



THE MILL HOUSE HOTEL

Planning Statement

Basingstoke Road
Swallowfield
Reading
RG7 1PY

13 August 2026
Reference: 2616-P600



Front Elevation of the Mill House Hotel taken from the Basingstoke Road



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1 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access statement has been prepared by Holtham+Newman Architects Limited on behalf of Sonesfelt Ltd and outlines the proposal for a single-storey rear extension at the Mill House Hotel, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading, RG7 1PY.

This report will present the design proposal alongside relevant surrounding context and planning policy.

1a. Proposal: Summary: Single storey rear extension to accommodate sanitary accommodation.

1b. Property Description: The site is a large modified three-storey detached country house that currently operates as a hotel, restaurant and wedding venue.

1c. Planning History: The site has been subject to numerous applications for change of use and additions/alterations in the past. Application: F/2008/0142 comprised of a single-storey rear extension to accommodate a disabled access WC.

1d. Development Plan designations (In summary):

Countryside

Flood zone 2

Great Crested Newt Consultation zone

Green wedge

Minerals consultation zone

Special protection area (AWE Burghfield – Detailed Emergency Planning Zone DEPZ))

Site of specific scientific interest.

1e. Relevant Policies:

PPS7

Berkshire Structure Plan – DP6, DP7

Wokingham District Local Plan – WOS3, WCC1, WCC2

SPG B5



2. APPRAISAL

2a. Description of Development

One of the primary objectives is to improve the public toilets in both access and quantity. The scheme design will address provision for a designated disabled toilet that meets Part M compliance but is also located such that its juxtaposition is accessible but discreet relative to the surrounding public rooms. The existing female toilet offers a single cubicle. This condition is to be rectified to support the multiple occupancy associated with a public entertainment facility. The new arrangement will also include a common area for washing hands and general vanity activities.

To facilitate this, the area to the side of the bay window serving the rear Lounge will be allocated at design stage. The mono-pitch roof above the bay will extrude sideways to create a new build block that fills a redundant outside recess and squares-off the footprint. There is a shallow extension (from past development) that currently affords disabled toilet provision. This is to be demolished to accommodate the new build extension which in turn will unify this rear section of accommodation at ground floor level. Please see photograph below of the existing part rear elevation of the Mill House Hotel. The proposed extension will occupy the recess to the right-hand side of the block that has a bow window at ground floor level and box dormer window at first floor.



Part Rear Elevation of the Mill House Hotel taken from the private garden.

This new block will comprise of a single storey extension with a gross external floor area of circa 13 sqm. The external shell will comprise of materials that match the vernacular of the host property. External walls will comprise of facing brick work dog-toothed into the existing and adjoining brick skins. The roof presented is pitched and again will be designed as a continuation to the immediate



adjoining block. To avoid physical clashes with the retained first floor windows, the pitch roof will terminate as a crown roof configuration, which in turn will facilitate two flat roof lights, discreet in appearance. These lights will afford natural daylight into the proposed disabled toilet, inner lobby and Ladies washroom.

This extension will accommodate a new disabled toilet in line with Part M of the Building Regulations together with baby changing facility. In addition to this, there will be a new female toilet block that creates 3 no individual toilet cubicles which equates to two more than currently provided for at entrance level. An internal lobby will create direct access to these facilities with a discreet entry point off the retained reception area.

2b. Principle of Development

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan.

The site is located within the designated Countryside and Green Wedge. Limited extensions to existing buildings within these areas are deemed acceptable in principle subject to their appropriateness with regards to scale and design, including any potential detrimental impact on the open rural or special landscape qualities.

Impact upon the countryside:

CP11-Proposals outside Development Limits will not normally be permitted except where the proposal does not lead to excessive encroachment or expansion of development away from the original building/host property.

The proposed extension will be limited to ground floor level only and its projection restricted to the outer most part of the existing and retained block it abuts.

Visual impact upon the countryside:

The overall scale and massing of the proposed extension will be governed by the host property it abuts to and restricted by retained blocks in turn creating natural demise lines. Its plan form will utilise an existing outside recess that is flanked both sides by current buildings. This condition will naturally conceal the proposal with no external side views visible from the boundary of the Mill House Hotel. By virtue of this scenario, the proposal would not result in undue harm to the character of the countryside.

2c. Impact on Neighbouring Properties

The proposal is single storey at ground floor level, is modest in scale and will not project beyond the existing rear extensions to the host property.

The proposal would be located some distance from the surrounding residential occupiers, with the closest neighbour being 'sheepbridge Mill' located more than 30m from this proposal. As such the proposal would not result in harm to residential amenity by way of overbearing and/or loss of sunlight and daylight or loss of privacy.

2d. Impact on the character of the area

The single storey extension proposed is in an area highly valued for its open space and rural character. The site in question is located on a large site within the designated countryside and Green Wedge.



The overall scale of the extension can be proportional to the scale of the host property and together with its location proposed, would not appear obtrusively dominant and/or detract from the character of the property or the surrounding open countryside.

The intended construction materials are to match the existing buildings external facing brick work walls and slate roofs.

2e. Highway Issues

The proposal simply improves sanitary facilities for guests/occupants of the Mill House Hotel. Subsequently there would not be an intensification of the use of the site and as such would not result in an increase demand for parking.

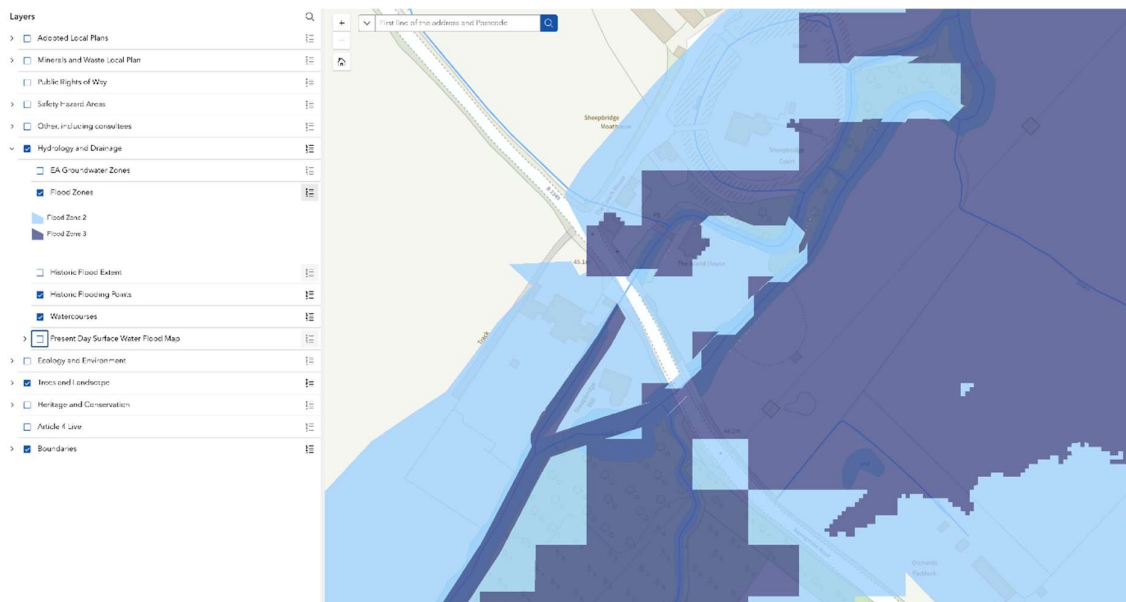
2f. Biodiversity

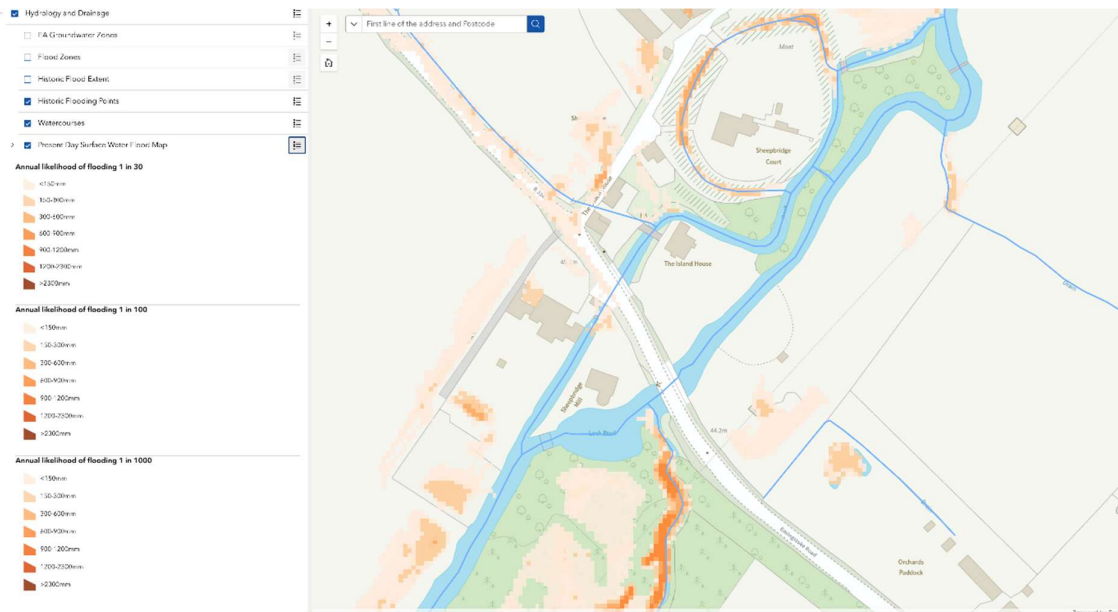
Given the scale and scope of the development from the known breeding pond, and its distance away from the Lock Pool, this proposal is unlikely to adversely affect the local great crested newt population. It is also noted that the site in question falls within the risk zone: Green which equates to moderate habitat suitability.

However, we include the following informative to any permission granted: If great crested newts are encountered at any point during development then all works must stop immediately and the local Natural England office together with Wokingham Borough Council notified in writing accordingly.

2g. Flood risk and surface water

Please see below maps taken from the Government website. These identify small pockets around the Mill House Hotel fall within an area with a likelihood of flooding being 0.1% (1 in 1000). However, the proposed extension falls outside of this area. The site falls within Flood Zone 2.





2h. Community Engagement

There are no direct neighbours near the proposed site that require early engagement as part of the design process to establish any immediate concerns relating to the proposed extension.

3. CONCLUSION

The single storey extension proposed would assist in improving the sanitary facilities to this public building. Its location would utilise an otherwise redundant outside space and this juxtaposition relative to the host property would prove conducive with a facility of this type which its success is dependant on access and location.

The new build extension would only be visible when approaching the rear elevation of the Mill House Hotel face on from within the walled garden and car park facility beyond. The front and side elevations of the host property are to remain unchanged.

The proposal outlined would therefore have no detrimental impact on the character of the area, the character of the street or the residential amenities of any neighbouring properties.