

Application No: 16/00673/FULL Full Application

Site: The Montagu Arms Hotel, 1 Palace Lane, Brockenhurst, SO42 7YG

Proposal: Extension and conversion of barn to create two guest accommodation suites.

Applicant: Mr A Wolseley, Greenclose Hotels Ltd

Case Officer: Deborah Slade

Parish: BEAULIEU

1. REASON FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

Referred by Authority Member

2. DEVELOPMENT PLAN DESIGNATION

Listed Building
Conservation Area

3. PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

DP1 General Development Principles
CP2 The Natural Environment
CP7 The Built Environment
CP8 Local Distinctiveness
CP19 Access
CP16 Tourism Development
DP17 Extensions to Non Residential Buildings and Uses

4. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Design Guide SPD

5. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Sec 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
Sec 13 - Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals
Sec 7 - Requiring good design

6. MEMBER COMMENTS

Richard Frampton – requests committee consideration to balance policy considerations with the need to secure upkeep of traditional building which

may otherwise deteriorate

7. PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Beaulieu Parish Council: supports this application as it will secure the future of this dilapidated barn which is of historic significance and importance. Further the proposed use will generate income for the local economy. Hope earlier assurances of providing more car parking within the hotel grounds will be kept. However the Parish Council will accept the decision reached by the NPA's officers.

8. CONSULTEES

8.1 Ecologist: No objections subject to condition.

8.2 Building Design & Conservation Area Officer: Objection on grounds of harm to Listed Building.

8.3 Tree Officer: No objection subject to condition.

9. REPRESENTATIONS

9.1 No representations received.

10. RELEVANT HISTORY

10.1 Conversion of barn to create two guest accommodation suites (15/01009) withdrawn on 4 February 2016

10.2 Conversion of barn to create two guest accommodation suites (Application for Listed Building Consent) (15/01010) withdrawn on 4 February 2016

11. ASSESSMENT

11.1 The Montagu Arms is a Grade II Listed Building, its list description is as follows:

Hotel. 1888 by W H Mitchell extended 1924 by Bizan and Fletcher, altered internally since. Brick with stone dressings some blue header decoration. 1st floor tilehung or timber-frame with plaster infill, plain and fishscale tile roof. Tudor-Jacobean style with Vernacular revival later range; old part 2 storey and attic, 4 bay with to rear, one end, along upper part of High Street, 2 bay wing, at other end, projecting to front later wing lower 2 storey and attic, 4 bay. Main front has at each end projecting gabled bays, one 2 storey, other 3 and jettied gable over centre. All with bargeboards and finials. Off centre rectangular half glazed, hipper roof porch. Either side stone mullioned and transomed windows. Timber windows on upper floors. All windows have leaded

casements. Wide along upper part of street has stepped, shaped gabled at end of main range, gabled timber frame section with balcony, and carriageway below canted bay under gable. Gable dormers on roof. Stack at end of main range and on ridge, set diagonally with clustered shafts.

- 11.2 This application relates to the brick built barn which lies behind the Montagu Arms Hotel, which forms part of a historic farmyard. Although not listed in its own right the barn is curtilage listed as the barn pre-dates 1948, was in the same ownership at the time of the hotel being listed and had an ancillary use associated with the hotel. In addition to being curtilage listed, the barn has been highlighted within the conservation area character appraisal as a building of local historic, architectural, vernacular interest within the Beaulieu Conservation Area.
- 11.3 Planning permission is sought to extend the barn and convert it to form two hotel suites, to be used as guest accommodation in conjunction with the Montagu Arms hotel. Policy DP17 provides for the limited extension of existing non-residential buildings where this would not materially increase the level of impact of the activity on site, and where it would be contained within the existing site boundary. Policy CP7 requires that proposals should protect, maintain or enhance nationally important features of the building environment, such as Listed buildings.
- 11.4 The barn presently contributes in a positive manner to the setting of the listed building and also to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The brick barn appears on the historic OS maps of the mid-late 19th century and into the early 20th century. The barn has a good sized tie beam, raking struts, trenched purlins and the rather crude appearance of construction. The historic roof structure remains apparent despite the later installation of a modern timber roof structure. Externally, a cart door opening on the west elevation remains visible along with a similar proportioned opening on the east elevation which has potentially been blocked in at a later date with varying brick work to make a smaller door opening. Two small vent openings are within the apex of the side gables and there is evidence of a former window opening which has been blocked to the left hand side of the doorway opening on the west elevation. The barn was perhaps used as a smaller scale threshing barn. The barn may pre-date the 19th century Montagu Arms and form part of an earlier farm yard group. The Montagu Arms was previously a pub and became a hotel in 1888.
- 11.5 The requirement of Section 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in relation to the statutory duty is to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting and the conservation area. In recent Court of Appeal cases (*Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd*

v E.Northants DC, English Heritage, National Trust & SSCLG) considerable weight has been applied to the preservation of the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas. In summary, where any harm (including 'less than substantial' harm) can be shown to occur to the setting of a listed building or conservation area, the default position should be a refusal. ('Less than substantial harm' is anything that does not involve complete or partial demolition of a Listed Building.) The applicant should demonstrate sufficiently powerful material considerations necessary to justify harm, which can include showing that alternative options have been explored and ruled out.

- 11.6 The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 134 states that: *Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.* The proposal to convert the barn into two separate guest accommodation suites would see the barn divided in half into two units of accommodation. This would involve the subdivision of the barn in a vertical manner by a wall. The subdivision would be visible from the west elevation through the glazed doorway where the vertical line of the dividing wall would be discernible. Each unit of accommodation would have a bedroom on the ground floor and at first floor a living room, with a bathroom within a lean-to single storey rear extension. This has resulted in two roof lights being proposed on the rear roof slope, one for each unit of accommodation to light the living room.
- 11.7 A sympathetic and appropriate use for this barn would certainly be a positive step forward in ensuring the longevity of the barn. However, any scheme should be mindful of the agricultural character of the barn with its non-domestic appearance. There is concern with regard to the manner in which the barn is being proposed to be converted. It would be feasible to convert the barn to one unit of accommodation without the need for extension, and without the need for the mezzanine floor which subdivides the barn, reducing its openness as a structure. However, the proposal seeks to create two units of accommodation, with a gross internal floorspace of 114 square metres. The existing barn has a floorspace of around 54 square metres.
- 11.8 The barn has a simple, agricultural appearance in line with its former use where light and ventilation had to be carefully controlled. The general principle with barn conversions is that any existing openings should be utilised and any new openings should be minimised in order to preserve the character of the barn and where they are proposed they should clearly reflect the agricultural/industrial character of the building. It is not considered that the roof lights on the rear roof slope and the large glazed door opening on the west elevation will preserve the character

and appearance of the barn. The roof lights would appear overly domestic in character. If rooms were permitted within the roof space then alternative means of lighting these rooms would need to be explored.

- 11.9 It is proposed to remove the double doors and glaze the opening entirely with full height glass, recessed back, which contains two glazed doors which lead to the two units of accommodation. A key aspect of the character of the barn is its relatively solid appearance, which is reinforced by the full height double doors, set within the original opening. There is a concern that although the glazing would retain the scale of the original opening, the glazing would reveal the domestic paraphernalia which would be visible inside and the strong vertical division which would not accurately reflect the uncomplicated agricultural character and will strongly suggest the internal subdivision, thereby contrary to the character of the barn. The manner in which the barn is being subdivided would not be a satisfactory discreet or appropriate way in which to utilise the space within the barn and would indicate an overly intensive and intrusive conversion. The proposed glazing would have a large degree of impact and even if some sort of tint is being proposed, the glass would still be reflective and should be covered by shutters or doors. The glazing as proposed would despoil the 'barn-like' appearance of the building. The overall effect would not accord with the principles for barn conversion which are set out on page 37 of the Design Guide SPD.
- 11.10 A simple lean-to rear extension may be acceptable but only if it were of appropriate small scale, and only if it ensured that there would be less pressure internally on the historic building. The proposal is for a fairly substantial extension in combination with the internal subdivision of the barn and as such the proposed extension offers no benefit for the listed building.
- 11.11 The internal character of the barn, as one which is a large open space, is an important aspect of its character and is an important aspect to be preserved. The proposed subdivision of the space by inserting a dividing line horizontally and vertically would not retain this open barn like character but instead would create a highly domestic interior which would lose the essence of the internal open character of the barn.
- 11.12 Such strong internal division is contrary to the significant internal character of the barn where it is possible to gain appreciation of the full height of the barn. An element of full height would remain within the proposal however this appears as a token gesture and does not allow for the full appreciation of the internal space of the barn. This is particularly the situation when there is a full height dividing wall to mark out the two units of accommodation. As such it is considered that the barn would only lend itself to one unit of accommodation, subject to the details.

- 11.13 For the reasons detailed above, the proposal would result in less than substantial harm as laid out within the NPPF. The proposed conversion is overly intensive and intrusive and would not preserve the significance of the curtilage listed building relating to its character and appearance.
- 11.14 Limited information has been put forward to justify the harm to the building by way of overriding public benefits. General links between the accommodation and bringing money into the area are made, as well as a link between the re-use of the barn enabling overgrown vegetation, structural defects and damp to be addressed. There is no itemised costing of the works which are required to be undertaken to the barn to ensure its maintenance and upkeep. However, there is an assessment of three different options for developing the barn, and the payback period for each of the three. The payback period of the scheme which has been submitted is 4.28 years, compared to a 7.52 year payback for a single suit conversion which would be less intrusive to the listed building. Whilst it is understandable that the applicants would wish to realise their returns quickly, it is not considered to be to the public benefit for this return to happen three years quicker, but also harming the Listed Building in the process. The capital cost is not broken down or itemised, so it is not possible to assess whether the works could be undertaken at a cheaper rate to reduce the payback time, or whether all of the intended works are strictly necessary. No overriding need to extend the accommodation provision at the hotel has been demonstrated or proposed.
- 11.15 Due to the material, harmful impact of the proposed activity on the site, the proposal is not considered to comply with Policy DP17. Whilst a less intensive use of the building could comply with Policy DP17, this proposal is too intensive in its use and impact to meet this criterion. Similarly, as the conversion to form two units would not be feasible without significant extension or detriment to the building, the proposal would not accord with Policy DP19 regarding the re-use of buildings outside of the Defined Villages.
- 11.16 The applicant has provided information to support a Habitats Regulations Assessment. This highlights that visitor/ recreational pressure contributes to likely significant effects which would adversely affect the conservation objectives of the designated sites. Avoidance measures are proposed including relevant contributions to the Authority's mitigation scheme, in-line with the Development Standards SPD. Provided that these were secured, there would be no conflict with Policy CP1. However, at the present time, no mechanism (such as Unilateral Undertaking) is in place to ensure that the contributions are paid. This could be conditioned were the scheme otherwise acceptable.

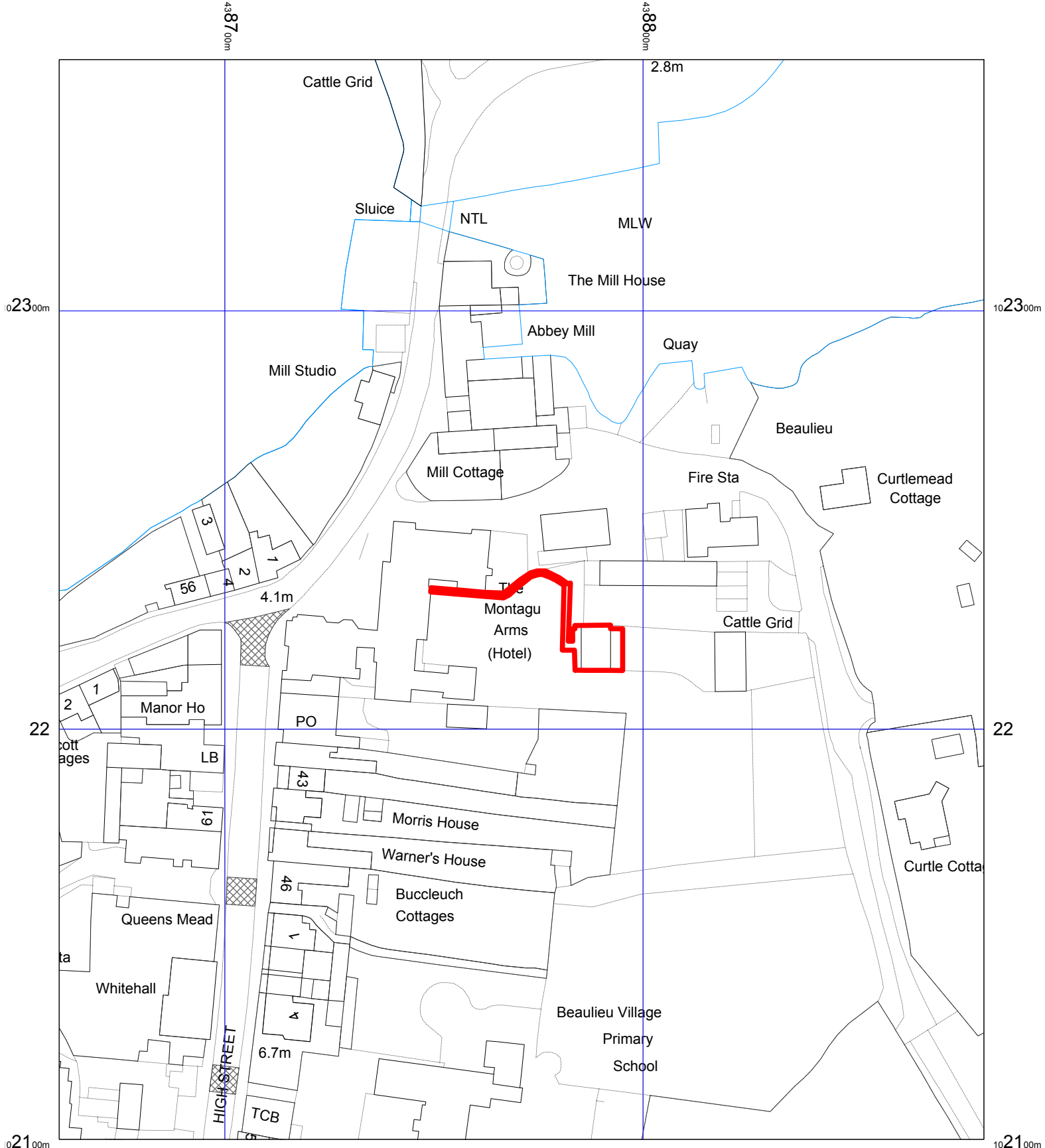
- 11.17 The barn provides a resting place for bats and that a protected species licence would be required. It is proposed that a bat roost is formed in the apex to the barn. This would result in a further degree of intrusive works into the structure and integrity of the Listed Building. In principle the conversion of the barn to provide a suitable ancillary accommodation scheme is acceptable, and it is likely that a less-intensive version of the development would meet with the tests of the Habitats Regulations (no satisfactory alternative; overriding public interest; maintenance of favourable conservation status); particularly as this is a Listed Building requiring upkeep and a viable use. This is not in itself considered to form a reason for refusal of the application, and a suitable mitigation scheme could be conditioned, were consent granted.
- 11.18 Pre-application advice was sought for this proposal, and the applicants were made aware of Officer's concerns about the potential impact of this scheme upon the curtilage listed building. This application follows a previous application for the insertion of a full floor across the barn, but with no extension to the building, which was withdrawn following conservation concerns in 2015.
- 11.19 Overall it is concluded that the public benefits associated with this proposal are limited, and that the harm to the listed building outweighs the public benefits to be derived from the proposal. In essence, there is no point striving to generate money to upkeep the barn if in doing so, the character and significance of that barn is lost by virtue of the proposed works to achieve it. Refusal is therefore recommended.

12. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

Reason(s)

- 1 The proposal would harm the character and integrity of the curtilage listed barn by virtue of excessive glazing, a sizeable extension as well as a subdividing wall and mezzanine floor which would adversely affect the open, spacious form of the agricultural building, as well as conspicuous domesticating alterations. The public benefits of the proposal would not override the harm to the appearance of the listed building. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policies DP1, DP6, CP7 and CP8 of the New Forest National Park Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (DPD) (December 2010) as well as the Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.



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 Date: 27/09/2016

Ref: 16/00673/FULL

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