

Application Number: 16/11333 Full Planning Permission

Site: CHEWTON GLEN HOTEL, CHRISTCHURCH ROAD,
NEW MILTON BH25 6QS

Development: 2 detached guest lodges; parking; landscaping; temporary vehicle
access

Applicant: Chewton Glen Hotel & Spa

Target Date: 02/01/2017

1 REASON FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

Discretion of Service Manager Planning and Building Control and previous Committee interest

2 DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND OTHER CONSTRAINTS

Countryside outside the New Forest
Green Belt

3 DEVELOPMENT PLAN, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Core Strategy

Objectives

1. Special qualities, local distinctiveness and a high quality living environment
7. The countryside
9. Leisure and recreation

Policies

- CS1: Sustainable development principles
- CS2: Design quality
- CS3: Protecting and enhancing our special environment (Heritage and Nature Conservation)
- CS10: The spatial strategy
- CS19: Tourism
- CS21: Rural economy

Local Plan Part 2 Sites and Development Management Development Plan Document

- NPPF1: National Planning Policy Framework – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- DM2: Nature conservation, biodiversity and geodiversity
- DM13: Tourism and visitor facilities

4 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT ADVICE

Section 38 Development Plan

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
National Planning Policy Framework
Achieving Sustainable Development
NPPF Ch.1 Building a strong, competitive economy
NPPF Ch. 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy
NPPF Ch. 7 - Requiring good design
NPPF Ch.10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal
change
NPPF Ch.11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

5 RELEVANT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE AND DOCUMENTS

SPD - New Milton Local Distinctiveness

6 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

6.1 11/96840 - 6 detached guest lodge buildings. Screening Opinion EIA not required 18.3.11

6.2 11/96834 - 6 detached guest lodges, parking, landscaping, temporary vehicular access/track. Granted 18.10.11

7 PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

New Milton Town Council - acceptable but would accept a delegated decision

8 COUNCILLOR COMMENTS

None received

9 CONSULTEE COMMENTS

9.1 Hampshire County Council Highway Engineer - no objections

9.2 Natural England - no objection

9.3 Tree Officer - recommend condition

9.4 Environment Agency - no objection

9.5 Southern Gas Networks - offer advice

9.6 Southern Water - offer advice and request an informative

9.7 Ecologist - no objection subject to condition

9.8 Employment and Tourism Manager - supports the proposal

10 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

None

11 CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

None

12 LOCAL FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Local financial considerations are not material to the decision on this application

13 WORKING WITH THE APPLICANT/AGENT

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, New Forest District Council take a positive and proactive approach, seeking solutions to any problems arising in the handling of development proposals so as to achieve, whenever possible, a positive outcome.

This is achieved by

- Strongly encouraging those proposing development to use the very thorough pre application advice service the Council provides.
- Working together with applicants/agents to ensure planning applications are registered as expeditiously as possible.
- Advising agents/applicants early on in the processing of an application (through the release of a Parish Briefing Note) as to the key issues relevant to the application.
- Updating applicants/agents of issues that arise in the processing of their applications through the availability of comments received on the web or by direct contact when relevant.
- Working together with applicants/agents to closely manage the planning application process to allow an opportunity to negotiate and accept amendments on applications (particularly those that best support the Core Strategy Objectives) when this can be done without compromising government performance requirements.
- Advising applicants/agents as soon as possible as to concerns that cannot be dealt with during the processing of an application allowing for a timely withdrawal and re-submission or decision based on the scheme as originally submitted if this is what the applicant/agent requires.
- When necessary discussing with applicants/agents proposed conditions especially those that would restrict the use of commercial properties or land when this can be done without compromising government performance requirements.

The supporting information provided is not considered to represent very special circumstances which amount to overriding the strict Green Belt policy.

14 ASSESSMENT

14.1 Introduction

14.1.1 The site lies just outside of the built up area of New Milton in the Green Belt. Part of the Chewton Glen site is also within Christchurch Borough. Chewton Glen is an exclusive hotel and spa with grounds which include a walled garden, tennis centre and cookery school. The accommodation is largely contained within the main hotel building although there are 6 detached lodges to the north of the main building along the valley of Walkford Brook which runs through the site. Part of the site, which runs north from the spa end of the hotel to the Walkford Road and includes an access track running east/west and north/south onto Christchurch Road, is also designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

14.1.2 The proposal entails the provision of two additional lodges, one either end of the existing run. Each lodge would comprise entrance lobby, plant room, kitchenette, two ensuite double bedrooms, a bunk room, shower room and large open plan living/dining area leading to a terrace with hot tub at ground floor level with two further bunk rooms in the roof space. They would be accessed from the woodland walk via a bridge walkway. Two additional parking spaces would be provided in an additional car port adjacent to the existing parking area for the lodges.

14.2 Principle

14.2.1 The proposal is contrary to Green Belt policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework as it does not fall within any of the categories which are considered to be appropriate in such locations. It is therefore considered to be inappropriate development requiring the applicant to demonstrate very special circumstances to outweigh the harm caused to the Green Belt.

14.2.2 The previous scheme which was granted permission included a unilateral undertaking securing the provision of the 6 lodges as an alternative to an extant permission for an extension to the hotel. The current proposal has no alternative and would represent two additional buildings within the Green Belt. The supporting statement has indicated very special circumstances relating to the impact the hotel has on the local economy and tourism. The figures provided do not however, specify the potential increase to these were permission to be granted for the lodges, simply a statement relating to the existing contribution the hotel makes.

14.2.3 The hotel are keen to expand upon the success of the existing tree houses as part of their business plan which is to 'continually enhance the leisure and accommodation offer'. This would suggest that in the future, these additional lodges may not be sufficient for the hotel and further accommodation would be sought.

14.3 Highways

14.3.1 The proposal also includes the provision of a temporary access off Christchurch Road in New Milton. As with the previous scheme, the Highway Authority did not raise any objections to this subject to the applicant obtaining the necessary license for the works required to the public highway. The provision of two parking spaces for the two units accords with the parking provision previously agreed and there are no highways objections to the proposal.

14.4 Trees/landscape

14.4.1 The site contains many trees, some of which are within the SINC although none are statutorily protected in their own right. A few are proposed to be removed and, in the overall context of the area, it is not considered that their loss would adversely affect the landscape setting in this part of the hotel grounds. Further, the lodges themselves appear to be sympathetically sited and are unlikely to have any detrimental impact on public amenity or the landscape setting. There are no objections raised from a tree point of view subject to a condition requiring tree protection measures.

14.5 Ecology

14.5.1 The proposal would involve the closure of a badger sett and the maintenance of an artificial sett provided prior to the previous scheme being implemented. Subject to compliance with the recommendations in the submitted ecological report, there are no objections to the proposal although a condition is requested requiring additional details of biodiversity enhancement. The proposal is not considered to be harmful to nature conservation issues.

14.6 Drainage

14.6.1 The application provides details of the proposed foul and surface water drainage schemes in that they would be generally similar to the existing tree houses with the exception of the foul sewage to one of the lodges. However, while drainage runs are indicated within the relevant document and it is stated that storage tanks would be placed underneath the lodges, there is no indication of what any water storage facility may look like as the proposed elevations do not show this. The existing servicing underneath the lodges is partially screened although is not a particularly attractive feature to the scheme.

14.6.2 The Environment Agency has no comments with regard to the proposal and Building Control would deal with the suitability of these schemes.

14.7 Conclusion

14.7.1 Whilst there are no objections to the proposal in respect of their energy efficiency, impact on trees, ecology and highway safety, the fact remains that the hotel is within the Green Belt where new buildings are considered to be inappropriate. It is accepted that the hotel currently offers great benefits to the local economy and tourism of the New Forest but in the overall scheme of things, the additional two jobs to be created and likely extent of local spending by visitors to the lodges, coupled with the fact that the previous approval was seen as an exchange for extant floor space elsewhere within the site is not considered to be sufficient to override Green Belt policy in this instance and refusal is therefore recommended.

14.7.2 In coming to this recommendation, consideration has been given to the rights set out in Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions) of the European Convention on Human Rights. Whilst it is recognised that this recommendation, if agreed, may interfere with the rights and freedoms of the applicant to develop the land in the way proposed, the objections to the planning application are serious ones and cannot be overcome by the imposition of conditions. The public interest and the rights and freedoms of neighbouring property owners can only be safeguarded by the refusal of permission.

15. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

Reason(s) for Refusal:

1. The proposal lies within the Green Belt where strict policies of restraint apply. The proposal is not considered to demonstrate very special circumstances which would override this policy, contrary to CS10 of the New Forest District Council Core Strategy.

Notes for inclusion on certificate:

1. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, New Forest District Council takes a positive and proactive approach, seeking solutions to any problems arising in the handling of development proposals so as to achieve, whenever possible, a positive outcome by giving clear advice to applicants.

The supporting information provided is not considered to represent very special circumstances which amount to overriding the strict Green Belt policy.

Further Information:

Major Team
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New Forest DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**Planning Development
Control Committee
December 2016**

Item No: 3h

**Chewton Glen Hotel
Christchurch Road
New Milton
16/11333
SZ2194**

Scale 1:5000

N.B. If printing this plan from the internet, it will not be to scale.

