

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P15/V2051/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	3.9.2015
<b>PARISH</b>	MILTON
<b>WARD MEMBER</b>	Michael Murray
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Steventon House Hotel
<b>SITE</b>	Steventon House Hotel, Milton Hill, Steventon, OX13 6AB
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Proposed two 1/2 storey hotel extension, extension to restaurant seating area (orangery) and extension to bar seating area (As clarified by Site Plan Drawing No: H8640-11 Revision D accompanying agent's email of 7 October 2015 and as subsequently amended by elevation Drawing Nos: H8640-17 Revision B and H8640-18 Revision B accompanying agent's email of 9 November 2015)
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	None
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	447703/190734
<b>OFFICER</b>	Peter Brampton

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## SUMMARY

This application is referred to committee as Milton Parish Council objects to the proposal.

The application is seeking full planning permission for three extensions to the existing hotel. A two ½ storey extension to provide additional bedrooms and two associated separate single storey extensions to the restaurant and bar of the hotel are proposed.

This report seeks to assess the planning application details against the national and local planning policy framework where relevant and all other material planning considerations.

The main issues to consider are:

- The principle of the proposed development in this location in relation to planning policy context
- The design of the extensions and their impact on the existing building and local character
- The impact on residential amenity
- The impact on highway safety

The principle of new hotel accommodation is supported by the provisions of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan, in particular Policy T1. Following the receipt of amended plans, the proposed extensions are considered to have an acceptable impact on the character of the building, area and landscape. There are no overriding concerns about residential amenity, highway safety, flood risk, trees, drainage or heritage assets. Subject to the recommended conditions, the application accords with local and national planning policy and should be approved.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application relates to a hotel located in grounds of around 0.75 hectares on the eastern side of the A4130. The site lies south of Milton and southeast of Steventon. The Core Business Centre lies immediately north and east. The main hotel is of brick

and slate construction and is three storeys in height. There have been a number of ad-hoc two, one ½ and single storey extensions to the building, although the main building remains the dominant feature when entering the site. There is car parking to the front, laid to gravel. The front of the site also benefits from a number of substantial mature trees that add character and interest to the street scene. The hotel gardens are located to the south and east of the main building.

1.2 The hotel currently has 23 bedrooms of which four are considered small single rooms and a further three are located in an existing annex.

1.3 A location plan is **attached** as Appendix 1.

## 2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The application is for the erection of three separate extensions to the building. The main addition is a two ½ storey extension to the north of the main hotel. This will replace the existing annex and create 30 new bedrooms at the hotel. The seven rooms discussed above will be lost to accommodate this extension and so the overall net gain in hotel rooms will be 23.

2.2 The extension has been amended following input from the council's Architects Panel and negotiations between officers and the applicant's architect. The main changes are the introduction of flush-fitting rooflights, the removal of horizontal blue brick string courses and the increase in height of ground and first floor windows. These are changes in response to the comments of the Architects Panel, which are copied in full at Para 3.6.

2.3 The second extension is an addition to the restaurant on the northern elevation of the main hotel. This will take the form of an orangery.

2.4 The final extension is to the bar on the southwestern corner of the main hotel building. It will include a covered seating area to allow views of the gardens to the south of the building. This element of the scheme has also been amended to accommodate officers' requests for the walls to be of stone construction, rather than the reconstituted stone originally proposed.

2.5 A car park extension is proposed in the western part of the site to accommodate the extended accommodation.

2.6 The application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, Arboricultural Survey and Report and a Foul Drainage Assessment, all of which can be viewed on our website.

2.7 Extracts from the application drawings are **attached** as Appendix 2.

## 3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 **Milton Parish Council** – Recommends refusal – *“The Parish Council are concerned about the extra noise and traffic that will be created by this extension. The neighbours have raised concerns about the current noise levels and are worried about the nuisance that will be caused by the extra accommodation.”*

3.2 **Neighbour Representations** – None received

3.3 **Oxfordshire County Council Highways** – No objections - *“Increased traffic from the proposal would not have any significant impact upon the operation of the existing vehicular access or the local highway network. Appropriate provision would be made*

*for increased parking demand.”*

- 3.4 **Oxfordshire County Council Archaeologist** – No objections. Previous excavation works in the area have shown evidence of a Bronze Age settlement. Conditions covering archaeological scheme of investigation and watching brief requested.

3.5 **Economic Development** – Supports the application.

- 3.6 **Architects Panel** – Defer for negotiations on original scheme - *“In principle, no objection to scale and location of proposed extensions in relation to existing building. The small extension to the south of the main building would be better if it were more modern in detail (more glass and stone). The main bedroom block is uncomfortable due to proportions of sash windows in what is very horizontal banded elevations. Also, top attic floor could be improved with dormer windows instead of velux’s. Maybe re-look at the whole volume/massing and it could be improved.*

- 3.7 **Landscape Architect** – No objections – requests condition requiring prior agreement to landscaping scheme to soften impact of development

3.8 **Forestry Officer** – No objections – subject to tree protection condition

3.9 **Countryside Officer** – No objections

- 3.10 **Drainage Engineer** – No objections – subject to condition covering prior agreement to SUDS strategy

3.11 **Environment Agency** – No objections

- 3.12 **Thames Water** – No objections – subject to condition covering prior agreement to foul drainage strategy

3.13 **Environmental Health** – No objections

#### 4.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 [P12/V2294/FUL](#) - Approved (15/01/2013)  
Proposed development comprises of a single storey separate staff accommodation ancillary building to be located within the grounds of the main Hotel.  
[P00/V1225](#) - Approved (14/09/2000)  
Extension to form link, toilet block and cold room.  
[P98/V1131](#) - Approved (01/10/1998)  
Erection of conservatory to form new dining room. (Revised Application)  
[P98/V0802](#) - Approved (30/07/1998)  
Erection of a greenhouse.  
[P97/V1300](#) - Approved (18/12/1997)  
Erection of a dining room.

#### 5.0 **POLICY & GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 **Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies;**  
The development plan for this area comprises the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011. The following local plan policies relevant to this application were “saved” by direction on 1 July 2009

GS2 - Development in the Countryside  
GS8 - Re-use of non vernacular buildings outside settlements  
DC1 - Design

DC3 - Design against crime  
DC4 - Public Art  
DC5 - Access  
DC6 - Landscaping  
DC7 - Waste Collection and Recycling  
DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses  
DC10 - The Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Development  
DC12 - Water Quality and Resources  
DC20 - External Lighting  
HE10 - Archaeology  
NE9 - The Lowland Vale  
T1 - New tourist related development  
TR3 - A34 related development

## 5.2 **Emerging Local Plan 2031 – Part One**

The draft Local Plan Part One is not currently adopted policy. Paragraph 216 of the NPPF allows for weight to be given to relevant policies in emerging plans, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, and only subject to the stage of preparation of the plan, the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency of the relevant emerging policies within the NPPF. At present it is officers' opinion that the emerging Local Plan policies carry limited weight for decision making. The relevant policies are as follows:

1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development  
3 – Settlement hierarchy  
6 – Meeting business and employment needs  
8 – Spatial Strategy for Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-area  
28 – New employment development on unallocated sites  
31 – Development to support the visitor economy  
33 – Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility  
34 – A34 strategy  
35 – Promoting public transport, cycling and walking  
36 – Electronic communications  
37 – Design and local distinctiveness  
38 – Design strategies for strategic and major development sites  
39 – The historic environment  
40 – Sustainable design and construction  
42 – Flood risk  
43 – Natural resources  
44 – Landscape  
45 – Green Infrastructure  
46 – Conservation and improvement of biodiversity  
47 – Delivery and contingency

## 5.3 **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

- Design Guide – March 2015
- Hotel Needs Assessment 2014
- Flood Maps and Flood Risk – July 2006

## 5.4 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – March 2012**

## 5.5 **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

## 5.6 **Other relevant legislation**

- Written statement by Secretary of State on sustainable drainage systems (18 Dec 2014)
- Written statement by the Secretary of State on car parking (25 March 2015)
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990
- Community & Infrastructure Levy Legislation
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- Localism Act

**5.7 Neighbourhood Plan**

Milton parish does not have a neighbourhood plan

**5.8 Environmental Impact**

The application site is under 5 hectares in size. Consequently, the proposal is beneath the thresholds set out in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 and this proposal is thus not EIA development and there is no requirement under the Regulations to provide a screening opinion

**5.9 Human Rights Act**

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report

**5.10 Equalities**

In determining this application, the Council has regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under section 148 of the Equality Act 2010.

**6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The relevant planning considerations in the determination of this application are:

1. The principle of development
2. The design, scale and bulk of the extensions and their impact on character
3. Residential amenity, including issues of noise
4. Landscape impact
5. The impact on trees, including trees removed and retained
6. Flood risk and surface and foul drainage
7. Traffic, parking and highway safety
8. Archaeology

**Principle**

6.2 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. The development plan currently comprises the saved policies of Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF provides that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

Other material planning considerations include national planning guidance within the NPPF and NPPG and the emerging Vale of White Horse Local Plan: Part 1-Strategic

6.3 Sites and Policies and its supporting evidence base.

6.4 Saved policy T1 supports proposals for new tourist related developments within the district provided: 1) they are in keeping with the scale and character of the area; and 2) they aim to support the inherent qualities and assets of the Vale. The policy also states that outside of the built up areas of the villages and towns, proposals will be permitted if the proposal involves the re-use, conversion or adaptation of the suitable existing buildings. This policy is fully consistent with the provisions of the NPPF and its core principle of proactively supporting sustainable economic development/ growth.

6.5 Core Policy 31 of the emerging 2031 plan also encourages new development to advance the visitor economy for leisure and business purposes. It supports proposals outside of main settlements and services centres provided that proposals are in keeping with the scale and character of the locality.

6.6 The south Oxfordshire and Vale Hotel Needs assessment 2014, produced as part of the evidence base for the emerging 2031 plan, is also relevant. The assessment shows that there is a significant demand for hotel space in the Science Vale area and in particular, a need for a significant increase in hotel supply through new hotel openings and the expansion of existing hotels with potential for up to 761 new hotel rooms in the Science Vale Market Area by 2031 under the Medium Growth scenario and just over 1,000 new hotel rooms under the High Growth projection. As the Science Vale area grows in line with ambitions, additional hotel accommodation is critical in order to support this business growth in the area.

6.7 At the committee meeting on 7 October 2015, it was resolved to grant a change of use application at Manor Court in Chilton to create a 53 bedroom hotel next to the A34 (Planning Ref: P15/V0770/FUL). Earlier in 2015, the council agreed a hotel development within the Milton Park Local Development Order area that will provide 145 homes (Planning Ref: P15/V0708/LDO). In 2012, a two-storey extension to the Premier Inn next to the Milton Interchange was permitted, providing a further 51 bedrooms (Planning Ref: P12/V0960). As such, the need and demand for additional hotel accommodation in the Science Vale area has already been demonstrated and this application is a further example of that. The hotel is well-established, has existing high occupancy rates and is excellently located to support the needs of the area. The addition of 23 rooms to this hotel will assist the forecast demand outlined in the Hotel Needs Assessment.

6.8 The council's Economic Development team support this application and officers are satisfied the principle of the development is supported by national and local planning policy and can be agreed.

**Design considerations**

6.9 Policy DC1 of the Local Plan seeks to permit development that is of a high quality and inclusive design that takes into account local distinctiveness and character. The application has been amended to take into account the assessment of officers and the Architects Panel and is now considered acceptable.

6.10 The two ½ storey bedroom extension is clearly the main part of this scheme and is undoubtedly a substantial addition to the building and site, although it will, in part, replace the existing annex on the northern side of the building. From observations on site, the hotel has been extended a number of times in recent years (See Section 4 for further details) and the resulting plan form is rather ad-hoc and illogical. This extension will stand almost entirely detached from the main hotel, save for a shared party wall in

its southwestern corner.

- 6.11 This extension will be constructed to match the existing three storey main part of the hotel in design and materials. The Architects Panel were concerned about the proportions of the windows relative to the horizontal banding on the extension. In response, the horizontal banding has been simplified and the windows increased in height. In this respect, the extension better reflects the main three storey hotel which has a more vertical emphasis.
- 6.12 The amendments have also reduced the scale of the dormer windows in the northern and southern elevations and introduced flush-fitting rooflights to simplify the roofline. These changes are welcomed. The applicant has resisted the suggestion of the Architects Panel to introduce dormer windows as the pitch of the roof would make these difficult to assimilate properly. Officers agree with this assessment and welcome the introduction of the flush fitting rooflights as an acceptable compromise.
- 6.13 It is noteworthy that the extension is offset and set back around 20 metres from the front building line of the main hotel. The shallow pitch of the roof means it is set down around 2.8 metres from the ridge of the main hotel block. As such, despite its size, officers are satisfied this extension will appear appropriately subservient to the main hotel. Officers are satisfied this extension represents high quality design that respects local character as required by Policy DC1.
- 6.14 The proposed extension to the restaurant will take the form of a single storey orangery. This is a heavily glazed addition and as such will appear as an appropriately light weight addition to the building. It will enjoy a prominent position within the site, being immediately adjacent to the principal elevation of the main hotel. However, with appropriate materials, officers are satisfied this will be an acceptable addition to the building.
- 6.15 The final extension is a modern flat-roofed addition to the bar on the southern elevation. This is a relatively substantial extension and the modern approach will create an interesting contrast with the existing hotel. At the request of officers, the amended plans propose the use of natural stone for the walls of the extension, which is an improvement of the initial proposal for reconstituted stone. A condition covering sample materials is recommended to ensure the quality of the development. The extension is subservient and will be set some way from the principal elevation of the hotel.
- 6.16 Overall, officers are satisfied these extensions represent high quality additions to the hotel that accord with local and national policy.

#### **Residential amenity and noise**

- 6.17 The hotel has two neighbours, The Lodge to the north and Rustlings to the south. Given the location of the extensions, the distances involved and the intervening planting, there are no concerns this proposal would materially affect the amenity of the occupants of these properties when considering loss of light, loss of outlook or overlooking.
- 6.18 Milton Parish Council has objected to this application, in part, because of concerns over noise emanating from the hotel. Officers acknowledge these extensions will increase the overall capacity of the hotel and so there is potential for increased noise disturbance from use of the restaurant and bar. However, officers consider the management of noise from the hotel is the responsibility of the owners and it is for them to mitigate any noise increases from the larger bar and restaurant.

- 6.19 To this end, the owner of the hotel has stated that they are not aware of any visits from the police or the council's environmental health officers since they bought the hotel in 2007. They have not received any individual letters of complaint and music is turned off at midnight during functions. This response is supported by the fact that the council has not received any representations from nearby properties in response to the application, nor does the council's environmental health officer offer any objections to the proposal. With the lack of any evidence to the contrary, officers are therefore satisfied this proposal will not have a significant impact on neighbouring amenity.

#### **Landscape Impact**

- 6.20 The application site falls within the Lowland Vale part of the Vale. Policy NE9 of the Local Plan seeks to protect the long open views that characterise this area. As discussed above this is a substantial addition to the built mass of the site. However, the site is well contained by the mature planting around the boundaries discussed in Section 1. As such, the majority of public views are restricted to the roadside footpath opposite the site. The trees around the remainder of the site block and soften views from elsewhere.
- 6.21 Nonetheless, the building will project much closer to site boundaries than before, particularly north and south, whilst the proposed car park extension projects up to the western side boundary. It is this that will have the greatest landscape impact from this proposal. The council's landscape architect recognises this and recommends a bespoke planting scheme is secured by condition. Officers are satisfied this is an appropriate response to the landscape impact of this proposal.

#### **Trees**

- 6.22 Policy DC6 requires new development proposals to protect and enhance local landscape features, including, where appropriate, the retention of existing features such as important trees. As discussed, there are a number of mature trees on this site and so the impact of these proposals upon them has been a key element of the assessment of this proposal.
- 6.23 The proposals will result in the direct loss of a small group of Cypress and evergreen trees. These form a small and unimportant group close to the site of the restaurant extension. Their wider amenity value is limited and there are no objections to their removal. Two further trees will be removed but these are in poor condition.
- 6.24 The council's forestry officer has identified that the two ½ storey bedroom block can be built without the loss of significant trees, particularly a Yew and Walnut within the site and a Horse Chestnut on neighbouring land. However, the retention of these trees is subject to the use of appropriate foundations within the root protection areas (RPAs) of them. On balance, the design of these foundations can be secured through a bespoke tree protection condition. This condition will also need to cover a pruning regime for these trees to prevent regular conflict between the canopies and the hotel rooms, some of which will suffer from reduced natural light due to their proximity.
- 6.25 The same tree protection condition will also cover those trees within and close to the car park extension. As outlined above, the retention and enhancement of the tree coverage in this part of the site is a crucial part of the overall recommendation to approve the scheme.

#### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 6.26 The site falls within Flood Zone One and so is at the lowest risk of flooding. Given the increase in built footprint and hardstanding within the site, a SUDS scheme will be necessary to ensure the site continues to drain adequately. This can be covered by



pre-commencement condition.

- 6.27 Thames Water have raised concerns about capacity in the local sewer network to accommodate the additional flows from this development. A Grampian style condition is recommended to require a scheme for foul drainage improvements to be agreed prior to commencement and for that scheme to be implemented prior to any discharge from this site into the public system.

#### **Highway Safety**

- 6.28 The main objection of Milton Parish Council relates to increased traffic on local roads from this development. Officers acknowledge that a large amount of development is planned for the Milton area and the impact of that on the local road network is a concern locally.
- 6.29 Nonetheless, in consultation, the County Council Highways Authority has confirmed their view that the overall increase in vehicular movements from this development will have only a minor impact on the traffic flows on local roads and have no objections on this point.
- 6.30 The Highways Authority also consider the proposed car park extension, which will provide 23 additional spaces for guests, is adequate for the proposed increase in accommodation proposed here. The new car parking arrangement can be secured by condition.
- 6.31 The proposed access to the hotel will remain unchanged and visibility is acceptable. No upgrade to the access is necessary to accommodate this development and so this proposal is acceptable in highway safety terms.

#### **Archaeology**

- 6.32 In consultation, the County Council Archaeologist has confirmed previous excavations in the area have found evidence of a settlement dating from the late Bronze Age. The settlement was revealed to be well preserved and located just northeast of the application site. Therefore, there is potential for related archaeological features within the application site. Consequently, the Archaeologist has requested a scheme of archaeological investigation be agreed prior to commencement. A subsequent Watching Brief will also be necessary during construction. These conditions are considered an appropriate response to the likelihood of there being archaeological artefacts within the site.

#### **7.0 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 This application has been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), relevant saved policies in the local plan and all other material planning considerations. The NPPF states that sustainable development should be permitted unless the adverse effects significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The NPPF also states that there are social, economic and environmental dimensions to sustainability and that conclusions must be reached taking into account the NPPF as a whole.
- 7.2 The proposed development would perform an economic role through the provision of new hotel accommodation to serve the wider business market in Science Vale and in providing employment opportunities. In addition, the additional accommodation would ensure the future vitality and viability of this community and help maintain existing infrastructure, creating investment in the local and wider economy.
- 7.3 The scheme would have a social and environmental role as it will support Science Vale

and will allow an existing successful business to grow on its current site. The development is considered to amount to sustainable development, compliant with local and national policy, and it is recommended for approval.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **Grant Planning Permission subject to:**

- 1 : Commencement Three Years**
- 2 : Approved plans**
- 3 : Slab Levels to be agreed**
- 4 : Sample materials to be agreed**
- 5 : Surface Water Drainage scheme to be agreed**
- 6 : Foul Water Drainage scheme to be agreed**
- 7 : Hard and Soft Landscaping Scheme to be agreed**
- 8 : Implementation of Landscaping Scheme to be agreed**
- 9 : Tree Protection Scheme to be agreed**
- 10 : Scheme of Archaeological Investigation to be agreed**
- 11 : Archaeological Watching Brief to be agreed**
- 12 : Car Parking as approved**

Author: Peter Brampton  
Contact No: 07717 271509  
Email: peter.brampton@southandvale.gov.uk