

Appeal by Derek Warwick Development Ltd.
Appeal Site: The Queens, Selborne, GU34 3JJ
Pins Reference: APPY9507/W/21/3289423

I, Geraldine Dawson, have prepared this statement for the planning enquiry into the appeal against the refusal of planning permission, for The Queens Hotel, SDNP/21/00069/REF.

I am making this statement in my capacity as a member of Selborne Stores Ltd.

Selborne Stores Ltd, a Community Benefit Society, was formed in February 2020. It was registered as a society for the benefit of the community with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA. Registration Number: RS008332). Selborne Stores Ltd is committed to trading for the benefit of the community and not for anyone's private benefit. To this end Selborne Stores Ltd is democratically owned and controlled by the local community. Membership is the means by which the society is owned by the community.

There is confusion about the provision of a shop/ community shop with The Queens and to that end I would like to clarify some of these issues. A shop- community or otherwise- is NOT within the title of the application-(SDNP/20/04118/FUL). There is no designated area shown on the plans for a shop . The Appellant's final comments, uploaded on 18/05/2022, state that the 'planning application does not seek consent for a discrete Class E retail use.'

Key to this is the distinction between a commercial village shop and a community shop. It would not be possible for Gilbert White Museum (GWM) to run a Community shop , as is NOT one of their charitable aims, and so they could only operate a shop, in The Queens, as a commercial enterprise, and, as stated above, there has been no application for retail use Class E.

From the start of this application (September 2020) until now Mr Macklin has never approached the members of Selborne Stores committee to discuss putting a community shop in The Queens. Following a facebook post, by Lucy Macklin in March of this year, which stated: 'a complete shop is ready to open at the Queens' and that it just needs dialogue to move things forward,' Andy Martin, Chairman of Selborne Stores committee, contacted Mr Macklin to arrange a site visit. For details of that visit, and reasons why the sites discussed were not suitable for a community shop, I refer you to the correspondence uploaded by Andy Martin to the SDNP appeal site on August 5th 2024 (for reference I have attached this letter to this statement). In summary this details why there is no suitable space available for a community shop at The Queens. I understand that a large portion of the ground floor, including the 'back room' offered by Mr Macklin, is currently leased to GWM.

It was explained to MR Macklin that the Selborne Stores committee had been in correspondence with trustees of the GWM over the past couple of years, but they had been resistant to all our approaches for a community-run shop on any site within their control.

In any event, at 20-25 sqm the 'back room' space suggested by Mr Macklin is too small to operate a financially viable community shop. As a community benefit society we are able to raise funds: from the community via a Share Offer, from Local Authorities and from charitable trusts. In order to be awarded funds we must demonstrate that we have a robust business plan and a long-term secure lease. We must demonstrate that our business will thrive and bring significant benefit to the community.

Selborne Stores committee have now been offered the lease of a piece of land in the centre of the village. We are in the process of agreeing a long-term lease with a peppercorn rent. Our aim is to raise funds to provide a purpose-built (min 75sqm) community shop on this site.