

## **Planning Statement**

### **Demolition of existing building and construction of building to provide pool, leisure facilities and offices at Lakeview Manor, Dunkeswell, EX14 4SH.**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Lakeview Manor is a country manor house hotel with seventeen bedrooms set in 45 acres of gardens and parkland with two fully stocked fishing lakes. There are eighteen well-established high quality static lodge units on the west side of the lake which were granted planning permission under reference 15/0846/FUL.
- 1.2 Since purchasing Lakeview Manor in January 2020, the applicant has embarked on a programme of improvement and upgrading the site and facilities. The restaurant, bars and every letting room have been fully refurbished, and a development of twenty-one lodge units has been completed on the east side of the lake (reference: 20/2160/FUL). More recently, an additional twenty-six lodges were approved on another lakeside area under reference 21/1889/COU.
- 1.3 Planning permission was granted under reference 21/1890/FUL for a first floor extension over the existing facilities building to create an improved swimming pool, gym and ancillary space. This application proposes demolition of the existing outdated gym building and construction of a modern single storey building that will accommodate the required facilities in a similar footprint to that already approved.

#### **2. Design Considerations**

- 2.1 The existing timber clad building sited to the north of the hotel and at the entrance to the holiday lodge development has a gym and storage area on the ground floor and office space on a mezzanine above. It does not present a modern and attractive facility for visitors and the gym is dated and no longer suitably fit for purpose.
- 2.2 This application is for demotion of that building and construction of a new bespoke facilities building on the same footprint comprising new gym, office areas and indoor heated swimming pool with associated changing facilities on the ground floor. This will be a year round facility of the high standard that is expected by customers in the current holiday market.

- 2.3 Externally, the building will sit on the same footprint as the existing one and is 1m shorter and 2m wider making it a smaller footprint overall. The walls will be vertical timber cladding under a low mono-pitch roof finished in a proprietary black rubber membrane finish. The new building will be approximately 1500mm lower than the existing building. The setting of the building, to the rear of the hotel and near the holiday lodges and lakes, is not visible from outside the site and is neatly grouped with the existing development.
- 2.4 The new building provides all facilities on the ground floor, making it accessible to all users. The modern structure will incorporate good thermal and noise insulation and be more energy efficient than the existing building and the approved extended building.
- 2.5 The new building will improve the visual approach to the lodge developments.
- 2.6 The proposed facility will need management, monitoring and cleaning and will create more employment opportunities.

### **3. Policy Considerations**

#### **East Devon Local Plan**

- 3.1 Strategy 7 of the East Devon Local Plan resists development in the countryside except where it is accordance with a specific permissive policy.
- 3.2 There is no specific policy for hotel extensions, but Policy E19 has some relevance in that it encourages the upgrading of existing holiday accommodation and permits the expansion of existing caravan sites within the designated landscape areas, subject to the proposal meeting specified criteria.
- 3.3 The policy also requires that the development provides 'no new permanent structures or are replacement structures designed to blend into their surroundings'. This is a replacement building with the same footprint and floor-space as the existing one and with a smaller overall mass.
- 3.4 The approved extended two-storey building is the acknowledged fall-back and we submit that this revised design is an improvement upon that in terms of design, accessible layout and energy efficiency.