and that we either have ownership of the property or likelihood of a secure long-term lease.

You will see that, for various reasons, there is no viable space for a community shop or for a village shop within The Queens site. I hope that this helps to clarify the situation for you.

Yours faithfully,

Andrew Martin  
Chairman, Selborne Stores Ltd