

## **Andy Martin Statement re: The Queens**

1. I, Andrew Martin, have prepared this statement for the planning inquiry into the appeal against the refusal of planning permission xxx. In preparing this statement, I have read the SoCG and the parties' Statements of Case.
2. I have experience in visitor trade in Selborne having supported my parents on an ad-hoc basis, in running a tea room in the centre of Selborne (next door to the Selborne Arms) from 1982 to 2000 and then running the tea room with my wife from August 2000 to December 2000.
3. I am currently a coach operator (from March 2016) offering day trips and holidays (as well as other services). I believe that I am qualified to comment on the requirements of visitors when selecting a place to visit and/or stay.
4. Prior to 2016 visitors to Selborne had a hotel providing 7 letting rooms coupled with a breakfast service, lunch and evening meal. Meals could be taken in the bars, the restaurant or in the garden. The facility of the garden as part of the pub has now been lost. The bedrooms could be booked for a single night or longer. This was ideal for visitors wanting to stay overnight to explore the area with its great walks, scenery, and village appeal. These visitors would spend money in the Queens or Selborne Arms as well as Gilbert Whites House and local shops (pottery, village stores, and other shops in the village e.g. at Bush House shop.)
5. Since the conversion of the Queens to apart hotel style rooms the occupants have tended to be on longer term lets. I understand that a minimum of 4 nights is required. This minimum stay duration is not conducive to weekend visitors who are looking for 1 or 2 night stays to fit in with the conventional working week. Further, anyone staying for the minimum 4 nights has to bring their own food for breakfast. There is no longer a functioning shop in Selborne so food has to be bought outside of the village. There is the possibility of having lunch at Gilberts Whites House or the Selborne Arms, the latter also providing evening meals. However, the current offering from the Queens is not equivalent or better than what was previously available at the Queens Hotel.
6. As a prominent building and pub/hotel In the Village the Queens was a popular destination. Whilst the Tap Room offers Gilbert White Brewery beers as well as wines and

spirits it is a much smaller overall bar area than previously provided and only opens from 5:30pm to 9pm on 3 nights per week. There is no food provision. This is not the same as the Queens pre- 2016 which provided breakfast, lunch and dinner on 7 days per week, and employed several local people in the restaurant and bar as well as for cleaning. The majority of Tap Room staff are volunteers.

7. I have lived next door to the Selborne Arms for the last 24 years (and at ad-hoc times from 1982 when staying with my parents) and do not consider there are disturbances from this pub. There are more disturbances from parties in the Village Hall and from weddings in the Gilbert White Barn (wedding venue).
8. The Queens prior to 2016 also provided teas and coffees as well as afternoon snacks.
9. The loss of afternoon teas has removed a place for social gathering.
10. The provision of an additional Field Study Centre at the Queens (there is already a Field Study Centre at Gilbert Whites Barn, behind the Selborne Arms) does not create additional opportunity to socialise. It would merely provide competition to the existing spaces available to rent for meetings in the village and so cannot be deemed to be of equivalent value of a pub/hotel open 7 days per week.
11. There is also now very limited parking at The Queens with the rear car park no longer connected to the front car park (which now has private property signs on the fence discouraging visitors to the Tap Room).
12. As a result of the above, there has been a loss of visitor spend in both the Queens and other village businesses.
13. To work as a tourist destination Selborne needs to have a number of complementary businesses providing accommodation, restaurants, cafes and places of interest to visit to make the village of sufficient interest to visitors so that they do not go somewhere else. The loss of the Queens 'nightly' accommodation and reliable food service is a significant loss to the village as a tourist destination.
14. I note that paragraph 4.7 of the SoCG that:
  - a. There is also a statutory duty, in pursuing National Park purposes, to "seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of communities living with the National Park."
15. The request from the Appellant does not meet this.