

**Appeal by: Derek Warwick Developments Limited**

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

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

---

**SPEAKING NOTE**

**SIR ADRIAN MONTAGUE**

---

**Background**

1. My name is Adrian Alastair Montague and I now live at [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
2. I took a law degree at Cambridge University and then joined (and subsequently became a partner in) Linklaters & Paines (now Linklaters), a large firm of solicitors in the City of London, where I specialised in construction and project finance law. In the early 1990s I joined Kleinwort Benson, a merchant bank, as Head of Project Finance and, in 1997, I joined HM Treasury to set up a specialist unit charged with being the focal point across Government for private finance.
3. Since leaving the Treasury in 2001, as chairman or deputy chairman of the Boards of different companies, I have been fortunate to acquire a broad range of experience over a range of business sectors. I do not have any direct experience of investment in the hospitality sector but, while I was chairman of 3i plc I oversaw the initiation, structuring, financing and valuation of many, varied private equity investments.
4. From 2011 to 2015 I lived at [REDACTED] which is situated immediately behind the Queens' public house and shares access to Huckers Lane along a track that runs immediately behind the Queens' car park. I have followed the Appellant's various attempts to secure permission to develop the site of the Queens with a level of general interest, but not minutely as I am no longer directly affected by any proposed re-development.

**Queens' public house in Selborne**

5. In 2011, when I came to Selborne, the village was fortunate enough to boast two public houses, the Queens' and the Selborne Arms. Each offered a distinct proposition to its customers. The Selborne Arms is, to my mind, an archetypal village pub. It offered (and continues to offer) a good range of beers, wines and spirits with a limited food offering: its physical footprint is in practice quite limited as both the saloon bar and the dining room are rarely used, its garden is not particularly welcoming and the kitchen offers a quite limited menu and closes in the middle of the evening. That said,

it has a faithful clientele to whom it represents a socially important and convivial facility.

6. In contrast, the Queens' has the advantage of a more substantial building, more extensive floor space and, before it closed, better facilities. Its public bar would have been, I would guess, much the same size as that of the Selborne Arms, there was also a saloon bar and, most significantly, a sizeable room with dedicated dining facilities, offering perhaps 25-30 covers. There was a decent menu and wine list, with (in its hey-day) a live piano accompaniment. I can't be precise in my date but, around 2012 I would guess, the 6 or 7 bedrooms were refurbished which attracted a high rate of occupancy, and I think it is fair to say that the restaurant and guest rooms are likely to have been a more substantial source of revenue than the takings from the public bar. So, it is important to recognise that, while they were both public houses, the Queens' and the Selborne Arms represented distinctly different offerings, with the Queens' more in the nature of a restaurant with rooms, rather than just a village pub.
7. It is fair to acknowledge that the quality of the Queens' offering was rather variable. The pub changed hands around the time of my arrival in Selborne in 2011. The new tenants had run a successful bar/restaurant overseas before returning to the UK and their entrepreneurial experience was instrumental in making the Queens' into a considerable success in its early days. They invested in a significant renovation of the fabric of the building and later into development of accommodation and, for some time, they ran a delicatessen from the barns adjacent to the main pub building. Its success can be measured partly by the pressure on its parking facilities: the quite modest car park was often full at lunchtimes at the weekend and customers were often compelled to park on the track leading to Huckers Lane, to my irritation, as they tended to impede my access to [REDACTED]
8. However, the leading tenant developed pancreatic cancer in, I think, the autumn of 2013 and quite quickly died. From that point on the Queens' declined and eventually the lease was transferred to a new tenant who managed the pub until its eventual sale to the Appellant in 2015. Initially it operated full opening hours, not closing until late in the evening, and even in 2015 offered an extensive range of facilities. I well recall that, on my wedding day on 7 February 2015, our guests assembled in its saloon bar for drinks and refreshments before the ceremony in the parish church.
9. Latterly, the Appellant has authorised the opening of a so-called Tap Room within the fabric of the Queens'. This is a valuable local initiative, but it cannot in any way be compared with the facilities offered by the Queens'. The Tap Room has limited opening hours; its footprint is very small, broadly replicating that of the Queens' old saloon bar; it offers bar snacks but not the restaurant facilities that the Queens' provided; and its clientele seems to be drawn almost exclusively from members of the village.
10. It is known, but not widely, that I supported the last tenant of the Queens' in his bid to buy the freehold of the pub before it was sold to the Appellant. I had planned to

buy the field adjacent to the pub and the barn situated in the pub's car park for a cash sum that would have provided the deposit to allow the tenant to raise the funds necessary to buy the pub itself. In the event, of course, Punch Taverns, the freeholder, elected to accept the Appellant's offer to buy both the pub and the adjacent field. Since that time, I am aware that several groups of Selborne residents have considered making offers to buy the pub, but none has come to fruition. I was not formally a part of any such group, but I supported one of them with advice and guidance.

11. I do believe, however, that with a fresh start it would be possible to turn the Queens into a valuable strategic asset for the village. The area around Selborne has very few restaurants of distinction; with substantial investment in staff and kitchens, it should be possible to make good use of the premises to create such a restaurant in the premises of the Queens'. Selborne also attracts many visitors who enjoy the wonderful walking and hiking available on the Hangers; there is nowhere for them to stay in the Village but, with proper investment, it should be possible through the Queens' to offer overnight accommodation to allow them to spend the night in the immediate area. This would fulfil the original vision of the Queens' as a restaurant with rooms, attract diners into the village from surrounding areas, position it in a different part of the market from the Selborne Arms and bring increased employment to the village and more footfall to its other businesses. These are not objectives which the Tap Room could reasonably aspire to achieve.
12. As I have tried to explain, the Selborne Arms and the Queens' used to provide quite distinct and different offerings. Rather than a restaurant with rooms, which I believe is the Queens' proper classification, the Selborne Arms is the classic village pub. It has many loyal and constant patrons in the village and its near surrounds who value the companionship and atmosphere it offers. It is also prominently positioned by the roadside so it must attract a good share of the passing trade, and some local businesses must patronise it for low-key business entertaining. And the Tap Room provides another very welcome facility in which the village can relax.
13. Neither the Selborne Arms nor the Tap Room, however, individually or together replicates what the Queens' was able to offer in its prime: it had a larger floor space, the building was more imposing, it offered a more extensive food and drink menu and, of course, its accommodation was a real draw. It is true, as I have said, that its quality declined in the period before its sale to the Appellant, but the strength of its commercial proposition could in my view be re-established by a well-funded owner or syndicate looking to establish a high-quality restaurant with rooms drawing visitors to Selborne and establishing a strong local reputation.
14. For these reasons I would submit that the proposal does not meet the criteria of the policy SD43(2), and I would urge the Inspector to dismiss the appeal.