

# Planning Committee



Application Address	The Captains Club Hotel, Wick Lane, Christchurch, BH23 1HU
Proposal	An extension to the existing hotel to create additional hotel bedrooms and suites and ancillary plant rooms
Application Number	8/22/1069/FUL
Applicant	Mr Morgan
Agent	Miss Heath, Savills
Ward and Ward Member(s)	Christchurch Town Cllr Cox and Cllr Tarling
Report status	Public
Meeting date	15 June 2023
<b>Summary of Recommendation</b>	<b>Delegate to the Head of Planning to grant permission subject to a s106 and conditions</b>
Reason for Referral to Planning Committee	<p>Number of representations objecting to the proposal and a call in by Cllr Cox on the following grounds;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased size will have a significant effect on local neighbours</li> <li>• Effect on amenity spaces for neighbours will be detrimental</li> <li>• Significant worsening of traffic and parking for local residents</li> <li>• Contrary to policies HE2 and HE3</li> </ul>
Case Officer	Sophie Mawdsley

## Description of Proposal

1. This application seeks consent for a rear extension and a fourth storey extension to the existing hotel to create additional 29 hotel bedrooms and 7 suites which will increase the floor space by 1,845.1sqm. In addition, the extensions will re-house the existing and new plant space.
2. 24 of the proposed bedrooms would be within the rear extension and the remaining 5 bedrooms and 7 suites would be located within the fourth storey element of the extension.

3. The access and parking arrangements would remain the same as existing, with the current provision of 47 parking spaces remaining for guests, visitors and staff.

### **Description of Site and Surroundings**

4. The Captains Club Hotel is located on a prominent riverside location on the River Stour, southwest of the town centre of Christchurch. The existing building is a three storey building, which on the riverside elevation comprises of significant glazing to benefit from the panoramic views across the river towards the harbour and Tuckton Gardens public open space. The rear of the building currently has minimal openings and at ground floor level the plant facilities and bin storage are located.
5. Terraced residential properties are located to the west, north and north-east of the Hotel within Creedy Drive, Sopers Lane and Willow Way with the rowing club, sea cadet hall and public car park to the east. The residential properties are 2 and 3 storey in form, with the majority in Creedy Drive which face the Hotel consisting of 3 storey terraced properties with balconies at first floor level.
6. The site lies outside of the Central Christchurch Conservation Area which lies approximately 93 metres to the east. The boundary of the Wick Village Conservation Area runs up the middle of The Stour (approx. 37m from the hotel building) and there is a strong relationship between both sides of the riverbank.
7. The site is located within an area of high flood risk, identified as being within current flood zones 2 and 3 but also within future flood zone 3a (2093 for commercial development) as shown in the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

### **Relevant Planning History**

8. 8/11/0089  
Erection of single storey outbuilding and removal of existing entrance door.  
Granted 28/04/2011
9. 8/07/0571  
Erection of single storey enclosure for waste bins.  
Granted 25/10/2007
10. 8/06/0479  
Erection of 2 signs displaying hotel name.  
Granted 27/10/2006
11. 8/04/0461  
Erection of three-storey 28 room hotel, comprising 16 holiday or short stay suites and 12 restricted occupancy residential suites, restaurant, conference rooms and ancillary features and associated car parking and vehicular access from Wick Lane and Sopers Lane. (Variation of planning consent ref: 8.03/0368 to include additional plant buildings and extension/alterations to hotel elevations) (including S106 legal agreement).  
Granted 13/01/2005.

### **Constraints**

12. In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special

architectural or historic interest - section 66 - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

13. With respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area – section 72 - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
14. The following constraints apply to the site:
  - Flood Zone 2 current
  - Flood Zone 3 current
  - FZ3b 30cc 2093
  - FZ3a 30cc 2093
  - FZ3a 40cc 2133
  - FZ3b 40cc 2133
  - Flood Zone 3a (2019)
  - Flood Zone 3b (2019)
  - SSSI Impact Risk Zone
  - Areas Benefiting from Flood Defences
  - Flood Defences
  - Green Belt
  - Heathland 5km Consultation Area
  - Rights of Way
  - Airport Safeguarding
  - Coastal Area (Policy)
  - Town Centre Boundary
  - Wessex Water Sewer Flooding
  - Contaminated Land - Refuse Disposal

#### **Public Sector Equalities Duty**

15. In accordance with section 149 Equality Act 2010, in considering this proposal due regard has been had to the need to:
  - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

### **Other relevant duties**

16. In accordance with section 40 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, in considering this application, regard has been had, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of this function, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.
17. For the purposes of this application, in accordance with section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998, due regard has been had to, including the need to do all that can reasonably be done to prevent, (a) crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); (b) the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area; and (c) re-offending in its area.

### **Consultations**

18. **Environment Agency** – No formal response received.
19. **Natural England** - None received
20. **Wessex Water** - None received
21. **Dorset & Wilts Fire & Rescue Service** - None received.
22. **Christchurch Town Council**  
*“RESOLVED that the Council raises objection to the proposal on the grounds of:*
  - *incompatibility with Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy Policies HE2 (Design of New Development) and HE3 (Landscape Quality),*
  - *detrimental visual impact on the riverside and the conservation area due to the scale, bulk, and height of the proposal,*
  - *loss of amenity and tranquillity for neighbouring residences,*
  - *increasing light and noise pollution in the area,*
  - *concerns over the impact of the proposal on car parking and increased traffic congestion which would discourage tourists coming into Christchurch.*
  - *Voting: Unanimous”*
  - Consultation response following amended plans:
    - *“RESOLVED that the Council raises objection to the proposal on the grounds of:*
    - *Bulk and massing of the proposal that would be detrimental to the relation with the river and the surrounding area;*
    - *Detrimental effect to the amenity of neighbouring residences due to overlooking and loss of privacy;*
    - *Concerns over the impact of the proposal on car parking and increased traffic congestion”.*
23. **BCP Environmental Health** – (see file for full comments)  
*“There are residential properties opposite the hotel approximately 30m away which have a direct line of sight to the proposed plant area. It is likely that plant will be operating continuously and may have specific characteristics such as tonality, impulsivity and intermittency which could adversely impact those residents, especially during the night time. Louvered panels are proposed on the northern elevation surrounding the plant area which will provide some attenuation, but noise will escape through the open top which has been created to provide sufficient ventilation and circulation to the plant.*

*At this stage we have no information to indicate what the background noise levels are and what noise levels will be produced from plant in the new proposed areas. Therefore, for us to be able to fully consider this application we would advise the applicant to submit a noise impact assessment to demonstrate that noise from all plant/equipment associated with the hotel will not adversely impact on residents. report. Furthermore, please could the applicant provide further information on what restrictions and control measures they will implement to minimise noise disturbance to local residents from collections/deliveries to the hotel.*

Comments received 11<sup>th</sup> May on submitted Plant Noise Assessment

*"A plant noise assessment has been carried out by 24 Acoustics (Ref; R9895 – 1 Rev 0) which provides plant noise criteria. New service plant will be selected, attenuated, and installed to ensure that the cumulative noise rating level achieves the identified criteria. As the exact plant to be installed is still not known we would therefore recommend conditions on background noise (rating level (BS4142:2014) of 5dB below the background noise levels); construction phase environmental management plan; no burning on site; and construction hours".*

24. **BCP Rights of Way** - None received

25. **BCP Waste and Recycling** - None received

26. **BCP Lead Flood Authority** – (full comments can be viewed on line)

*"In section 6.11 they have used a climate change allowance of 25%. This is only the central estimation of the increased amounts of rainfall but the upper (safer) limit is 45%.*

*In Sect 6.12 they say "Surface water will be attenuated within the subbase before discharging into the piped network at a restricted rate of 1l/s, using a flow control device and into the Wessex Water surface water sewer." I would point out it is for the LLFA (in consultation with Wessex Water) to specify a discharge however we would find 1 l/s acceptable. It would have been helpful if WW had been consulted although I don't think they would object. Any SuDs condition should stipulate this figure.*

*In section 7.6 In the event the capacity of the proposed surface water drainage network is exceeded, the excess water will follow the topography of the ground and flow overland towards the north of the site and discharge into the highway drainage at an unrestricted rate, leaving properties unaffected. This is not acceptable and or not realistic because if the capacity of the proposed surface water drainage network is exceeded then it is highly likely that the highway drainage will already have become overloaded as well. There is no guarantee that the existing drainage has any spare capacity. Indeed, as the local highway drainage almost certainly discharges into the Wessex Water surface system which in turn discharges into the river. So if the River is high they either cannot discharge or will have a very reduced rate of discharge.*

*I cannot see anywhere in this report that they have consider the impact of Climate change. Now this area is already at risk of flooding which will only get worse with climate change. And although the EA do have flood defences in place they are obviously already trapping (surface) water behind them. Further looking at the Christchurch Level 2 SFRA it is quite possible these defences will (unless improved be extended but who knows if this will happen) possibly be outflanked in future due to sea level rise.*

*Now all the living accommodation is on or above the first floor and the only new bits at ground level are classed as less vulnerable so the overall flood risk is not going to change significantly so I cannot see that what is proposed will make a considerable difference to the overall flood risk but what is proposed will not improve the situation which will only get worse with climate change. I would agree with Section 4.9 that really the sequential test is not appropriate. Further I appreciate sect 5.5 where they*

say "However, since this development is an extension of an existing building, this is not feasible and the finished floor levels will be set no lower than the existing building's finished floor levels." However, the FRA makes no mention about trying to improve the flood resistance or resilience of what is being proposed and I don't know if the existing building has anything but this does seem a wasted opportunity.

I feel the FRA does not adequately cover the current risks let alone future ones but I cannot see that what is being proposed will significantly increase the already current risk or make the flooding any worse. It would however be an excellent opportunity to incorporate flood resilience and improve the situation. Further there should be a condition for the developer to have a proper emergency plan in place (to be agreed / approved by our emergency planning team)".

Comments on additional and update flood risk document -

"I am happy to accept that this is not a residential development so can have a more limited life span so the 25% climate up lift is acceptable. (It still does beg the question as to what will happen in 75 years time if the Hotel is still here but the assumption in the PPG is it is likely to be replaced by then.)

I note the comment about " we can only describe what will happen in this situation" which is true and they cannot be responsible for drainage not within their control but it doesn't alter the fact that it is likely to be overloaded as well.

It is a shame they didn't mention anything about improving / incorporating a more resilient / resist design".

## 27. **BCP Destination & Culture**

"The Captains Club hotel is a luxury award winning four-star hotel, spa and wedding venue situated on the banks of the River Stour in the historic town of Christchurch and only 5 minutes from the seafront and it's blue flag beaches. The Captains Club hotel plays a significant role within tourism for the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area attracting visitors from far and wide, including international staying visitors. The hotel makes a significant contribution to the guest experience and tourism industry all year round and an extension to the existing hotel to create additional guest bedrooms is in line with the Tourism SPD (2016) which supports continuing investment in and improving the quality of tourism accommodation.

Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole has forged a hard-won reputation over the past 150 years to become established as one of the UK's premier seaside resorts, generating over half a billion pounds in visitor spend each year and sustaining over 12,700 local jobs\*. The resort's reputation for excellence is reflected in the many awards won for its high-quality natural environment, public realm, diverse range of accommodation and leisure attractions and major events.

The Council in conjunction with the local tourism industry, through the Destination Management Board, has adopted a strategic vision for our tourism economy to establish a World Class Visitor Experience. At the present time, the BCP area is enjoying significant levels of investment interest across the economy and tourism in particular which will see the transformation of the destination, cultural, attraction, leisure, retail, seafront, events, public realm and town centre offer. The new BCP Seafront Strategy which was adopted in Spring 2022 sets out the strategic vision of delivering a 'World Class Seafront' by investing in our seafront, enhancing what is already recognised as among the cleanest and most beautiful city region coasts in the world.

The potential rewards for investors are clear. The conurbation continues to perform strongly for overnight stays with the most recent visitor volume and value survey for 2019 identifying 76% of visitors are staying visitors (South West Research Company

2019). To achieve a world class offer we need to convert some of the day visitors to staying overnight in order to help the resort deal with things like littering, traffic congestion and the wider sustainability issues. This will also help to convert many of the low paid, seasonal jobs into year-round employment. Improving the quality of the accommodation offer and making every endeavour to reduce seasonality are the two key factors in achieving this.

BCP Council commissioned Hotel Solutions, a research specialist company to undertake an assessment of guest accommodation year-round supply, performance and development potential, new accommodation supply pipeline and future growth and investment plans within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (Appendix A attached). As their report shows there are 11 major hotel development proposals in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole with the potential to deliver more than 1200 bedrooms over the next 10 years. There is significant potential for additional 4-star, boutique and lifestyle hotel provision in Bournemouth over the next 20 years, potentially more than doubling of the resort's current 4-star hotel supply. In Christchurch there is an opportunity for additional 4-star or boutique hotel provision, most likely in terms of the expansion of existing hotels and in Poole there is scope for a new 4-star or boutique hotel over the next 10 years, and possibly a further new 4-star, boutique or lifestyle hotel by 2040.

*This proposal makes a positive contribution to BCP's tourist accommodation and can only improve the facilities offered to guests making it a world class offer therefore, Tourism fully support this proposal".*

**28. BCP Highways - Major Dev**

*"The net increase in vehicle trips is likely to be 15 movements in the morning peak and 16 in the afternoon peak. The roads around the site are of a standard highway layout design and are capable of accommodating the relatively modest increase in vehicle movements from the proposal. Therefore, in terms of highway network impact the increase in traffic from the proposal is unlikely to result in significant highway network capacity issues.*

*The site is located within parking Zone B of the Parking Standards SPD guidance, which is a Zone with reasonably good transport links but it is noted that the site is on the boundary of Zone A (the Zone requiring the least amount of car parking provision). The site is located close to the transport links and amenities of Christchurch Town Centre.*

*Within parking Zone B the SPD guidance sets out that a 65 bedroom hotel facility should ideally provide 49 car parking spaces (in the neighbouring Zone A this would be a 33 space requirement). The existing car park for the hotel has 47 parking spaces, and this is to stay the same, but at present the car park is available for both hotel patrons and the public to use as the hotel offers the parking spaces available as a privately operated pay & display car park. The proposal is to retain the 47 spaces which would now be for hotel patrons, staff, and visitors only, which will likely result in less demand and traffic movements in the car park than the existing arrangement of shared general public use. There are public car parks close to the site and apart from a few peak holiday weekends the majority of the year there is spare capacity in these car parks, certainly to cater for 2 cars to park from this proposal. The SPD does allow proposals to have differing parking provision to that outlined within that guidance. Therefore, considering the change in car park availability, relative location to the town centre facilities and availability of public car parks nearby the Highway Authority does not consider that the amount of car parking provision proposed would result in any significant highway safety issues.*

*The proposal indicates that 13 cycle parking spaces will be provided which is an acceptable figure in line with SPD requirements. 4 of those cycle spaces will be for general public/visitor use and these are the existing cycle stands located close to the main building entrance. The rest will be for staff and are located internally within the service area of the building.*

*Notwithstanding the above comments on likely traffic generation there is scope for the proposal to offer improvements to cycle links in the area to meet the aims of sustainable development and to encourage less car use. Part of the National Cycle Network runs part way through the hotel car park linking Sopers Lane with Creedy Drive but signposting/wayfinding for this route could be improved. We'd suggest a scheme to improve signage, such as surface markings through the car park, be conditioned as part of the proposal.*

*The Highway Authority can offer support to the proposal subject to conditions."*

## 29. **BCP Planning Policy**

### "Flood Risk

*The application site is wholly within Future flood zone 3a (2093 for commercial development), and Environment Agency (EA) present day flood zone 2; and a large part of the site is in EA present day flood zone 3. This would generally trigger the flood risk sequential test (NPPF para 162). However, para 168 of the NPPF (and footnote 56) indicates that the sequential test is not required for small, non-residential extensions (with a footprint of less than 250m<sup>2</sup>).*

*The applicant's Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) para 3.2 indicates that it is proposed to demolish 113m<sup>2</sup> of the existing building footprint; and that the proposed extension will generate 343m<sup>2</sup> of new footprint. Part of the proposed development it states will be built in place of the existing building footprint to be demolished, and so the FRA indicates that the total increase in footprint is approximately 230m<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, in accordance with para 168 of the NPPF, I conclude that the flood risk Sequential Test is not required in this case. However, the NPPF still requires a site-specific flood risk assessment to be submitted. To accord with the NPPF, the EA and the BCP FCERM Team will need to be satisfied that the FRA satisfactorily demonstrates that the proposals are sufficiently flood resistant and resilient and do not increase flood risk elsewhere; and meet all the requirements of NPPF para 167.*

*I would also draw your attention to para 54 of the flood risk National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) which indicates that development within 16m of a riverbank (tidal river), a flood risk activity permit may also be required in addition to planning permission. I trust the EA/ FCERM Team (as Lead Local Flood Authority) will advise on this.*

### Town Centre Uses

*Additional tourist accommodation in Christchurch is supported in principle by Core Strategy policy PC6 which seeks to promote visitor accommodation in sustainable locations; and saved Christchurch Local Plan policy ET1 seeks to avoid the loss of tourist accommodation. The existing Captains Club Hotel provides high quality accommodation well located in the historic town of Christchurch and local attractions; and plays a significant role for tourism within BCP.*

*Notwithstanding the above, the proposed hotel accommodation is a main town centre leisure use; and the application site lies outside of the town centre boundary as defined to Core Strategy policy CH2. As such, and in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF (para 87) and Core Strategy policy KS7, an extension to provide*



*additional hotel accommodation would require a sequential test to be undertaken to determine whether there are any sequentially preferable sites within the town centre. As the site is only just outside of the town centre boundary, it is deemed to be edge-of-centre which is the next sequentially preferable location (after the town centre).*

*The applicant has submitted a town centre use sequential test in support of the proposals. It identifies 4 sites that it concludes are either not suitable and/or not available. I would agree that these sites are either not available or not suitable. I note that the applicant's Sequential Test (para 8.9) rejects sites identified in Core Strategy policy CH1 (Bridge Street/Stony Lane, the Magistrates Court, Saxon Square and The Lanes on the basis that they are outside the town centre. These sites actually fall within the town centre boundary as defined in policy CH2, so should be considered as part of the sequential test. I accept that these may not be suitable or available in view of: the flood risk constraints around Bridge Street/Stony Lane, the live consent to develop the Magistrates Court for other uses; and the applicant's criteria; but this should be demonstrated in the applicant's sequential test. In view of flood risk constraints in the Bridge Street/Stony Lane area we are not aware of any other potential town centre sites that are currently suitable and available. Furthermore, in accordance with the intentions of the NPPF (para 81), extension of the existing site would enable the existing local business to invest, expand and adapt. NPPF para 88 requires that when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are fully explored. This site immediately adjoins the town centre; is well connected to the town centre and local attractions; and hotel development in this location will support tourism and the vitality of the town centre".*

### **30. BCP Urban Design and Conservation**

*"Concerns were raised in February 2023 regarding the design and the heritage impacts of the proposal, in terms of:*

- Scale and bulk of the proposed top floor extension.*
- Impact of the proposed top floor extension on the design of the existing building – the existing slender lightweight tower features.*
- Setback building entrances leaving poorly lit undercroft areas that would collect wind blown litter.*
- Note that there would be an increase in overshadowing of neighbouring properties during the winter months.*
- Site Enhancement Plan for biodiversity not based on proposals so not accurate.*
- Dark and austere appearance of top floor with small window openings that did not respond to the pattern of fenestration of the floors below – need for materials to be much lighter in tone, more glazing and a pattern of fenestration in keeping with the windows of the floors below. Any balcony balustrades need to be glazed.*
- Blank and uninviting ground floor of the rear extension – need for high quality materials - cladding with some depth of texture/colour/tone would help to enhance the appearance. Dark grey cladding too dark and austere.*

*The Urban Design Officer and the Conservation Officer consider that the form of the proposal is now of an appropriate scale and bulk. The existing tower elements would be respected. The ground floor rear entrance now works much better, with a reduced undercroft area and a well-considered canopy/porch element. In terms of the materiality, the proposed cladding is a paler colour which is a notable improvement. The details and materiality however would benefit from more work. The top floor still*

*needs a higher proportion of glazing and an improved pattern of fenestration, particularly on the southern side. The proposed visible cladding joints would not support a high-quality appearance.*

*The ground floor cladding at the rear still needs enhanced materials, or some depth of texture/colour/tone. Being at the ground floor level, the quality of the materials, or lack of, would be especially apparent to visitors, residents and passers-by as they would be passing close to the building. The detail of the finish could perhaps be conditioned, but it is considered the pattern of glazing to solid walling should be addressed at this stage. With the inclusion of improvements to fenestration (as discussed above), the new work would better relate to the existing building and no objections would be raised”.*

31. **BCP Biodiversity**

No formal comments received

**Representations**

32. We have received 131 representations to the application. Of these, **105 are objections and 5 comments** to the proposal on the following grounds:

Design and scale

- Overbearing and dominant
- Excessive bulk
- Ugly structure
- Mass of building excessive
- Out of proportion with riverside setting
- Dominate the riverbank
- Spoils the experience when on the river
- Intrusive within locality
- Harm the street view
- Impact on visual amenities alongside river
- Already an eyesore on the river
- It is a largely residential and recreational area with limited room for further development
- Change character of the area
- Character of quaint town would be harmed
- Overwhelming
- Tall than adjacent apartment buildings
- Destroying the open, spacious and attractive aspects of this area
- Disruption to skyline
- Dominate views of Priory
- Contrary to Local Plan policies HE2 and HE3
- Contrary to Policies BE5 and BE16
- Change the view, historic feel and sense of timeless pride Christchurch has in this area.
- The Priory should remain, the dominant building steeped in history, tradition and architectural importance.

### Traffic

- Increased traffic in area
- Reduction in available parking for local residents
- Extra traffic dangerous for school children
- Insufficient parking for capacity of hotel
- Existing car park pay and display
- Existing car park not owned by Hotel
- Local car parks all often full
- Congestion on local roads
- Increase risk of accidents
- Additional delivery and servicing vehicles
- Emergency vehicle access inadequate
- Significant traffic congestion, especially when local events are running
- Impact on public safety
- Majority of visitor will arrive by car and not use bikes, coaches or buses
- Increase in the hazard to cyclists on National Cycle Network
- Congestion of Wick Lane – non commercial vehicle access
- Displacement of river users – no where for them to park
- Contrary to Policies KS11 and KS12
- Car parks used by school drop offs and pick ups

### Amenity

- Additional noise from size of hotel and additional servicing requirements
- Extensive glazing harmful to residents
- Light pollution
- Damage quiet and peaceful character of area
- Noise and disturbance
- Noise and emissions from plant and equipment
- Antisocial behaviour at night
- Loss of privacy
- Overlooking into properties
- Design of rear elevation allowed hotel and properties to coexist for last 18 years
- Harm outlook of residents
- Trees will not prevent loss of privacy to properties opposite
- Overbearing
- Odour pollution
- Unneighbourly extension
- Loss of views
- Contrary to Local Plan policy HE2
- Kitchen will be closest to residential properties
- Inadequate Noise Assessment

### Other issues

- Questioning requirement to need to do flood Sequential Test
- Increased flooding
- Weight on riverbank
- Impact on landscape character and biodiversity value of Christchurch harbour, coast, beaches and rivers
- Breach of original planning permission
- Totally out of the line with the original concept of co-habiting harmoniously
- Suites must not be for residential occupation
- Large Hotel has no place in village like community
- Falls outside town centre which should be focus for uses including higher density residential, employment, retail, leisure and entertainment, offices, arts, culture, and tourism development.
- Size of rooms will change nature of Hotel
- Should provide roof landscaping

33. We have received 26 representations in support for the following reasons;
- A modest, subservient and attractive addition to the existing world-class hotel.
  - The design is balanced and of high quality
  - Ensures the ongoing long-term operation of the hotel, extending upon the existing benefits to the local economy through employment and footfall in a sustainable location.
  - Need to support the flagship Hotel
  - Christchurch needs investment and needs to offer more modern and upcoming facilities.
  - There is a car park close by
  - More rooms means more spend to local shops. The traffic is a mess in Christchurch not because of expansion but because of the constant road works.
  - Brings trade into the town
  - Vital part of the economy
  - Does not disadvantage residents
  - Façade on the car park elevation of the hotel is a significant improvement to its appearance both for guests and local residents overlooking the hotel
  - Great for tourism
  - Hotel provides for community and charity support
  - Providing employment and training
  - Training for local schools
  - Support a local business
  - Safeguards all the benefits the hotel brings to the town
  - Supported by Policy PC6

### Key Issues

34. The key issues involved with this proposal are:
- Principle of development
  - Economy and tourism

- Design, form and scale and impact on visual amenities of area
  - Impact on Heritage assets
  - Flood risk and surface water management
  - Impact on residential amenities
  - Parking and Access
  - Biodiversity and Dorset Heathlands
  - Energy and Sustainability
35. These issues will be considered along with other matters relevant to this proposal below.

### **Policy Context**

36. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan for an area, except where material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan in this case comprises Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy (2014) and saved policies of the Christchurch Local Plan (2001).

KS1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

KS2 Settlement hierarchy

KS7 Role of town centres

KS11 Transport and Development

KS12 Parking provision

PC6 Tourism

HE1 Valuing and conserving our historic environment

HE2 Design of new development

HE3 Landscape quality

ME1 Safeguarding Biodiversity and Geodiversity

ME3 Sustainable Development Standards

ME4 Renewable Energy Provision

ME6 Flood Management, Mitigation and Defence

Saved Policy BE5 Setting of Conservation Areas

Saved policy ENV3 Pollution and existing development

Saved policy ENV5 Drainage and new development

Saved policy ENV21 Landscaping in new development

Saved policy ET1 Redevelopment/change of use of tourist facilities

37. **Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance**

Parking Standards 2021

Conservation Area Appraisal

38. **National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF"/"Framework")**

The policies in the Framework are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications

## **Planning Assessment**

### **Principle of development**

39. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the NPPF. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that where policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, planning permission must be granted unless policies in the Framework provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposals. The Core Strategy policies relevant to this application are considered to be up-to-date.
40. The existing Hotel is an established business just outside of the town centre of Christchurch and as such its use has already been established. Policy PC6 seeks to promote visitor accommodation in sustainable locations and saved Christchurch Local Plan policy ET1 permits the redevelopment or change of use of tourist accommodation provided there is no reasonable demand and it would not result in a significant loss of tourism accommodation. The Captains Club provides high quality accommodation within the town and currently plays a significant role for tourism in BCP. BCP Destination and Culture have stated; *"The hotel makes a significant contribution to the guest experience and tourism industry all year round and an extension to the existing hotel to create additional guest bedrooms is in line with the Tourism SPD (2016) which supports continuing investment in and improving the quality of tourism accommodation"*.
41. Notwithstanding the above, the hotel is a main town centre use but lies outside of the town centre boundary. Therefore, in accordance with policy KS7, an extension to provide additional hotel accommodation would require a sequential test to be undertaken to determine whether there are any sequentially preferable sites within the town centre. As the site is only just outside of the town centre boundary, it is deemed to be edge-of-centre which is the next sequentially preferable location (after the town centre). A town centre use sequential test has been submitted with the application and in agreement with the Planning Authority, it focused on alternative sites in Christchurch town centre given it did not seem appropriate to look at local or district centres given the scale of the hotel and the catchment area for hotel visitors. 4 sites were identified within the submission; The former Christchurch civic centre; Beagle site; Magnet; and Bypass car park. These have been discounted for a number of reasons including flood risk, not of scale to accommodate a hotel of the right size; location within business/light industrial area; and site not available to purchase. The document refers to other strategic sites within policy CH1 and these being outside of the town centre; this is incorrect; however, the Case Officer and BCP Planning Policy have accepted that given the high flood risk on the sites and live consents for other uses on the former magistrates/police site these sites are not available, taking into account the applicant's selection criteria which appear reasonable.
42. Paragraph 88 of the NPPF states; *'When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are fully explored.'* It is considered that this edge of centre site is highly accessible from the town centre and wider BCP area. It is therefore considered the Sequential Test has been passed and the proposal is compliant with Policy KS7 and the NPPF in this regard.

43. Whilst it is considered the principle of the Hotel's expansion is acceptable, this still needs to be considered against other material planning considerations which will be considered below.

### **Tourism and the economy**

44. Core Strategy Policy PC6 promotes new visitor attractions and accommodation in sustainable locations and saved Christchurch Local Plan policy ET1 seeks to avoid the loss of tourist accommodation.
45. As referred to above, this Hotel makes a valuable and positive contribution to the local tourism economy and attracts visitors from afar, including international visitors. BCP Destination and Culture, in their consultation response have provided some background to the local tourism industry and confirm that BCP is established as one of the UK's premier seaside resorts, generating over half a billion pounds in visitor spend each year and sustaining local employment. An assessment of guest accommodation year-round supply, performance and development potential, new accommodation supply pipeline and future growth and investment plans within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole has taken place and this indicates that in Christchurch there is an opportunity for an additional 4 – star provision or boutique hotel over the next 10 years, most likely from expansion of existing hotels.
46. It is clear that the expansion of the Captains Club hotel will make a positive contribution to the provision of tourist accommodation within Christchurch and BCP as a whole and this would contribute to the local economy through investment, visitor spending and employment opportunities. It is considered the extension to the Captains Club which is in an edge of centre location with links to the town centre and beyond meets the ambition of Policy PC6 to promote tourist accommodation in sustainable locations. Paragraph 81 in the NPPF states; *'Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development'*. This scheme would enable a local business to expand and improve the offering to visitors and adapt to the changing climate since the pandemic. It is therefore considered that the proposal meets the aims of policy PC6, ET1 and the NPPF.

### **Design, Form and Scale**

47. CS Policy HE2 complements the design requirements in section 12 of the NPPF by requiring that development be compatible with or improve its surroundings in relation to criteria including layout, site coverage, visual impact and relationship to nearby properties. Policy HE3 states that development needs to protect and seek to enhance the landscape character of the area. The NPPF states that developments must function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and landscaping.
48. The proposed extension has a very similar form and design to the existing hotel and builds upon and responds to the character of the current building. According to the submitted Planning Statement, the existing hotel was originally designed to emulate a cruise ship, a nautical theme which is complimentary to the location. The proposals have been amended during the planning process to overcome concerns raised with the overall scale and mass of the building, in particular the additional bulk at the fourth storey. The building is highly visible from the southern side of the river and forms a prominent landmark along the River Stour. In addition, the rear of the western end of the building is visible from Sopers Lane and the public car park to the

northwest of the site. The increased size of the hotel will clearly be seen from many public vantage points and given its presence over the surrounding built form; it is extremely important that the extensions do not result in an intrusive building which harms this riverside setting.

49. It is considered that the rear extension which is to be the same height as the existing building is acceptable in terms of its scale and bulk. It relates well to the building and does not appear intrusive within the street scene and will be clearly read as part of the hotel. At ground floor level, there are minimal openings resulting in a rather blank facade; however, it is appreciated that this is required due to the location of the plant rooms and storage areas at the rear. Given the existing situation, with timber enclosures and a number of different spaces, this proposal rationalises the rear area, enclosing everything within the building, improving the appearance. The amendments to the access points for staff at the rear have minimised potential for anti-social behaviour and collection of litter and material with a reduced undercroft area and a more inviting porch area.
50. There is a significant amount of glazing being introduced on the northern rear elevation to serve the proposed bedrooms. The impact on amenity will be discussed below; however, in terms of design the rhythm of the fenestration and the horizontal emphasis is considered to be appropriate and relates well to the existing style and appearance of the building.
51. With regards to the additional storey; the amendments to the scale of this element with the removal of the new turrets, stepping in on front and side elevations, increased glazing and the finishing materials has overcome the initial concerns raised. It is considered that the form and scale is now more appropriate and the extension respects the existing tower elements and the building would not appear top heavy. BCP Urban Design and Conservation still consider that the top floor still requires a higher proportion of glazing. It is recognised that the floors below show a greater proportion of glazing on the southern elevation; however, the proposed pattern of glazing and the ratio to solid wall in conjunction with the now lighter cladding is considered to be acceptable and would not result in a discordant or top heavy extension. The reduction in floor area of this level along with the lighter material ensure it will appear as a lighter weight structure and not dominate the existing building.
52. The built relationship with the neighbouring residential properties must be considered, in particular those in Creedy Drive to the north and Riverside Park to the west. It is clear from the representations, there are strong concerns with the resulting mass and bulk of the building compared to the surrounding residential properties. The rear extension will bring built form closer to these properties; however, there still remains a significant distance between the buildings with the parking and highway maintaining this gap. It is not considered that the resulting built relationship would result in a cramped or oppressive form of development within the street scene. Whilst the extensions will clearly increase the Hotel's presence in the locality, it is considered that the proposals are sympathetic to the scale of the surrounding buildings.
53. Overall, it is considered that the scale, form and design of the extensions to the hotel are acceptable and are compatible with the existing building and neighbouring built forms. The Hotel will remain as a visually attractive building, with the extensions maintaining its symmetry and balance. The scheme is considered to be a positive response to increase the size of the hotel without creating a significant amount of footprint and the impact to the character and visual amenities of the area would be



acceptable. Therefore, the proposal is considered to comply with policies HE2 and HE3 and the NPPF, in particular paragraph 130 a) and b).

### **Heritage assets**

54. Core Strategy HE1 seeks to ensure that the significance of all heritage assets and their settings will be protected and enhanced. As outlined in the site description, the site is not within the Conservation Area but lies to the north of the Wick Lane Conservation across the River Stour and the Central Christchurch Conservation is located to the east. Wick is a historic village and owes its reputation as the last village on the River Stour to its location and surroundings, and its attractive character. There are views of the top of the Grade I listed Priory Church in Christchurch from this open space as well as from the open space to the east of the Hotel. The listing description of the Priory includes the following: "*Christchurch Priory forms the focal point of several groups of buildings as well as being the most prominent feature in the distant views of the town*".
55. The proposed development to the Hotel will have an impact on the setting of these two heritage assets and in particular Wick Lane CA given the open views from the open space to the south of the river. In addition, there are views across the river to the Grade I listed 11<sup>th</sup> Century Christchurch Priory Church from this location. The Heritage Statement submitted with the application acknowledges the hotel's presence on the waterfront and the setting of the Conservation Area. The NPPF in paragraph 206 states; '*Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.*'
56. There is no denying that the extension to the hotel, in particular the additional storey will result in the building being more prominent on the riverside and therefore in views from within and towards the Conservation Area. However, it already forms part of the built fabric and with the revisions that have been made to reduce the impact of the fourth storey, it is considered that the extended hotel would not cause a distraction to the setting of the Wick Lane Conservation Area. The extensions would not disrupt views of the Grade I listed Priory Church over and above the current situation from the open space on the opposite side of the river. There are still views of the Priory Church which forms part of the backdrop of the townscape of Christchurch town centre and therefore it is considered that the significance of this valuable heritage asset would not be unacceptably harmed and the setting of the Priory Church would be preserved.
57. Views from the Central Christchurch Area would be slightly more oblique and although the proposals would be visible above the rowing club house and from views on Wick Lane, it is considered that the additional built form would not be read as a whole and therefore would not appear intrusive or out of context with the existing building or surrounding buildings.
58. It is concluded that the proposal does not cause harm to the setting of the two Conservation Areas, as designated heritage assets. The riverside setting of the Wick Lane Conservation Area is preserved and the views from the Central Christchurch Conservation Area towards the west would not be harmed by the proposal. Therefore, the scheme is considered to accord with Policy HE1 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF.

## **Residential Amenity**

59. Policy HE2 states that; 'development will be permitted if it compatible with or improves its surroundings in; its relationship to nearby properties including minimising disturbance to amenity'. Saved policy ENV3 refers to development which creates noise, discharges or emissions not harming the amenities of occupants of nearby land.
60. The Hotel is clearly an integral part of the townscape of this part of the urban area and there is an ongoing relationship between this business and the neighbouring residential properties. The proposed development has the potential to impact on the amenities and living conditions of the occupiers of the surrounding dwellings and it is clear from the representations that there are strong concerns regarding the extensions.
61. With regards to the properties directly opposite the rear of the Hotel in Creedy Drive, there is a separation distance of between 27 and 32 metres between the dwellings and the proposed rear building line, with the public car park and highway in between. These dwellings comprise of three storeys with windows at all levels on the front elevation and balconies at first floor level facing the hotel. Their private rear amenity spaces are to the north and not visible from the hotel with the exception of No 19 whose amenity area is at right angles to Creedy Drive. The rear extension and introduction of glazing on the northern elevation to serve the new bedrooms is clearly a concern for residents on overlooking and a loss of privacy.
62. The new built relationship and the resulting impact has been carefully considered before coming to a recommendation. Whilst there may be some mutual overlooking between the residential properties and the hotel rooms, the distances involved are considered to be sufficient to maintain privacy as they exceed the 15m – 20m distances quoted in the National Model Design Code as sufficient to maintain privacy. Furthermore, the private rear amenity spaces would not be affected. In respect of No 19, there is 31 metres from the rear of the extended hotel and the side boundary of the garden area, which is enclosed by a brick wall. There are also a number of trees within the strip of soft landscaping between the car park and Creedy Drive which partially filter views.
63. Whilst the local residents' concerns are recognised and been taken into account, it is considered that the proposed extensions with additional glazing would not give rise to an unacceptable relationship with the surrounding properties in this urban area and a material loss of privacy would not occur. Therefore, the scheme complies with Policy HE2 in this regard.
64. The increased size of the hotel is likely to give rise to additional movements and activity from an increased number of visitors and staff. This locality is on the edge of the town centre and characterised not only by the hotel and residential properties but by public car parks, a rowing club and areas of open space. Therefore, there is an intrinsic level of movement and activity in the area. The existing car park that serves the hotel, will no longer be available as a public play and display and will only be used by staff and guests so there could be a reduction in vehicle movements associated with the car park. It is considered that the proposal would not give rise to such a significant increase in noise and disturbance to cause undue harm to the occupiers of the surrounding properties.
65. The proposal introduces additional plant rooms within the hotel, with a new plant area within the new fourth storey at the western and eastern ends accommodating air handling units (AHU's) and condensers. Whilst it would be at this level, there would

be no roof covering and louvred sides on the northern elevation. In response to the initial consultation response from BCP Environmental Health, a plant noise assessment has been undertaken. This report has established the prevailing background noise (taken from a point directly to rear of Hotel on eastern side) and sets out the maximum plant noise rating levels at the nearest noise- sensitive receptors. The report concludes; *“Plant noise criteria have been established for daytime and night-time periods, to meet the criteria of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole council and with reference to the methods set out in BS 4142:2014. The new services plant shall be selected, attenuated, and installed to ensure that the cumulative noise rating level achieves these criteria at all times.”*

66. BCP Environmental Health have considered this report and are satisfied with the conclusions, subject to a condition to ensure the plant noise achieves a rating level (BS4142:2014) of 5dB below the background noise levels determined in Section 4 of the Plant Noise Assessment. Therefore, with this condition in place, it is considered that the levels of noise from the new plant areas would not have an adverse impact on residential living conditions.
67. The proposed extension at the rear and at the fourth storey will include additional glazing, especially on the southern side fronting the river. During the evenings and at night, this could increase the prominence of the building given the light omitted from the building. However, given the existing level of glazing on the southern elevation and the level of built form within the area and street lighting plus the separation to neighbouring dwellings, the light omitted from the building is not considered to cause such an adverse impact on the environment or living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties. There is no additional external lighting shown on the plans; however, an external lighting strategy can be conditioned to ensure that any new lighting around the hotel is suitable for the locality and does not cause harm to the residential amenities of the surrounding properties.
68. The impacts on residential amenity have been carefully considered and it is concluded that the development is compatible with its surroundings in the relationship to neighbouring properties and the general impact to amenity. Therefore, the proposal complies with policy HE2. With a condition in place to secure the noise levels of the plant rooms, the proposal will comply with saved policy ENV3.

### **Flood risk and surface water management**

69. Policy ME6 of the Local Plan sets out the requirement for developments within flood risk areas and stipulates that all development will be required to demonstrate that flood risk does not increase as a result of the development proposed. The application site is wholly within Future flood zone 3a (2093 for commercial development), and Environment Agency (EA) present day flood zone 2; and a large part of the site is in EA present day flood zone 3. There are existing flood defences in place for up to and including the 1 in 1000 year flood event. The site is more vulnerable to tidal flooding compared to flooding from other sources such as fluvial, surface water or infrastructure failure and it is considered to have high levels of ground water which is stated to be less than 3m from ground level.
70. The NPPF in paragraph 162 sets out the aims and requirement for the Sequential Test to be applied to new development; *‘The aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding’*. sequential test. However, para 168 of the NPPF (and footnote 56) indicates that the sequential test is not required for small, non-residential extensions (with a footprint of

less than 250m<sup>2</sup>). It has been determined that the increased footprint from the extension, taking into account the footprint of the existing structures to be demolished is just below 250 m<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, it has been concluded that in this particular instance, notwithstanding the overall floor area of the extensions well exceeds 250m<sup>2</sup> the actual footprint does not and therefore in line with the NPPF the sequential test does not need to be applied to this proposal. Given the Sequential Test is not required there is no need for the Exception Test to be applied to the development.

71. A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted as part of the application. The Environment Agency have been consulted and not provided any formal consultation response. However, they have clarified that given the majority of the additional floorspace is above ground floor there would be minimal flood risk concerns and as such the National Standing Advice for extensions would apply.
72. In line with the Standing Advice, the floor levels should either be no lower than existing floor levels or 300 millimetres (mm) above the estimated flood level. The existing and proposed floor levels will be 2.20m AOD. The minimum crest level of the surrounding flood defences is 2.50m AOD which is above the modelled 1 in 1000 year tidal flood level for the site, which is 2.17m AOD. Therefore, the site is protected for up to and including the 1 in 1000 year flood event.
73. BCP FCERM have made the point that although the proposal is unlikely going to increase flood risk, it is a missed opportunity to improve the situation and incorporate enhancements to the resilience of the building. The Agent has responded and stated; *"As part of the design, only plant and other ancillary rooms will be located at the ground floor level and all bedrooms will be located on the first floor and above to mitigate against flood risk. Flood resistance and resilience measures will be incorporated into design through the use of flood resistant materials such as stainless steel and plastic for fixtures and fittings which are less likely to be affected by flood waters and are easily cleaned, tiled or concrete floors at ground level, raising plug sockets, water, electricity and gas meters off the floor and above the flood level where possible and valuable items will be kept on upper floors or on high shelves"*.
74. In terms of surface water drainage, our SFRA Level 2 data shows that whilst the site itself is not at risk from surface water flooding, Sopers Lane to the north west and part of Creedy Drive to the north is showing as low risk. However, as indicated by the BCP Flood Engineer in the FCERM team there have been instances where these roads have been subject to surface water flooding. The FRA states the following; *"The surface water run-off from the proposed extension will discharge into the shallow attenuation system and be attenuated before discharging to the Wessex Water public surface water sewer located in Creedy drive at a peak discharge rate of 1l/s. The SuDS features will ensure excess water will be safely contained within the site boundary up to and including the 1in100 year storm event +25% climate change"*. Whilst Wessex Water would need to agree this rate, BCP FCERM consider it to be acceptable and will minimise adding to any surface water flooding in the immediate vicinity. Notwithstanding the submitted details, full details for the SuDS including the discharge rate can be secured by condition.
75. It is concluded that the scheme will not increase the flood risk on the site or in the immediate locality. With resilient measures in place and the finished floor levels secured by condition, it is considered the proposal complies with policy ME6 and the NPPF.

## **Traffic, Parking and Access**

76. Policy KS11 states; *'Development should be in accessible location that are well linked to existing communities by walking, cycling and public transport routes. Development must be designed to: provide safe, permeable layouts which provide access for all modes of transport, prioritising direct, attractive routes for walking, cycling and public transport'*.
77. Policy KS12 refers to parking provision and the Parking Standards SPD (2021) sets out the parking requirements for vehicles and cycles. The site is sited within a highly sustainable location, within walking distance of the town centre, open spaces and bus routes. In addition, the National Cycle Network runs through the hotel car park.
78. The application is supported by a Transport Assessment which sets out the likely increase in traffic movements. As set out by the BCP Transport Development Team in their consultation response, the net increase in vehicle trips is likely to be 15 movements in the morning peak and 16 in the afternoon peak and it is considered this level of movement can be accommodated on the local highway network.
79. The Parking SPD identifies that the Hotel is located within Zone B but is on the boundary with Zone A. The adopted guidance sets out a 65 bedroom facility should provide 49 car parking spaces within Zone B. However, within Zone A, the requirement would only be 33. The current hotel's car park which is also available as a privately owned pay and display can accommodate 47 spaces. The proposal sets out that the existing 47 spaces would be retained, and no additional parking would be provided. However, the carpark would remain solely for the use of guests and staff of the hotel. Whilst there is a technical shortfall of 2 spaces, the Highway Authority are satisfied that given the public car parks close to the site and the sustainable location of the Hotel, the parking provision is acceptable and would not result in significant highway safety issues.
80. 13 cycle parking spaces are to be provided which is in line with the SPD requirements. A proportion of these will be the existing stands for visitor use and the remainder would be internal for staff. The application offers the opportunity to improve the signage for the National Cycle Network which is currently poorly signposted. Improvements to this, such as new surface markings can be secured by condition.
81. There is wide concern from local residents about the impact of the Hotel expansion on traffic movements and the perceived lack of parking for the hotel and local residents. These have been carefully considered; however, given the evidence from the Transport Assessment and the requirements set out in the SPD, it is considered that the scheme is acceptable and would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety issues in the area. Therefore, the proposal is considered to be compliant with policies KS11 and KS12 and the NPPF.

## **Biodiversity**

82. Core Strategy Policy ME1 sets out that it aims to protect, maintain and enhance the condition of all types of nature conservation sites, habitats and species within their ecological networks. The NPPF in paragraph 174 states that decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by minimising impact and providing net gains for biodiversity.

83. A Phase 1 Ecological Survey accompanies the application. The site is described as being predominantly covered in buildings and hard standing with some areas of ornamental planting and an area of well-managed amenity grassland. The conclusions are that the building provides negligible suitability for roosting bats but suitable habitat for nesting birds. Given the Hotel's location adjacent to the river, it could be used as a commuting bat route, but the site does not have significant foraging opportunities given the limited vegetation. In order to minimise the impact of the development on the surrounding natural environment the following mitigation measures are recommended within the Appraisal;
- Storage of equipment and machinery should take place as far as possible from the River Stour and not within 20m of the river.
  - Heras fencing and dust sheeting to provide a boundary between the site and river.
  - If possible, fuels and oil should be stored off site.
  - External lighting limited to that required for safety purposes and must follow the Bat Conservation Trusts and Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance on bats and artificial lighting (BCT, 2018).
84. Given the relatively low ecological value the site currently has, there are opportunities to enhance the biodiversity on the site in line with the NPPF. The proposed enhancement measures are;
- Additional planting along northern boundary adjacent to the car park
  - 4 x 3 metre standard trees to replace those being lost including field maples and rowan.
  - Integral swift nesting boxes
  - Biodiversity information board for guests
85. The proposed enhancement measures are acceptable and whilst they could have gone further, Policy ME6 of the Local Plan only refers to the enhancement and net gains in biodiversity where possible. The above measures will be secured by condition and the proposed landscaping will be secured through an appropriate landscaping condition for a minimum of 5 years.
86. The application site lies within 5km but beyond 400m of Dorset Heathland which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and as a European wildlife site. The proposal for an extension to the existing hotel, in combination with other plans and projects and in the absence of avoidance and mitigation measures, likely to have a significant effect on the site. It has therefore been necessary for the Council, as the appropriate authority, to undertake an appropriate assessment of the implications for the protected site, in view of the site's conservation objectives.
87. The appropriate assessment has concluded that the likely significant effects arising from the proposal are wholly consistent with and inclusive of the effects detailed in the supporting policy documents. When there is a completed legal agreement the proposal will be wholly compliant with the necessary measures to prevent adverse effects on site integrity detailed within the documents: Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 SPD.
88. The appropriate assessment has concluded that the mitigation measures set out in the Dorset Heathlands 2020-2025 SPD can prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of the site. The SPD strategy includes Heathland Infrastructure Projects (HIPs) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM). In relation to this development the Council will fund HIP provision via the Community Infrastructure Levy but SAMM, which forms the second strand of the strategy, requires

that contributions be secured via s106 from hotel development. The contribution is calculated basing one bedroom on the same as one flat. Therefore, with 35 additional bedrooms, this would equate to a financial contribution of £10,220.00. The strategic approach to access management is necessary to ensure that displacement does not occur across boundaries.

89. The current application is currently not accompanied by a completed unilateral undertaking which should secure the necessary contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring in accordance with the Dorset Heathlands SPD. This contribution does not relate to the provision of infrastructure, is reasonable and necessary; the contribution complies with Regulations 122 and 123(3) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). However, the applicant has submitted a draft unilateral undertaking which will be verified by BCP Legal department. With this mitigation secured, the development will not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the designated site and is therefore in accordance with policy ME2.

### **Trees and Landscape**

90. Policy HE2 and HE3 seek to protect natural features including trees and shrubs and the landscape character. The main areas of soft landscaping on the Hotel site are to the east of the Hotel building in which a Strawberry tree and Weeping Willow are located and to the north between the car park and Creedy Drive. This area includes Birch, Norway Maple and Field Maple. There is no TPO on the site and given the site is not within a Conservation Area, the trees are not protected.
91. An Arboricultural Method Statement accompanies the application and identifies that two young birch trees, T14 and T15 are to be removed on the southern edge of the car park in order to facilitate the development. The report also recommends a third birch tree to be removed, T1, sited to the west of the building. It is not considered that the loss of these trees would harm the visual amenities of the locality. In order to protect the trees to the north of the car park, the Method Statement shows protective barriers to be put in place during construction and this can be secured by condition.
92. As set out above in the Biodiversity Section, 4 x 3 metre standard trees (2 rowan and 1 field maple) are proposed within the soft landscaped area to the east of the building. In addition, native shrub planting is proposed below the existing trees on the northern edge of the car park.
93. It is considered that the soft landscaping proposals are acceptable and will protect the visual amenities of the locality. Therefore, the proposal is in accordance with policies HE2 and HE3.

### **Energy and Sustainability**

94. Policy ME3 in the Core Strategy requires development to meet national sustainable development standards. Policy ME4 in the Core Strategy encourages the provision of renewable, decentralised and low carbon energy in major development proposals.
95. There is reference to energy within the submitted Planning Statement; however, there is minimal information on what if any measures are being introduced to ensure the provision of renewable energy and sustainable construction. There is reference to Part L of the Building Regulations; however, it is considered appropriate that a scheme of this scale should be providing measures to reduce carbon emissions and renewable energy provision. Therefore, it is considered appropriate to condition an

Energy Strategy to ensure the proposal complies with Policy ME3 and ME4 of the Core Strategy.

### **Planning Balance/Conclusion**

96. The council encourages sustainable development. This seeks to strike a balance between the economic benefit of the development, the environmental impacts and the social benefits. The economic benefits resulting from the hotel expansion are significant with the provision of enhanced tourist accommodation which will make a valuable and positive contribution to the local tourism economy. The proposal is considered to comply with policy PC6 and paragraph 81 of the NPPF. Substantial weight is given to the tourism and consequent economic benefits of the proposals in the Planning Balance.
97. Social benefits are linked to the provision of employment and the provision of high quality tourism accommodation for visitors within this riverside location. However, these do need to be balanced alongside the environmental impacts which include the potential impact on the visual amenities of the locality, impacts on the living conditions of neighbouring properties and the traffic movements associated with the proposal. These impacts have all been carefully assessed and it is concluded the scheme would not harm the residential amenities of occupiers of the surrounding dwellings, the visual amenities of the area and the setting of the adjacent Conservation Areas would be preserved and the traffic flows and parking is acceptable and would not give rise to significant impacts on the local highway network.
98. Whilst the proposal could be said to have only minimal flood resilient measures and there is current lack of sustainable and energy efficiency measures, the proposal is considered to comply with the Development Plan as a whole and the NPPF does not provide a clear reason for refusal. Therefore, overall, it is considered that the balance is weighed in favour of approving the application subject to the s106 and conditions.

### **Recommendation**

It is therefore recommended that this application be delegated to the Head of Planning to **Grant permission** subject to:

- a) the completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure the required contributions towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) financial contribution; and
- b) the conditions as set out below (and any amendments to those conditions as deemed necessary).

### **Conditions**

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:  
001 Existing Ga Gf And Ff Plans  
002 Existing Ga Sf And Tf Plans



003 Existing Ga Elevations  
004 Site Location  
005 Site Existing Ground  
006 Existing Roof  
200 A Proposed GA Elevations\_Rev A  
201 A Proposed 3D Views\_Rev A  
202 A Proposed 3D Views 2\_Rev A  
007 A Site Proposed Ground\_Rev A  
008 A Site Proposed Roof\_Rev A  
009 A Proposed Site Section\_Rev A  
100 A Proposed GA GF & FF Plans\_Rev A  
101 A Proposed GA SF & TF Plans\_Rev A  
102 A Proposed GA Roof Plan\_Rev A

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Prior to any demolition or construction work taking place, a Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan scheme shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. All works which form part of the scheme shall be implemented before any part of the proposed development is started, including demolition and site clearance. The scheme shall include;
- i. An introduction consisting of construction phase environmental management plan, definitions and abbreviations and project description and location;
  - ii. A description of management responsibilities;
  - iii. A description of the construction programme;
  - iv. Site working hours and a named person for residents to contact;
  - v. Detailed Site logistics arrangements;
  - vi. Details regarding parking, deliveries, and storage;
  - vii. Details regarding dust, noise and vibration mitigation;
  - viii. Details of the hours of works and other measures to mitigate the impact of construction on the amenity of the area and safety of the highway network; and
  - ix. Communication procedures with the LPA and local community regarding key construction issues – newsletters, fliers etc.
  - x. Confirmation of no burning on the site

Reason: In order to protect the amenity of the locality and residential amenity

4. No part of the development hereby permitted shall be commenced unless a drainage scheme for the disposal of surface water by way of a sustainable drainage system has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall in particular include:
- (a) proposed arrangements for the disposal of surface water;
  - (b) information about the design storm period and intensity, the methods to be employed to delay and control the surface water discharged from the application

site and the measures to be taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters;

- (c) a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development that secures the operation of the approved surface water drainage scheme throughout this time; and
- (d) a timetable for delivery.

The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved drainage scheme and the methods, measures and arrangements in the approved scheme shall at all times be retained and managed and maintained in accordance with it.

Reason: To avoid and minimise surface water flooding of the site and wider area.

- 5. Prior to any demolition or any equipment, machinery or materials being brought on to the site for the purposes of the development, the erection of protective fencing as shown in the Arboricultural Method Statement dated November 2022 shall be carried out and shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the written consent of the local planning authority.

Reason: To protect the existing soft landscape features on the site.

- 6. Prior to any demolition or construction work taking place an energy strategy and sustainable construction scheme for the building is to be provided and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development must be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development is minimising carbon emissions.

- 7. No development above DCP (damp proof course) shall take place until full details of soft landscape works including details of species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. The planting must be carried out in the first planting season following completion of the development or the first occupation of the hotel bedrooms hereby approved, whichever is the sooner. Any planting found damaged, dead or dying in the first five years following their planting are to be duly replaced with appropriate species.

Reason: To protect the visual amenities and landscape character of the area

- 8. No development above DPC (damp proof course) of the rear extension or the fourth floor extension shall take place until details and samples of all external facing and roofing materials have been provided on site and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). All works shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with the details as approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the LPA.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory visual relationship of the new development to the existing.

- 9. All building services plant (including air conditioning unit and any air handling plant etc) shall be sited and designed in order to achieve a rating level (BS4142:2014) of 5dB below the background noise levels determined in Section 4 of the Plant Noise Assessment carried out by 24 Acoustics, dated 16<sup>th</sup> February 2023 (Ref; R9895-1,

Rev 0). Within 6 months of the first use of any of the new plants hereby approved, a noise assessment shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. This Assessment must be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of the neighbouring dwellings

10. Construction hours for the development hereby approved, shall be limited to 0800 to 1800 hrs Monday to Friday, 0800 to 1300 hrs Saturday and no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the area

11. Before the development is occupied or utilised the car parking and cycle parking facilities shown on the hereby approved plans must have been constructed. Thereafter, these must be maintained in useable condition, kept free from obstruction and available at all times for the purposes specified.

Reason: To ensure the proper construction of the parking facilities and to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes.

12. A scheme to provide signage improvements to the National Cycle Network route that runs through the site car park shall be submitted and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed scheme shall be implemented within 2 months of any of the approved new hotel bedrooms being brought into use.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable development to encourage sustainable modes of transport.

13. Prior to any of the approved new hotel bedrooms being brought into use an updated Biodiversity Site Enhancement Plan must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancements as set out in Ecological Assessment dated October 2022 and updated Site Enhancement Plan. Any variation must first be approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the biodiversity interests of the site and area and ensure biodiversity enhancements are secured.

14. Prior to the addition of any new external lighting on the hotel building or within the Hotel site, full details of lighting including location, appearance, illuminance levels and shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenities of the locality and residential amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

15. Prior to any of the approved new hotel bedrooms being brought into use, an emergency plan in the event of a flood event shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and the Plan maintained and kept available at all times.

Reason; To protect occupiers of the Hotel from flood risk.

16. The finished ground floor levels of the extension hereby approved shall be as shown on the 009 A Proposed Site Section\_Rev A and the following resilient measures used on the ground floor:

- Use of stainless steel and plastic for fixtures and fittings
- Raised plug sockets, water, electricity and gas meters

shall be carried out prior to any of the approved new hotel bedrooms being brought into use.

Reason: To protect occupiers of the Hotel and the building from flood risk.

**Background Documents:**

Documents uploaded to that part of the Council's website that is publicly accessible and specifically relates to the application the subject of this report including all related consultation responses, representations and documents submitted by the applicant in respect of the application.