**Appeal by: Derek Warwick Developments Limited**

**Appeal Site: The Queens Hotel, High Street, Selborne GU34 3JJ**

**PINS reference: APP/Y9507/W/21/3289423**

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**PROOF OF EVIDENCE**

**CAROLINE RYE**

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**Introduction**

1. I have prepared this statement for the planning inquiry into the appeal against the refusal of planning permission for The Queens Hotel, SDNP/21/00069/REF.
2. My family has lived in the village of Selborne since the nineteenth century and my grandfather, Anthony Rye, was an expert on the local history of the village and wrote a biography of Gilbert White. Throughout my life I have been a frequent visitor to the village staying with my grandparents who lived in Huckers Lane and in 2000 I came to live permanently in the village in Huckers Cottage on Huckers Lane, approximately 200 metres northeast of The Queens. My children have been born and brought up in the village, educated at Selborne Primary School and I am an active member of the community; chair of our Local National Trust Committee, singing in the Church Octet and playing in our village function band. I have also coordinated the activities of Save The Queens, a community group which has campaigned to see The Queens retained for use as a pub with rooms as a vital resource for the village and the High Court action which quashed the previous appeal decision was made in my name.
3. In preparing this statement, I have read the Statement of Common Ground and the parties' Statements of Case.' I understand that the proposed development involves the creation of a Tap Room and Field Studies Centre in part of the ground floor of The Queens, the creation of 5 aparthotel suites; 3 in the main pub building and 2 in a separate building in the pub garden which will also include a new car park and the conversion and extension of the Barn to form a residential property.
4. I am giving this statement as factual evidence as a resident of Selbourne rather than as expert evidence. I am not a professional planner and rely on the expert evidence of Mr De Courcy in that regard. I believe that the facts stated within this statement are true.

**Evidence**

*Use of the Queens*

1. The Queens at the time it was purchased by Derek Warwick Developments in 2015 comprised of two bars, a restaurant, a pub garden and seven double en suite letting rooms. The pub, partly because it functioned as a hotel, was open all day from first thing in the morning until late into the evening serving three meals a day. When my husband and I hosted a large party at Huckers Cottage in 2007 we arranged for our guests, approximately 80+, to eat breakfast at The Queens Hotel. It was possible to pop into the pub at any time, if only for a coffee and because of it’s extensive facilities and accessibility it was used by visitors and locals alike. In particular I used to eat a meal with my disabled cousin at The Queens because, unlike The Selborne Arms which has step access, it was possible for wheelchair users and people with limited mobility to access The Queens.
2. As well as day-to-day uses such as socialising with a drink or meals out, in the pub or in the garden at the back, The Queens was also used as a venue by members of the community for significant events such as weddings, funeral wakes, naming ceremonies, birthday parties etc. This was possible because the pub has a large ‘Function’ room, the single-storey extension (which at other times was used as a restaurant space) and also has the advantage of in-house catering as well as a wide range of drink options. No charge was made for the use of the space where people just paid for their food and drink. Our function band played at one such occasion, a fortieth birthday and I have attended a number of wakes in the pub as well as a naming ceremony. The Queens was also a venue for other village events such as the Zig Zag Beer festival, the starting point for the Progressive Supper and other one-off events such as live music. I also understand that spaces in The Queens were used to host meetings of various village societies, although I never attended a meeting there myself.
3. Another unique feature of The Queens was, because of the larger spaces of this pub in comparison with those of the Selborne Arms, the main bar, to the rear of the building, could accommodate a pool table as well as a darts board. The two bars complimented each other, quite often the rear bar served mostly locals whereas the smaller lounge bar, at the front of the building (in the space now occupied by The Jubilee Tap Room) was used by visitors, or the hotel guests, or those who were eating a meal, or meeting for a mid-morning coffee. The penultimate landlords, Erick Chobert and Nick Mortlake, operated an excellent restaurant at The Queens with a piano for live accompaniment for diners.
4. The serviced letting rooms provided by the pub are a vital component in what is a tourist destination village. (Erick Chobert has previously provided evidence of how well these rooms were used and) there are also details of room occupancy given in sales particulars produced by Davis Coffer Lyons (“DCL”) when the lease was advertised about a year or so prior to the pub being sold by Punch Taverns (*CD27 & CD29*). These particulars state “rooms are at 100% occupancy until September on Friday and Saturday highlighting weekend break appeal”. We also used the letting rooms at The Queens in order to accommodate guests and I’m aware of others in the village who did the same, particularly around major holiday times when there was not enough room in one’s own home to host people.
5. The Queens provided multiple offerings of use to the community as well as visitors to the village principally because of its scale which reflects its origin as an Inn, located in the centre of the village. The Queens has developed in this way, with distinct large spaces, first as a coaching Inn and latter because Selborne became a tourist destination because of the growing interest in Gilbert White from the 19th century onwards. The other pub in the village is smaller and functions more as a straightforward pub with no accommodation or dedicated spaces for food or social functions.

*Ownership of DWD*

1. It is important to note that, contrary to previous statements made by the owners, the pub was not redundant when it was bought in 2015. Neither has any evidence been produced of “deteriorating trading conditions”, subsequent would-be investors who have requested to see books were told by the current agent, Savills, that none were available, however, I note from the earlier DCL particulars that ‘financial details [were] available on request”. The pub was fully operational at the time it was purchased and Robert Frost, the then tenant had tried to buy the pub, to run it as a pub operation, in partnership with Sir Adrian Montague but was, it appears, outbid by the appellant, who is a developer. The price paid for the pub, £800,000 included at that time ‘hope’ value something noted in a ‘viability’ report commissioned by the appellant for the earlier 2018 planning application.
2. After the property was purchased and while it was still in operation it was closed by the developer. The interior of the pub was completely stripped out; fixtures and fittings including the two bars and kitchen equipment, en suite bedrooms, a staircase was removed and some internal partitions. In this context it’s probably important to note that the interior of The Queens was not neglected or in need of refurbishment, it was in very good condition, it had been comprehensively refurbished in 2011; new décor in both bars, new décor and furniture in the restaurant including the addition of a piano, all the letting rooms were improved, all were made en suite, with new décor and furniture, at a cost of £300,000, see Appendix 1.
3. There then followed a period of time, between 2016 – 2022, when the pub was left empty while a series of residential planning applications were made, and refused, as detailed in the SoCG. In 2017 scaffolding was erected around the building and remained in place for about a year, although no exterior work appeared to take place. The exterior of the pub started to deteriorate with rubbish piled up outside, weeds, stained and flaking external paint, no maintenance seemed to be carried out. After the last planning refusal was upheld at appeal in 2019, the ground floor windows of the pub were boarded up, although the building has never suffered from any vandalism. All this created an appearance of neglect and redundancy. In 2021, in support of Selborne Parish Council STQ wrote to SDNPA requesting that they consider serving a Section 215 Notice for the harm that the appearance of The Queens was causing the amenity of the conservation area, in the centre of a tourist destination village in the Park.
4. During this time, we were aware that multiple offers were also made to DWD by individuals and groups of people who were interested in purchasing the property in order to operate it as a pub with rooms. Investors were told by the agent Savills that the price for the now stripped out building was “north of a million” or in one case that DWD would consider selling the site but without the car park. It was these practices, produced in evidence against the 2018 planning application, which caused Inspector S Edwards to find “the marketing process was therefore ‘somewhat flawed’ and, having regard to the requirements of LP Policies SD43 and SD23, cannot be considered as robust.”

*The Appeal Proposals*

1. The loss of The Queens and all the facilities it provided has meant that the community has been deprived of an important social centre within the village where we can gather to socialise on a day-to-day basis, eat a meal in a first-class restaurant and celebrate significant events. Our local businesses have also suffered because The Queens was a destination in its own right, attracting people into the area, sometimes staying for a few days, attending and spending money at the other attractions and businesses in the village. The lack of this resource has had a generally depressing effect on the social and economic life of the village.
2. The Jubilee Tap Room (the Tap Room in the proposal, now operational) occupies a small part of the ground floor of The Queens, in the space formally comprising the pub’s smaller Lounge Bar. It is open for 3.5 hours 3 evenings a week operated by volunteers selling beer made by volunteers from the Gilbert White Brewery as an extension of the Brewery operation. Because of its small scale, restricted offering and limited opening times it appears to principally serve those associated with the Museum Brewery. Although in the application it is suggested that food might be served there, brought across the road from the Museum’s kitchen, I understand that there is no food available at the Tap Room. There is a small kitchen adjacent to the Tap Room, but this does not appear to be used. The Jubilee Tap provides an alternative venue in the village for people to drink occasionally on a limited basis, however, it bears no comparison with what was on offer from The Queens Hotel when this bar, and another larger public bar, a restaurant and a pub garden were all available as drinking and eating spaces, with a much wider selection of beverages, as well as all main meals of the day, served seven days of the week, all year round.
3. The Aparthotel suites – it is very hard to understand why the pub’s serviced en suite letting rooms need to be replaced with large, self-catering apartments particularly because this decision also appears to require the building of a new detached building in the garden of the pub? Because previous planning applications have been for residential flats within The Queens building people see these apartments of a way of creating these flats. Self-catering is a strange choice in a village which currently does not have a shop to supply provisions and there is plenty of evidence that short term serviced accommodation is what is most needed, I have previously referred to the DCL Sales Particulars and Erick Chobert’s testimony of room use, there is also the demand created by wedding guests (the village is a popular wedding location) and walkers making use of the plentiful footpaths and longer distance routes which pass through the village. It is also well known in the village that since their construction the aparthotel suites have often been rented out for long periods of time. Details found on the Air BnB website state that stays of longer than 28 are possible and the minimum letting period is 4 days, which is no use for weekend visitors where the highest demand seems to lie, please see Appendix 2.
4. Previously, the letting rooms in The Queens could be rented for one night only if required and were therefore more flexible and better at catering for a short term mainly weekend market where people, especially walkers, might want serviced accommodation. At the SDNPA Planning Committee meeting (9th September 2021) it was explained and minuted that the Museum would have priority booking for these apartments primarily in order to support its wedding business, and in their supporting Business Plan the Museum expressed the hope of operating a services agreement to manage the apartments. However, this does not seem to have transpired where the apartments are directly run by the developer’s wife. There were two weddings in Selborne on the weekend of 7/8th September, one of which took place at the Gilbert White Field Studies Centre, a friend, Ginny Pawsey, who runs a vintage clothes shop on the High Street, related to me on the following Saturday, 14th, that two guests had complained to her that they had to stay in Alton because they had been unable to find any accommodation in the village.
5. Proposed Field Studies Centre (“FSC”) – this would be a facility for use by the Museum, who already own and operate a large purpose-rebuilt FSC sited within in the grounds of the Museum, a 16th century barn, donated by Sir Thomas and Lady Stockdale and rebuilt with public money so that the Museum could pursue its charitable purpose; of the education of the public in matters of natural history. The community benefit of another FSC is even less discernible than that of the Tap Room. The FSC would be available for hire by the community, when it was not required for use by the Museum we have been told. While education facilities are included on the list of community facilities in the SDNLP, in this instance, the educational opportunities are not being offered primarily to the community but to paying clients of the Museum, examples are given of the Natural History Museum and Winchester University. The proposed FSC then becomes a hireable resource, of which we already have a number in the Village, not least the other, original FSC, but also the Village Hall and Pavilion. Furthermore, the delivery of this new FSC would now seem to be in jeopardy as it is publicly acknowledged that the Museum is in financial difficulties, having recently let go its co-directors due to lack of funds and is currently running a fundraising campaign to raise £1,000,000 in order to cover its costs.

*Recent Work to the Queens*

1. Since the refusal of planning permission for this proposal construction and demolition work has taken place at The Queens. These are the changes that I am aware of that have taken place, internally and externally. I have some knowledge of these in part because The Queens is situated on the junction between Huckers Lane, where I live, and the High Street and main road, therefore I regularly walk, or drive passed the pub.
2. Shortly after the now quashed appeal was lodged in early 2022, the single storey toilet block attached to the north side of the main Queens building was demolished. I wrote to the SDNPA Historic Buildings Officer in March because I was concerned about demolition taking place in a Conservation Area. In this correspondence I also noted that a hedge at the rear of the site had been cut down and there seemed to be work taking place within the building, including to upper floors.
3. In May 2022 a number of mature trees at the rear of the site were cut down (this action and its consequence for the landscape and the screening of the site at appeal were the subject of our successful High Court challenge).
4. Between March and December 2022, a considerable amount of work appeared to take place at the pub principally carried out by two workmen who lived in a caravan on site. This work seems to have included the internal re-modelling of the ground floor to accommodate a Tap Room in the former lounge bar space, the partitioning of the main entrance lobby/public bar space to include a kitchen, and partitioning at the rear of the ground floor to create an entrance lobby for the upstairs apartments as well as a boot room/laundry room. The first and second floors were remodelled and repartitioned to create three ‘apart hotel’ suites including bathrooms and kitchens for each apartment. In addition, new double-glazed rear ground floor doors and upstairs windows were installed. Other work which took place in the garden and around the rear of the site includes the removal of a large hedge in proximity to Plum Tree House, the removal of the corner of the pub garden to create a wider splay with Huckers Lane and the installation of sawn post and rail fencing around the garden. A black timber fence has been erected across the front courtyard parking area in front of the barn and between the barn and the main pub building.
5. This year, 2024, shortly before the decision of the High Court was made public in February, the kitchen and food storage areas attached to the rear of the Function room were demolished, leaving the brick wall that fronts onto Huckers Lane still standing but exposing the rear of the Function building and further damaging the roof, which was already in a poor state of repair. In March, two years since trees and hedges had been removed from the rear of the site, a new beech hedge was planted along with four new saplings along the rear of the pub garden. I have a document that shows the areas of demolition against ‘existing’ plans as well as a comparison between the appealed ‘proposed’ plans and plans produced for other purposes (licensing application, Air BnB website) which are more likely to represent the actual configuration of the pub building at this current time (Appendix 3).
6. I understand that part of the ground floor and the car park at the front of The Queens is currently leased by the Gilbert White Museum. The Tap Room, which occupies the front room of the pub is operated by volunteers from the Museum’ s Gilbert White Brewery. A room in the rear of the main pub building is currently sealed off and used as a storage space. Between this room and the Tap Room is a new kitchen, I do not believe the kitchen is used and I do not know if it is currently part of the Museum’s lease. The single storey extension, Buttery or Function Room, is not currently part of the Museum’s lease as, I understand, this is subject to planning permission for the scheme being granted.
7. Although, in the application it is suggested that the whole of the ground floor would be leased to the Museum it appears that part of the ground floor is part of the Aparthotel operation as it provides the main entrance to the apartments, as well as an ancillary space and another entrance, described as a boot room, as shown on the Licensing application plan which differs from the plans submitted at appeal.
8. Evidence from the AirB’n’B website states that the apartments available for rent (and they are described as apartments not aparthotels) are hosted by Guy and Lucy Macklin. The people and organisations who own and operate the apartments are different from the people and organisations who organise and operate the Tap Room.

*Remaining Community Facilities in Selborne*

1. In Selborne we are fortunate to have a number of facilities that are used by and are of benefit to the community. Specifically, in relation to pub provision, there is another pub in Selborne, the Selborne Arms, approximately 85 metres southeast of The Queens on the High Street. The Selborne Arms is smaller than The Queens which reflects its origins as a farmhouse later converted to an ale house, historically, only licenced to sell beer (rather than the purpose-built Inn that is The Queens). The Arms has a small ‘saloon’ bar and a larger public bar which is also used to serve food, a pub garden and smoking shelter. It has the feel of a traditional, cosy country pub, with exposed timbers and open fire in the main bar. However, because of its size it is not really practical as a space for large-scale community gatherings, although it can and does host occasional live music events, particularly during the Zig Zag Beer Festival. Having participated both as a player and audience member I can confirm these events, whilst enjoyable, are a bit of a squeeze.
2. Since the closure of The Queens we have held our National Trust Local Committee Meetings at The Selborne Arms, this space is adequate for our committee of 6 people but larger group meetings would be constrained by the small size of the saloon bar (where meetings are held). The Arms has in the past screened sporting events, again in the saloon bar, so space is limited. It is not used for events like weddings, etc again because of its scale and without a separate larger area, like The Queens Function room, such events, or any larger gathering, would disturb the everyday business of the pub. Like The Queens, The Arms provides food and drink for a mixture of both locals and visitors and appears to be busy particularly at lunchtimes and over the weekends however it is not open all day and sometimes closes early on weekdays. The pub is positioned close to the start of the Zig Zag path, a popular walk up onto Selborne Hanger and in front of the public car park. However, while The Queens has dedicated private parking, motorised visitors to the Selborne Arms rely on space being available in the public car park behind the pub, which can get very busy especially with visitors at the weekends (the museum has a charging car park, free to Museum visitors, through and behind the village public car park).
3. Following the 2019 appeal hearing Inspector S Edwards visited both the pub sites, as well as other community spaces, she noted: “*When the Queens was still operating, both establishments catered for different needs and therefore complemented each*”. Indeed, when The Queens was first put up for sale the publicans of the Arms, quoted in the local newspaper, noted “we hope that a buyer is found, the Hotel has been going for many years and we need both it and the pub in the village as we serve two very different purposes”, please see Appendix 4.
4. Critically the Selborne Arms does not provide any accommodation for visitors and in this respect you can see that there are synergies between The Queens and The Arms in terms of the different facilities they provide where both can attract visitor business into the village and, with overnight stays available, encourage spending in both venues, as well as of course at the Gilbert White Museum.
5. The other facilities that are specifically for community use are the Recreational Ground with its Pavilion and the Village Hall, The Pavilion has parking and can be hired for events like children’s parties and there is an adjacent playground. The Village Hall is another hireable space, but unlike the Pavilion it is without the benefit of car parking space. This facility is used on a weekly basis for various village clubs; Kung Fu, Art Club, Ping Pong and Pilates and hosts meetings for the WI, the Selborne Association and one-off events like talks. Both the Pavilion and the Hall have a kitchen but unlike The Queens they do not have the benefit of on-site, in-house catering, so if your event requires drink and/or food this has to be separately organised. And of course there is also a fee to hire these spaces, whereas use of The Queens for social gatherings was free.
6. There is also another space available for hire by the community which is that of the existing Field Studies Centre in the grounds of the Museum. This is a magnificent building and setting, used principally by school children learning about natural history and the local area, but it can be hired for other events although it is very expensive, up to £500 for an evening, and once again there is no in house catering available.
7. There is a Primary School in the Village which hosts occasional community events like a May Fair and a music festival, Fosstival, although I believe there are not spaces in the school that are available for use/hire by the community.
8. St Mary’s Church is another community building in the village, the Church occupies a very picturesque location at the top of Church Meadow and the Church itself is “one of the loveliest to be found in anywhere in the south of England” W. S Scott, *A Selborne Handbook*. The Church is used for services, occasional concerts by visiting musicians and is the location for an annual community carol singing. The Church is also often part of a visitor’s tour around the village because of its associations with Gilbert White (who was the Curate) and because it is quite well known and attractive it is a popular location for weddings.
9. I should probably note that, as well as these community facilities, we have a number of commercial offerings in the Village, as well as the Gilbert White Museum. The Museum commemorates the pioneering eighteenth century naturalist Gilbert White, as well as the Oates family; Lawerence Oates, the Antarctic explorer and his Uncle, Frank Oates, a naturalist who explored America and Africa. As well as the aforementioned FSC, the Museum, located diametrically opposite The Queens Hotel in the centre of the village, comprises a house with exhibition spaces, a large garden, parkland and a café (open 10.30 – 3.30 pm, closed on Mondays). We also have a coffee shop and a recently opened vintage clothes shop, both with limited opening hours, a retro furniture shop, and the well-known Selborne Pottery.
10. Because The Queens was open all day, every day, it functioned as a focal point in the village drawing people in and providing services to those who lived and visited. Because we have no proper serviced, flexible accommodation, or indeed any hospitality businesses that are open all day anymore, the village misses out on potential spending from visitors and opportunities for locals to socialise. In particular this loss must affect other businesses in the village, most especially the Museum, both as a potential wedding venue and a visitor attraction. The economic basis of the village has been tourism for many years, especially since the establishment of the Gilbert White Museum in 1955, as noted by Edward Yates in his book about Selborne (*Knights, Priests and Peasants, A History of Selborne*, 2009). Because of Gilbert White’s book, *The Natural History of Selborne*, the village is well known, nationally and internationally and rather like Ronald Blythe’s *Akenfield* is, to some extent, synonymous with the quintessential English village. This means that increasingly, since the nineteenth century onwards Selborne has become a tourist destination and indeed is promoted as such by SDNPA, East Hampshire District Council and Hampshire County Council, including via their ‘Visit Hampshire’ website

*The Impact of the Loss of the Queens*

1. Without The Queens there is both a direct and indirect impact on the community, there are less employment opportunities through the loss of the pub and fewer reasons for people to come and visit and spend money here. On 16th September I meet two visitors on Gracious Street who said that after a walk up the Hanger they had tried to find somewhere to have a cup of tea in the village, the coffee shop had closed at 3.00 pm, the Museum café wasn’t open and The Selborne Arms was shut. We have lost our principal hospitality venue in the village which jeopardises the idea of Selborne as a viable tourist destination in the South Downs National Park. It also reduces the life of the community as we now no longer have our traditional and well-equipped large-scale pub to meet, socialise and celebrate in.
2. As I have detailed above, the Aparthotel suites do not constitute the sort of accommodation which is of significant benefit to the village or visitors to the National Park, neither do they provide local employment opportunities, as these rooms and the pub did previously. They are operated by Mr Macklin’s wife, who is not a resident of the village, with a self-check-in facility and no reception. Who services these apartments is not known but the person who occupies the second floor of The Queens was described as a “temporary manager”. The Tap Room is managed by another volunteer individual. It is perhaps important to note in this context that there was a five roomed flat which occupied half of the second floor of The Queens which provided accommodation for the pub manager. To accommodate the ‘aparthotel suite’ on the 2nd floor, this facility, which is of course essential to the running of a 24-hour pub/hotel business, has also been lost, as has the ‘family suite’, with two double letting rooms and a shared ensuite, which occupied the other half of the upper floor.
3. What the community might gain from a new, second, Field Studies Centre is hard to understand. The function of this space is a confused picture where, in the first iteration of this application, all education activities were to be re-located to this new space, leaving the sixteenth century Barn available solely for weddings. When the problems with this idea were made clear (no outdoor space, no coach drop-off, children’s education facility adjoining a licensed premises being but three of the objections) descriptions of the purpose of the new FSC were altered by the Museum to state that it would be a space for adult education for use by external third party institutions, whilst the appellant maintains in their ‘Final Comments’ document that it will be a space for older children. It is unclear who is going to be educated in this space, but the Museum and the appellant agree that any purported community benefits would arise from this space being made available for community hire.
4. We already have three hireable spaces within the Village, one of which is the existing FSC, no case has been made for the need of a fourth space which might, in part, jeopardise the future of our two dedicated community spaces, the Village Hall and Pavilion, by creating, possibly, unwelcome competition. It may be that Insp. C Shearing was unaware, when she stated in her quashed appeal decision that the FSC “*has potential to serve a wider and more diverse section of the local community*”, that we already have a FSC in the village which already runs classes for both school children and occasionally workshops for adults? Therefore, if there is a need for this type of facility the needs of a ‘more diverse section of the local community’ may already be being met? The appellant had not made this case, stating that the community benefit of the new FSC would be as a hireable space only (although, simultaneously, relying on it, in policy terms, as an ‘educational facility’ to meet the SDLP community facilities criteria).
5. As I understand it, this proposed scheme is required to meet policy SD43(2) of the SDNPA LP, which requires that any alternative community facilities are accessible, inclusive, available and of an equivalent or better quality to those lost. They must not also cause unreasonable reduction or shortfall in local service provision. I hope that my evidence, thus far, has made clear that what is on offer to the community in this proposal can in no way be considered equivalent, and certainly not better, than what we stand to lose, neither are they accessible, inclusive or available. We are provided with a Tap Room which occupies a fraction of the space of the pub, with limited opening hours and a limited drink offering only. And an FSC, to supplement the one we already have in the Village, where the educational benefits to the community are obscure and which is, as an alternative hireable space, unnecessary. Furthermore, the delivery of this scheme would cause a reduction and shortfall in very necessary facilities and all the benefits that these bring to the community, that we have enjoyed for many years previously.
6. In addition, I would briefly like to expand further on the nature of the visitors to the village and the consequences this has for the type of provision that these people might need and expect. I have previously drawn attention to evidence pointing to the demand for short-term, weekend break accommodation in Selborne, and others have also observed the same. We have a number of attractions in and around the village, principally, the Museum but also the extensive National Trust land which surrounds us, providing open access to the countryside, footpaths and bridleways. It is noticeable from observation, and I live in view of Church Meadow, part of National Trust land in the village, that the village is busier with visitors at the weekends and bank holidays. People come to visit the Museum and walk here and there is also Jane Austen’s House in a neighbouring village which is also open to the public. There are therefore lots of reasons to visit for a short break although it might be harder to sustain interest, without going further afield, for a break longer than a few days. We are also only a short journey from London, 1.20 hr. by train to Alton and we personally, not infrequently, host friends from London escaping for a weekend I’d also suggest that serviced accommodation is what people want from a weekend break, rather than the necessity of catering for yourself, particularly if one is on foot, because whilst it is possible to eat a meal at the Arms or the Museum, no breakfast is available, nor teas after 3.30 pm and there is nowhere, at present, in the village to purchase food or drink outside of the other pub’s and Museum’s opening hours. With serviced accommodation the other hospitality businesses would also benefit over a weekend, a meal in each of the two pubs available in the village, lunch in the Museum, for example.
7. Weddings are another area where we traditionally receive guests into the village and this is a business which is also of direct benefit to the finances of the Museum, through the use of its FSC as a wedding venue. Once again, short term serviced accommodation is perfect for this type of visitor who does not want to have to drive to their accommodation in another location (or pay for a taxi) at the end of such a celebration.
8. The visitor accommodation provided by the proposed development is not well-suited to these kinds of visitors and requires unnecessary additional development in the garden of the pub thus also spoiling some of the qualities of landscape and historic character that attract people to Selborne in the first place.

**Conclusion**

1. This development deprives the community of the facilities we have previously enjoyed for socialising, meeting and celebrating, without replacing this loss with adequate alternatives. It also removes suitable and appropriately scaled visitor accommodation and requires harmful and unnecessary development in the centre of our attractive, historic village.