

**LOCATION:** Frimley Hall Hotel, Lime Avenue, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 2BG,

**PROPOSAL:** Erection of third floor extension with associated alterations to first and second floor.

**TYPE:** Full Planning Application

**APPLICANT:** Macdonald Hotels And Resorts

**OFFICER:** Emma Pearman

**RECOMMENDATION: GRANT, subject to conditions**

## 1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application seeks permission for extension and refurbishment of the third floor of the hotel, to create 12 new suites and staff accommodation and offices, as well as an extension to the hotel on the eastern elevation to extend the existing first and second floor bedrooms on this side. The application is very similar to previous permissions at the hotel, which have not been implemented, however this time there is no extension proposed on the western side, due to concerns regarding the impact on TPO trees.
- 1.2 The hotel is keen to secure the improvements, given the recent difficult economic situation for the hospitality industry, and states that the extensions and refurbishment will make the hotel more appealing for guests, and assist in the economic recovery. While the hotel is outside the town centre, it is not considered that the proposed extensions would result in any significant business being taken away from the town centre, as this hotel has a different offering in terms of accommodation and facilities.
- 1.3 Concern has been raised about parking, however the hotel has significantly more spaces than at the time of the previous application which was considered acceptable, and the limited number of additional rooms is not considered to result in any significant parking issues. The parking provision has been assessed by the County Highway Authority, who have not raised any concerns, and a Travel Plan is proposed to be implemented. Amenity concerns have also been raised in respect of noise and disturbance, however this is an existing occasional issue, generally related to large events and it is not considered that this proposal would have any significant effect on these events. The hotel intend to introduce new measures to assist with this.
- 1.4 The proposal will result in the loss of some TPO trees in the centre of the site, however a larger number of trees will be replanted, and no trees along the boundaries of the site will be lost, which help to screen the hotel from surrounding properties. The hotel's locally listed designation is not considered to be harmed by the proposals, which are also considered acceptable in all other regards, subject to the proposed conditions.

## **2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The application site comprises Frimley Hall Hotel and its grounds, which includes a separate health and fitness club building, restaurants, and a large car park and woodland to the north and south of the hotel. There are a large number of mature trees and hedgerows on the site, and on the boundaries. The front part of the hotel was formerly a Victorian manor house, and is locally listed. The remainder of the hotel comprises flat roofed 1970s additions, with a separate, more modern health and fitness building close to the western boundary.
- 2.2 The site is located in the settlement area of Camberley with its main access from Lime Avenue and a secondary access onto Frimley Hall Drive. It is bounded by residential properties on all sides, other than to the north where it shares a boundary with Crawley Ridge Junior School. The site is outside the 400m buffer to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

## **3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 3.1 06/0723              Redevelopment of the third floor into 24 bedrooms, following demolition of the existing third floor, with associated alterations  
*Granted 12.10.2007 [not implemented]*
- 3.2 10/0782              Application to extend the time limit for the implementation of planning permission SU06/0723 for the redevelopment of the third floor into 24 bedrooms, following demolition of the existing third floor with associated alterations  
*Granted 10.1.2011 [not implemented]*
- 3.3 11/0751              Erection of a single storey extension and a first-floor extension [to health and fitness suite]  
*Granted 18.1.2012 [not implemented]*
- 3.4 14/0060              Erection of a third floor extension with associated alterations to the first and second floors  
*Granted 22.4.2014 [not implemented]*
- 3.5 19/2024              Erection of a single storey side extension and a two-storey side extension to the health and fitness building, with associated alterations  
*Granted 18.5.21 [not yet implemented]*

## **4.0 THE PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The development proposed is the erection of a third-floor extension, following demolition of existing, with extensions to existing bedrooms on the first and second floors and associated alterations. The existing third floor comprises 13 rooms of accommodation, stores and offices which the applicant states are largely unused. The proposal would be to replace this with 12 larger suites and 4 staff bedrooms/offices. On the first and second floor, ten bedrooms on the eastern side of the hotel are proposed to be slightly enlarged by a depth of 2m, as well as an extension to accommodate a lift, added close to the eastern elevation, between the existing built form of the buildings.

- 4.2 The rear part of the hotel comprises a 1970s addition to the original locally listed Victorian Manor House, and it is this rear addition that would be extended. The eastern and western elevations would increase in height to approximately 12.5m from 10m with the addition of the extended third floor. The proposed third floor would have a flat roof with grey cladding. Juliet balconies would be proposed to the second and third floors on both the eastern and western elevations, and windows changed to dark grey on the first floor. On the eastern side of the building, there would be an extension of 2m depth, increasing the size of the existing rooms at first and second floors on this side. There would also be a three-storey extension of 6m x 2m in area approximately, to add a lift. This would be adjacent to the eastern elevation and seen from this side only, between the built form of the existing buildings.
- 4.3 Part of the northern elevation (middle section) would also increase in height from 6.5m to approximately 9.6m, with a flat roof, grey cladding and brick, and Juliet balconies for the third-floor accommodation. There would be an external staircase adjacent to it as a fire escape. The front of the locally listed Manor House is on the southern elevation of the building which would not change, however the top part of the third floor would be visible behind this elevation.
- 4.4 It is noted that several similar proposals have been previously granted permission but not implemented. This proposal was originally an identical resubmission of planning permission 14/0060, which was granted in 2014, and similar proposals were granted in 2006 and 2010. However this proposal has been amended during the course of the application, due to concerns about the impact on protected trees on the western side of the site. The proposal therefore now excludes the previously proposed extension to the rooms on the western side and part of the northern elevation, with the extensions now confined to the eastern side and third floor only.

## 5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

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| 5.1 County Highway Authority               | No objection, subject to conditions for a Construction Transport Management Plan, electric charging sockets for some parking spaces, implementation of the Travel Plan, and the provision of secure cycle parking. See Annex A for a copy of these comments. |
| 5.2 Council's Environmental Health Officer | No objection   |
| 5.3 Conservation Advisor                   | No objection, subject to condition for materials to match that of the existing building  |
| 5.4 Council's Arboricultural Officer       | No objection to revised plans, subject to conditions for an updated Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement, a tree protection site visit, and for a landscaping scheme to be submitted   |
| 5.5 Surrey Wildlife Trust                  | No objection, subject to conditions for wildlife and landscaping enhancements, for the work to proceed in line with the precautions set out in the ecology reports, and restrictions on external lighting  |

## 6.0 REPRESENTATION

- 6.1 At the time of preparation of this report, objections from five neighbouring properties have been received which raise the following issues:

Amenity [*Officer comment: see section 7.5*]

- Overlooking / loss of privacy
- Dirt, dust and noise impact of construction
- Noise, litter and other disturbance from customers
- Will affect privacy of houses in Paddock Wood Close

Traffic/parking [*Officer comment: see section 7.6*]

- Insufficient parking which already overspills down Lime Avenue, particularly during events
- Increased traffic and parking from additional visitors
- Increased pollution as a result of more traffic
- Public transport is unlikely to be used
- No speed calming in Lime Avenue and road is in a state of disrepair
- Previous application required 24 additional spaces
- Use of private road (Frimley Hall Drive) for public hotel access and for parking- hotel do not pay maintenance
- Two current applications should be looked at together – especially parking
- Gate to access Frimley Hall Drive should be controlled to prevent anti-social behaviour late at night

Trees and landscaping [*Officer comment: see section 7.7*]

- Impact on natural sky line of trees
- Insufficient information on boundary treatments
- Additional trees and bushes should be planted between the back of the site and Frimley Hall Drive for privacy
- Impact of the building on the trees
- Reference to mature woodland between Trefeddian and hotel is incorrect [*Officer comment: there are trees on this boundary as shown in the submitted Tree report*]

Other issues

- No consultation with neighbours took place [*Officer comment: Neighbour notification has taken place in accordance with statutory requirements*]
- No demand or need for these additional rooms as there are other hotels nearby [*Officer comment: see section 7.3*]
- Wrong hotel address on application (Frimley Hall Drive) [*Officer comment: this has been amended by the applicant*]

## **7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION**

- 7.1 The application site is located in the settlement area of Camberley, with the northern edge of the grounds and the southern part below the access road lying with a designated Area of Green Space within the Settlement Area. The main hotel building is locally listed. It lies within the Wooded Hills character area as identified by the Western Urban Area Character SPD (WUAC).
- 7.2 While the application is very similar to the previously approved applications as set out above, planning policies have changed since that time, and as such the impacts have to be re-assessed in light of the changed policy and the current environment. The application is considered against the relevant policies, which are Policies CP1, CP2, CP9, CP10, CP11, CP14A, DM9, DM11, DM12, DM15 and DM17 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 (CSDMP), the Guiding Principles of the Wooded Hills Character Area of the WUAC, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The main issues to be addressed in the consideration of this application are:
- Principle of the expansion of the hotel use in this location;
  - Character and heritage;
  - Impact on residential amenity;
  - Traffic and parking issues;
  - Impact on trees; and,
  - Impact on ecology

### **7.3 Principle of the expansion of the hotel in this location**

- 7.3.1 Section 7 of the NPPF seeks to ensure the vitality of town centres, with decisions supporting the role that town centres play and taking a positive approach to their growth. Paragraph 87 states that local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up to date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations, and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. Paragraph 88 states that when considering out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites, well connected to the town centre.
- 7.3.2 Paragraph 81 of the NPPF states that planning 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 local business needs.
- 7.3.3 Policy CP1 of the CSDMP seeks to direct development to sustainable locations, largely in the western part of the borough. Policy CP10 supports Camberley Town Centre as being the main location for leisure facilities, with Policies CP9 and DM12 setting out the secondary role of the District and Local Centres.
- 7.3.4 The application site is not within the town centre, nor a district or local centre. However, rather than being a brand new site, which would be more appropriately directed to a town centre location, the proposal seeks an extension to an established hotel. Camberley town centre, as defined by the CSDMP Proposals Map, does not provide a significant choice of hotel accommodation, with some hotel provision lost in recent years, and the current choice is mostly confined to large chain budget hotels. This hotel provides an alternative in a location which is reasonably accessible by public transport from the town centre. The separate spa, gym and events facilities this hotel provides, particularly for weddings, is also unlikely to take business away from current town centre hotels, which do not provide these facilities.

7.3.5 The applicant has stated that Covid-19 has had a devastating effect on the hospitality and leisure industry, and this proposal enables the hotel to formulate a planned phased approach to the future and assist in the long-term viability of the hotel business. It will enable them to respond to the anticipated eventual upturn in social and economic conditions and assist in repairing the economic damage that has been caused. The applicant states that it will also enable them to provide job retention and potentially new employment in the future, as staff may increase by up to 5. They have stated that the provision of guest suites rather than guest rooms is likely to attract more visitors and the requirement for new and improved guest facilities are now of greater importance to assist in long term viability of the business. It is noted also that at least 6 of the 13 rooms on the third floor could potentially be used for accommodation with internal refurbishment, and although this proposal will make the rooms larger and more attractive, as well as some of those on the first and second floors, overall the number of rooms is not significantly increasing.

7.3.6 The NPPF is clear that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account local business needs. While this proposal does not accord with Policy CP1 in terms of the location of development, it is an established hotel, and the expansion and extension of which is unlikely to take business away from the existing town centre hotels. The hotel is also in a reasonably accessible location by public transport. It is noted also that previous planning decisions have granted permission for the expansion of the hotel, which have not been implemented. It is therefore considered that the principle of the expansion of the hotel is acceptable in this location.

#### **7.4 Character and heritage**

7.4.1 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Paragraph 130 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate landscaping. They must also be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

7.4.2 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. Paragraph 199 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

7.4.3 Policy CP2 of the CSDMP states that the Borough Council will require development to ensure that all land is used efficiently within the context of its surroundings, and respect and enhance the quality of the urban, rural, natural and historic environments. Policy DM9 states that development should respect and enhance the local, natural and historic character of the environment, paying particular regard to scale, materials, massing, bulk and density.

7.4.4 Policy DM15 states that green spaces in settlement areas as identified on the Proposals Map will be protected by restricting development to appropriate recreation uses. Policy DM17 states that development which affects any Heritage Asset should first establish and take into account its individual significance, and seek to promote the conservation and enhancement of the Asset and its setting.

7.4.5 The Guiding Principles of the Wooded Hills Housing Character Area seek to retain the green character and spacious feel of the area, by the retention of mature vegetation and detached buildings, as well as the provision of high-quality designed buildings and surrounding spaces. Guiding Principle WH6 states that opportunities should be taken to enhance the architectural quality of buildings in the area.

- 7.4.6 The existing hotel is a sharp contrast of architectural styles, with the attractive Victorian Manor house façade to the front on the southern elevation, and the majority of the hotel to the side and rear which comprises a large flat roofed 1970s addition. The proposed extension to the hotel would change much of the 1970s façade, and while this addition would still remain flat roofed and a contrast to the Victorian southern elevation, it is considered that it would be an improvement on the existing building, resulting in a more modern and refreshed appearance to those parts of the hotel. The materials of the existing 1970s addition comprises a light-coloured brick with a grey exterior to the third floor and the Victorian southern elevation is a light sandy coloured brick and render. As such the use of light brick and grey colours is considered to be sufficiently in keeping with the existing building.
- 7.4.7 There are level changes within the site and the Victorian southern elevation is largely higher than the rear elements of the existing hotel. The addition of the third floor extension would make parts of the extension taller than the southern elevation, however only the top parts of the roof would be visible from the south and are not considered to be significantly harmful to the appearance of the hotel from the front. The ground floor footprint of the hotel would not increase significantly as a result of the development, with an additional 2m depth only on the eastern elevation, and the small lift block. As such the proposal would not result in a cramped appearance to the site, with the hotel still retaining its overall spacious and verdant character.
- 7.4.8 The Council's Conservation Advisor has not objected, stating that as the extension is proposed to the rear of the historic property, it would not have a detrimental impact on the setting or elevations of the building, and would not cause any harm to the significance of the building or site over and above the existing situation. A condition is recommended to ensure that external materials match the existing building where appropriate.
- 7.4.9 The development would not impact on the character or the function of the designated Area of Green Space within the hotel grounds, as the extension would be wholly outside this area. The development is therefore considered acceptable in terms of its impact on character and heritage, and in accordance with the relevant policies in this regard.

## **7.5 Impact on residential amenity**

- 7.5.1 Policy DM9 states that development will be acceptable where it respects the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and uses. It is necessary to take into account matters such as overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light and an overbearing or unneighbourly built form.
- 7.5.2 The application site is located within a predominantly residential area and is bounded to residential properties on three sides. The proposed third floor extension would be located centrally within the site and as such would be a significant distance from the site boundaries. It would also be significantly screened from the adjoining properties by the dense and high landscaping on the boundaries. The views of the extension would be limited from the adjoining properties and therefore it is not considered that the development would give rise to an overbearing or unneighbourly impact on these properties.
- 7.5.3 The site adjoins Lime Avenue to the east, however the extension would be around 34m from the boundary on this side, with a high, dense conifer hedge on the eastern side boundary and as such it is not considered that there would be any loss of privacy for the dwellings on this side. To the north, the extension would be approximately 57m from the boundary with properties on Crawley Ridge, with significant vegetation and tall trees along the boundary.
- 7.5.4 To the west, the extension to the third floor would be around 45m from the boundary with properties on Frimley Hall Drive, with the health and fitness building in between. While some trees are proposed to be lost on this side as a result of the proposed extensions to the health and fitness building, given the distance and retained screening, it is not considered that there would be any harmful loss of privacy. While the impact on Paddock

Close has been raised, the dwellings in Paddock Close are a significant distance to the south and the existing building and woodland would prevent any views in this direction.

- 7.5.5 Concern has been raised over increased noise and disturbance from the hotel guests. However, it is not considered that the development would result in such an increase in the intensity of the use of the site as to materially increase the noise or disturbance generated. As stated above, the overall number of rooms is not significantly increasing as the third floor already has 13 rooms, of which at least six could potentially be utilised for accommodation. It is not considered that the small number of additional rooms available for use would cause any significant noise or disturbance.
- 7.5.6 It is noted that permission has recently been granted to extend the health and fitness building, however this is largely for the use of hotel guests with a small number of anticipated additional members. However, the objections indicate that the noise and disturbance issue is largely related to guests attending events and as such, considering these two proposals together, it is not considered that there is likely to be any significant increase in noise or disturbance generated by the hotel as a result. The applicant has commented in response to the objections that the hotel will provide regular guard patrols/walkrounds of the site, particularly on function occasions. They will also implement an appropriate noise limit on music levels for functions. This is welcomed, but it is noted that the Environmental Health Officer has not objected or requested any conditions and as such it is not considered necessary to secure this via condition, as the EHO could deal with it as a noise nuisance in any event if required.
- 7.5.7 The issue of noise and disturbance during construction has also been raised, however this is not a material planning consideration as construction noise is controlled under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 and enforced by Environmental Health. Having regard to all of the above it is not considered that the development would materially impact on the residential amenities currently enjoyed by the occupants of the surrounding residential properties and compiles with the relevant objectives of Policy DM9 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

## **7.6 Impact on highways and parking**

- 7.6.1 Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that in assessing specific applications for development, it should be ensured that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be, or have been, taken up, given the type of development and its location; that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users, and any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or on highway safety can be mitigated to an acceptable degree. Paragraph 111 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe
- 7.6.2 Policy CP11 of the CSDMP seeks to direct new development to sustainable locations, and states that development that will generate a high number of trips will be required to demonstrate that it can be made sustainable to promote travel by sustainable modes of transport. Policy DM11 of the CSDMP states that development which would adversely impact the safe and efficient flow of traffic movement on the highway network will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that measures to reduce such impacts to acceptable levels can be implemented.
- 7.6.3 The hotel's main access is from Lime Avenue, with a secondary access from Frimley Hall Drive. No changes are proposed to the existing accesses. The hotel also has 95 parking spaces (plus two disabled access spaces) to serve the current 98 bedrooms, and the health and fitness suite. No change to the number of spaces is proposed, nor will the extension to the health and fitness building result in the loss or gain of any spaces, however secure cycle parking is proposed. The hotel maintains that most users of the health and fitness suite are hotel guests and as such do not generate significant numbers of additional vehicles. When the very similar application 14/0060 for this proposal was previously granted permission, there were 54 spaces on site, with an additional 24

spaces were proposed as part of the application, and as such it is noted that there are considerably more spaces now than at the time of the previous application, which was considered acceptable.

- 7.6.4 The applicant has submitted a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan in support of the application. An assessment has been carried out of the additional trips likely to be generated by the proposal, which has been estimated at around four two-way trips in the AM peak hour, and three two-way trips in the PM peak hour. It is noted that the proposal for the extension to the health and fitness building was proposed to generate an additional three two-way trips in the AM peak hour and six in the PM peak, although this was a worst-case scenario as the applicant maintains that most health and fitness users are hotel guests. The TA states that the car park does get busy at certain times of the week, but generally operates within its capacity and spaces can be found. The TA also sets out that the site is accessible by a range of public transport modes, and the Travel Plan encourages sustainable modes of transport to the site and includes measures such as car sharing.
- 7.6.5 The County Highway Authority has been consulted, and has not objected, stating that a car park accumulation study has been undertaken which shows there is adequate spare capacity within the site. The County Highway Authority consider that the proposal for cycle parking will encourage sustainable modes of travel to the site and the proposal is unlikely to have a material impact on highway safety issues. They have requested conditions in respect of electric vehicle charging points, a Construction Transport Management Plan, the implementation of the Travel Plan and the provision of secure, covered cycle parking (For a copy of the CHA comments, see Annex A of this agenda).
- 7.6.6 A number of objections have been raised in respect of parking, however given the limited number of additional rooms available and the parking assessment carried out, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any significant additional overspill of parking onto local roads, which appears to be an existing problem largely during events. Parking restrictions on neighbouring roads, as well as traffic calming, would be a matter for the County Highway Authority to consider separately and are outside the remit of planning.
- 7.6.7 The issue of the use of the gate to Frimley Hall Drive and the maintenance of this private road has also been raised, however these are private matters between the hotel and the residents of the road. This is not the main access to the hotel and as such it is not considered likely that this proposal, including in combination with the proposed extension to the health and fitness building, is likely to significantly increase the use of this road. In this regard, the applicant has confirmed that the gate to Frimley Hall Drive is neither used or opened for guests vehicular use/access, and as such any increase in guests will not increase use of this road directly. Staff also use the main access from Lime Avenue.
- 7.6.8 An issue of increased air pollution due to traffic has also been raised, however given the limited number of additional trips anticipated to be generated by the proposal, it falls below the requirement for an air quality assessment. It is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of its impact on highways and parking, subject to the proposed conditions.

## **7.7 Impact on trees**

- 7.7.1 Policy DM9 of the CSDMP states that development will be acceptable where it protects trees and other vegetation worthy of retention, and provides high quality hard and soft landscaping where appropriate.
- 7.7.2 The site is covered by a group Tree Preservation Order, TPO 1/03. An Arboricultural Report has been submitted with the application, which indicates that seven individual trees and one group of trees/vegetation are proposed to be removed to facilitate the development, as well as one tree removed for their poor condition. The trees to be removed comprise sweet chestnut, birch, pine sycamore and one oak, and are all immediately adjacent to the hotel building to the eastern side. The trees that provide

screening on the boundary of the site are unaffected. The excavation close to the trees that are proposed to be retained will be carried out by hand, or small machinery, and under supervision.

- 7.7.3 The Council's Arboricultural Officer has been consulted and was originally very concerned about the potential loss of TPO trees on the western side of the building, and considered that the loss would be greater than as set out in the report. It was considered that the trees on the western side have more value in amenity terms than those on the eastern side, and as such it was agreed that the applicant would remove the proposed extensions on the western side of the building (including on the part northern elevation) to prevent any harm to these trees. As such only trees on the eastern side are now affected, however the applicant has indicated on the Tree Planting Plan that they propose to plant in the region of 7 additional trees in this area set further back from the building, and 7 further trees in the north-eastern side of the site. These would be a mixture of standard and extra heavy trees, but the exact detail of planting is to be agreed by condition.
- 7.7.4 The Council's Arboricultural Officer has therefore removed his objection, subject to conditions for an updated Tree Protection Plan and Method Statement to be submitted, as well as details for landscaping including replacement trees and vegetation with maintenance for three years, and a site visit to check installed tree protection.

## **7.8 Impact on ecology**

- 7.8.1 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should minimise impacts on, and provide net gains for, biodiversity. Paragraph 180 states that when determining planning applications, if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.
- 7.8.2 Policy CP14A of the CSDMP states that the Council will seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity within Surrey Heath, and that development that results in harm to or loss of features of interest for biodiversity will not be permitted.
- 7.8.3 A bat survey report has been submitted, which found that there is no evidence that bats are roosting in the trees due to be removed, nor in the parts of the building affected by the proposals. It advises that precautionary measures for bats should be undertaken during construction, as bats are active around the site, and recommends biodiversity enhancements for bats.
- 7.8.4 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has also been submitted, which aims to identify any protected species and habitats on site, and identify measures to protect ecological features during development and any biodiversity enhancements. No protected species or notable habitats were found on site, although it was noted that there are likely to be birds nests in some of the trees and as such works to remove the trees should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season.
- 7.8.5 The PEA recommends that precautionary measures should be taken during construction to protect amphibians, reptiles and bats that could be present in the surroundings. It also recommends biodiversity enhancements by way of nesting boxes, bat boxes, habitat piles for reptiles, wildlife friendly tree and shrub species, and minimal external lighting.
- 7.8.6 Surrey Wildlife Trust has been consulted, and has not objected, subject to conditions for the biodiversity enhancements, and for work to proceed in accordance with the precautionary measures identified in the PEA, and the bat survey. They have also recommended that the trees lost should be replaced. It is considered that these measures can be secured by condition.

## **8.0 POSITIVE/PROACTIVE WORKING**

- 8.1 In assessing this application, officers have worked with the applicant in a positive, creative and proactive manner consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 38-41 of the NPPF. This included 1 or more of the following:-
- a) Provided or made available pre application advice to seek to resolve problems before the application was submitted and to foster the delivery of sustainable development.
  - b) Provided feedback through the validation process including information on the website, to correct identified problems to ensure that the application was correct and could be registered.
  - c) Have suggested/accepted/negotiated amendments to the scheme to resolve identified problems with the proposal and to seek to foster sustainable development.
  - d) Have proactively communicated with the applicant through the process to advise progress, timescale or recommendation.

## **9.0 CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The proposal is a very similar re-submission of an application previously granted in 2006, renewed in 2010, and granted permission again in 2014, that was not implemented. However, this current proposal has been amended during the course of this application process, to be reduced in size on the western side given concerns about harm to protected trees. The proposal seeks a limited expansion/refurbishment of a hotel use outside the town centre, which is contrary to policy that directs development to the town centre location. However, the application site is an established hotel, which offers alternative provision from the current limited choice in the town centre, and the proposal will support the economic growth and viability of the business. The principle of the development is therefore considered to be acceptable.
- 9.2 Objections have been raised with regard to parking particularly, however the applicant has submitted a Transport Assessment, carried out a parking study and intends to implement a Travel Plan for more sustainable methods of transport to the site. It is not considered that there would be any significant adverse impact on highways or parking as a result of the proposal, given the limited number of additional rooms proposed. The proposal is also considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on character, trees, heritage, residential amenity and ecology, subject to conditions.

## **10.0 RECOMMENDATION**

GRANT, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions and in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The proposed development shall be built in accordance with the following plans all received 17.5.21:
  - Proposed First Floor Plan PS08 Rev D
  - Proposed Site Plan PS02 Rev D
  - Proposed Third Floor Plan PS10 Rev D
  - Proposed East and West Elevations PS14 Rev C
  - Proposed Sections PS16 Rev C

- Proposed Ground Floor Plan PS07 Rev C
- Proposed Second Floor Plan PS09 Rev D
- Proposed Roof Plan Rev C PS11
- Proposed North and South Elevations PS15 Rev C

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning and as advised in ID.17a of the Planning Practice Guidance.

3. The development hereby approved shall be constructed in brickwork to match that of the existing building; and render, cladding and fenestration as set out in Section 7 of the application form received 28.02.20.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to accord with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. No works or development shall take place until an updated Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan specific to this scheme, has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement shall be written in accordance with, and address sections 5.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 7 of British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - recommendations.

Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details until completion of the development.

Reason: To protect trees which contribute to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area, in accordance with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. Prior to completion or first occupation of the development hereby approved, whichever is the sooner; details of treatment of all parts on the site not covered by buildings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The site shall be landscaped strictly in accordance with the approved details in the first planting season after completion or first occupation of the development, whichever is the sooner.

The submitted details shall include:

- a) A scaled plan showing vegetation to be retained and trees and plants to be planted
- b) A schedule detailing sizes and numbers of all proposed trees/plants
- c) A detailed written soft landscaping management plan with sufficient specification to ensure successful establishment and survival of new planting for at least 3 years
- d) Landscaping should include wildlife friendly native species, preferably of local provenance from seed collected, raised and grown only in the UK, suitable for site conditions and complimentary to surrounding natural habitat. Nectar rich flowers and berry species should be included.
- e) Location of bat and bird boxes on the building and/or retained trees
- f) Locations of habitat piles using suitable arisings from cut vegetation and the locations of the provision/retention of deadwood habitat.

There shall be no excavation or raising or lowering of levels within the prescribed root protection area of retained trees unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any new tree(s) that die(s), are/is removed, become(s) severely damaged or diseased shall be replaced and any new planting (other than trees) which dies, is removed, becomes severely damaged or diseased within five years of planting shall be

replaced. Replacement planting shall be in accordance with the approved details (unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation).

Reason: Required to safeguard and enhance the character and amenity of the area, to provide ecological, environmental and biodiversity benefits and to maximise the quality and usability of open spaces within the development, and to enhance its setting within the immediate locality in accordance to ensure a form of development that maintains, and contributes positively to, the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. Prior to the commencement of any works other than the installation of tree protection (including site clearance, demolition and construction works) 5 working days' notice shall be given to the Local Planning Authority Tree Officer to attend a pre-commencement site meeting to inspect all tree protection measures and confirm that they have been installed in the correct location as yet to be agreed under Condition 4 above. Alternatively, prior to the commencement of any works other than the installation of tree protection, photo evidence shall be provided to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority that demonstrates that the tree protection has been installed in accordance with details as agreed by Condition 4 above.

Reason: To protect trees which contribute to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area, in accordance with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. No development shall commence until a Construction Management Plan to include details of:
  - a) Parking for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors
  - b) Loading and unloading of plant and materials
  - c) Storage of plant and materials
  - d) Before and after construction condition surveys of the highway and a commitment to fund the repair of any damage caused
  - e) Measures to prevent the deposit of materials on the highwayHas been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Only the approved details shall be implemented in full during the construction of the development.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, in accordance with Policies CP11 and DM11 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

8. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless and until at least 4 of the parking spaces are provided with a fast charge socket (current minimum requirements - 7kw Mode 3 with type 2 connector - 230v AC 32 Amp single phase dedicated supply) in accordance with a scheme to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, in accordance with Policies CP11 and DM11 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. The details within the approved Travel Plan, dated February 2020, shall be implemented upon completion of the development and thereafter maintained and developed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, in accordance with Policies CP11 and DM11 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework

10. The development hereby approved shall provide facilities for the secure, covered parking of bicycles within the development site, in accordance with the approved plans, and thereafter the said approved facilities shall be provided, retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users, in accordance with Policies CP11 and DM11 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

11. The development hereby permitted shall proceed in line with the precautionary working recommendations for bats, set out in Section 5.5 of the submitted Bat Scoping Survey Report received 23.09.2019. Tree T19 as shown on the submitted Arboricultural Report should be soft felled to avoid harm to any bats, should they be present.

Reason: In the interests of not harming protected species in accordance with Policy CP14A of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

12. The development hereby permitted shall proceed in line with the precautionary working recommendations for reptiles and amphibians, as set out in Section 5 of the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal received 23.09.2019.

Reason: In the interests of not harming protected species in accordance with Policy CP14A of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework

13. No external lighting shall be installed on the site without a lighting scheme first being submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any external lighting shall comply with the recommendations of the Bat Conservation Trusts' document entitled "Bats and Lighting in the UK - Bats and the Built Environment Series".

Reason: In the interests of not harming protected species in accordance with Policy CP14A of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### **Informative(s)**

1. The developer is reminded that it is an offence to allow materials to be carried from the site and deposited on or damage the highway from uncleamed wheels or badly loaded vehicles. The Highway Authority will seek, wherever possible, to recover any expenses incurred in clearing, cleaning or repairing highway surfaces and prosecutes persistent offenders.

2. The developer is advised that a standard fee may be charged for input to, and future monitoring of, any Travel Plan
3. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the electricity supply is sufficient to meet future demands and that any power balancing technology is in place if required. Please refer to:  
<http://www.beama.org.uk/resourcelibrary/beama-guide-to-electric-vehicle-infrastructure.html>
4. The developer is reminded that it is an offence under Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird, or to intentionally damage, take or destroy its nest whilst it is being built or in use. Tree felling and vegetation clearance should be timed to avoid the bird nesting season of early March to August inclusive. If this is not possible, the site shall be inspected for active nests by an ecologist immediately prior to clearance works. If active nests are found they shall be left undisturbed with a buffer zone around them until confirmed by an ecologist that it is no longer in use.
5. In conditions 4 and 5 above, the following British Standards should be referred to:
  - A. BS: 3882:2015 Specification for topsoil
  - B. BS: 3936-1:1992 Nursery Stock - Part 1: Specification for trees and shrubs
  - C. BS: 3998:2010 Tree work - Recommendations
  - D. BS: 4428:1989 Code of practice for general landscaping operations (excluding hard surfaces)
  - E. BS: 4043:1989 Recommendations for transplanting root-balled trees
  - F. BS: 5837 (2012) Trees in relation to demolition, design and construction - Recommendations
  - G. BS: 7370-4:1993 Grounds maintenance part 4. Recommendations for maintenance of soft landscape (other than amenity turf).
  - H. BS: 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations
  - I. BS: 8601:2013 Specification for subsoil and requirements for use.