

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY ST SAMPSON PARISH COUNCIL  
MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14th NOVEMBER 2016 AT 7:15PM IN  
GOLANT VILLAGE HALL, GOLANT**

**Present:** Councillors R Anderson (Chairman), J Luddington , S Ratchford, S Fitzgerald, M Whell, D Pugh-Jones and A Van den Broek

Sue Blaxley (Parish Clerk)  
45 members of the public

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:15pm. He introduced himself and the Clerk and thanked everyone for attending. He also thanked those parishioners who had made representations to councillors regarding the planning application at the Cormorant Hotel. He explained that, at this meeting, any member of the public who wants to speak can do but for a maximum of 5 minutes without interruption. He said that following all comments from the public, the Applicant will be invited to make representations.

**Public Participation**

Barry Campbell- Taylor read out the letter of objection which he had submitted to Cornwall Council regarding the proposed development. He said that a development of this size is unsustainable given that the village has no school, shop or public transport. He explained that access to the development site is inadequate and dangerous, being very narrow and having a steep gradient and that construction traffic would face extreme difficulty. Once complete, he said the occupiers' traffic would also face great difficulty, exacerbated by the various additional traffic caused by service visits such as delivery vehicles, rubbish/recycle collections and visitors. He continued by saying that road access to Golant is very difficult and that the additional traffic which would be generated by this development would make the situation unbearable. He said that there is no affordable housing element to the proposal and that he is certain that, given the site location, all or most of the dwellings will become yet more holiday homes. He said that given the site location and views, these dwellings will inevitably be at a premium price range, thus denying access by most local people. He explained that often, during high tides, the main route to the site is flooded and access can only be gained by driving through the village back lane which is narrow with few passing places. In addition, he said that on Spring tides the whole of the lower road is flooded, totally restricting access to the site, including access by emergency vehicles. He said that a major development of this nature would generate a huge amount of construction traffic, make life quite unbearable for residents. Finally, he said that if the proposal is allowed, all traffic, both construction and residents access, should only be allowed from the lower road, and not along the already overburdened Gumms Lane.

David Johns said that he would like the property to remain as a hotel. He said that if the site has to be used for residential development, there are some facts to

be borne in mind: between the pub and the hotel, there are currently 10 dwellings of which 9 are holiday homes, of the 100 houses below the Church and Torfrey, approximately 40 are holiday homes and of the remaining 60, only 3 are occupied by families. He said that if residential development took place on the site, it could be stipulated that the dwellings are to be for main residences only and that half of them should be affordable houses. He said the result would be to increase the relative value of the other properties in Golant which do not have such restrictions. He said that due to the number of second homes in Golant, he thinks that the volume of traffic through the village is much less than it used to be.

Steve Furness said that he has concerns about the negative impact the proposed development would have on those parishioners living in Gumms Lane. He said that he does not think the resultant traffic from the proposed development would be significantly greater than the current use of the site as a hotel. He said that thought needs to be given as to how the parish grows and that he thinks that 12 houses is better than a non-viable hotel.

Sue Reardon reminded everyone of the neighbourhood plan questionnaire in which one of the questions asked where new development, were it to take place, would be preferable. She said that parishioners had said that they would not want to see new development within the village per se but in the Torfrey area.

Peter Stone said that he thinks that the idea of limiting occupancy to main residences would be very difficult legally as the full effects of the St Ives decision may not be known for five years.

Alistair Barr commented that the issue of subsidence in Gumms Lane has never been resolved.

Gill Paull said that the application makes no mention of some of the resultant dwellings being affordable units. She said that the application has been submitted for a high number of houses on the site which, if refused, may lead to a further application for a lesser number of houses. She said that if an application for residential development is approved on the site, conditions need to be imposed regarding management of the construction traffic.

Judith Campbell-Taylor said that there is a mature oak and a mature chestnut tree on the site, both of which should be protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Also, she said that ecology issues have not been addressed in the application.

Bunny Minter-Kemp questioned how vehicles would turn at the end of Gumms Lane.

Penny Parsons said that she understood that five parishes on the Rame peninsula are attempting to restrict homes to main residences.

Peter Edwards said the application requires an EIA.

Stuart Young said that, in Water Lane, there are currently issues with construction traffic. He commented that the current development taking place on the village green was subject to a planning condition that a traffic management plan be put in place. However, he said this has not been implemented so even if a similar condition is put on a planning permission for this site, he questioned who would monitor it.

Graham Estlick said that when the swimming pool was built, it was agreed that the village could use the pool. However, he said that experience has shown that use of the pool is at quite a high charge. He also questioned whether the hotel is going to be demolished or remain as part of the scheme.

Ian Laughton said that the village needs to maintain a mix of housing and if some of it is to be affordable, parishioners need to be clear as to exactly what this means.

David Skerritt said that in order to balance the demographics in the village, if residential development is to take place on the site, no one over 30 years old should occupy the properties. (this suggestion was particularly warmly received by the audience)

Jackie Fletcher said that traffic issues will be a major problem and this could detrimentally affect Water Lane in terms of the impact on the drains and sewers.

The Applicant, Mary Tozer, responded to the comments made by saying that she has taken on board everything that has been said. She explained that the reason she has submitted the planning application is that the business is not viable. She said that the hotel has been on the market for over two years and all prospective purchasers are of the same opinion. She said this is partly because 20<sup>th</sup> century hotel guests want a totally different hotel experience to that which was required when the hotel was built. She said that the block which was added in the 1960's houses ten of the fourteen of the hotel's bedrooms and is totally inadequate for today's market. She said that this block will have to be demolished even if the site remains as a hotel so the fears of the problems caused by construction traffic may be realised irrespective of whether the application for residential development is approved. She said that if residential development is not a viable proposition for the site or it cannot be a viable business as a hotel, she will have to board it up and walk away which she does not want to do. She emphasised that she would not want to spoil Golant as it is a place which she loves. She said that she understands that any development in Golant does impact on the village. However, she said that the site is fantastic and would be attractive to second home owners. She explained that Cornwall Council do not want the hotel to close as it is a tourist asset to the village but she said that second homes are also a tourist asset as the owners, when they are in residence, use the local facilities and services. She said that the application is

currently for twelve houses on the site but this does not have to be the number that is eventually approved. She said that if low cost affordable housing is provided on the site, there are no facilities for families in Golant. She explained that she did not think that the traffic generated by houses on the site would be more than that which is currently generated by the hotel. Mary Tozer said that she had no knowledge of the pool having to be made available to the public. She said that when it was open, only two parishioners used it regularly. She said the swimming pool is now closed. In terms of traffic using Gumms Lane, she said that she could not imagine construction traffic using Gumms Lane and that there would be no access to the new properties from Gumms Lane once the development was complete. She said that if the hotel is to remain, in order to make it viable, it may have to change to attract tourists which could be to the detriment of the peace and tranquillity of Golant. Councillor M Whell asked Mary Tozer if she will be retaining the one dwelling which is already on the site. She said that the reason for the application is to make the site more attractive for potential purchasers and that she does not intend developing the site herself. However, she said that if it were possible, she would love to remain living on the site. Councillor S Fitzgerald asked her if the main residence was listed. Mary Tozer said it was not.

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cornwall Councillor D Hughes who was chairing a CNP meeting.

### **2. Declaration of interest in items on the agenda**

None

### **3. Planning**

#### **PA16/07360 – Outline application (with all matters reserved) by Mrs Mary Tozer for the re-development of the hotel and swimming pool into a maximum of 12 three bedroom homes at The Cormorant Hotel, Golant Fowey**

The Chairman set an independent and objective scene by summarizing the comments received on Cornwall Council's Planning Portal to date from the statutory consultees. He said that there are two letters of objection on the portal to date. He reminded everyone about the results of the neighbourhood plan questionnaire saying that when parishioners were asked about the best and worst things about living in Golant, no one mentioned the hotel. Clearly, he said, it is not sufficiently loved by the local population. He explained that in the neighbourhood plan questionnaire analysis, the parish was divided on where they would want more housing developments. He said there is some support for infilling and for development on brownfield sites but opposition to development on greenfield sites. He said that 64% of those who responded said that they

thought that a change of use of a site should bring a sustainable benefit to the neighbourhood rather than just to the Applicant. He said that outline advice from Cornwall Council indicated that any residential development of more than six houses here may require an affordable element.

Councillor M Whell commented that change is always going to bring more traffic to the village. He commented that something has to happen to the hotel and that whilst everyone dislikes the inconvenience generated by construction traffic, it is a means to an end. He said that whilst he commends the idea of affordable homes as he would like to see families living in Golant, he questioned whether that is realistic. He said that he would not want to see the site used solely for second homes.

Councillor A Van den Broek said that if the hotel is failing, something has to happen. He said that if the proposed houses are smaller than others in the vicinity, they will be more affordable than the other properties in Golant.

Councillor J Luddington said that the overriding question is whether this proposal is acceptable in principle. She said that she considers that it is not acceptable as the resultant development would have inadequate amenity space, there would be an increase in traffic to the village which would be detrimental and that the development would have a negative impact on the visual amenity of this part of the AONB especially when viewed from the river.

Councillor S Ratchford said that in the neighbourhood development plan questionnaire, 90% of those that responded said that any new development should be sympathetic to the village. He said the proposed development fails to meet this criterion as it will have a negative impact on the visual amenity of this part of the AONB and a negative impact on the Saints Way.

Councillor S Fitzgerald said that she thinks the proposed development will be detrimental to the AONB. She said that the hotel sits on the edge of the village and that, over the years, it has crept onto green field areas with the provision of car parking and a swimming pool. She said that this development represents a potential creeping effect along the river. She said that an additional twelve houses is a large number for Golant and could have a significant adverse impact. She said that she would want to know more about the height of the proposed dwellings. Twelve houses, she commented, would represent a minimum of 24 vehicle movements a day. She said that if this application is approved, up to 50% of them could be affordable dwellings. If affordable housing is not provided on the site, any developer will have to provide an off-site provision which could be highways improvements or another contribution to the community. She said that a lot of information is missing from the application: an environmental report, an ecological report, a construction management plan and a financial viability report. She said that she did not totally object to the site being used for housing but twelve is too many.

Councillor D Pugh-Jones commented that there is a very distinct tree line between the swimming pool and the hotel which would inevitably be lost which would result in a negative impact on the visual amenity of this part of the AONB. She said that the proposed development provides inadequate amenity space and parking and to her, represents overdevelopment of the site. She said that whilst she would want to see families living in Golant, she is unsure how the affordable element of the development would be implemented. The Chairman said that any residential development of more than six houses has to have an affordable element. She said that she is also concerned about the adverse impact on Gumms Lane and that, if the development is approved, a condition would have to be imposed to ensure that Gumms Lane is not used by construction traffic or residents of the resultant dwellings.

The Chairman said that if development were to be allowed on the site, there would have to be absolutely no site access from Gumms Lane, no parking rights at the end of Gumms Lane for the residents of the resultant properties and no quarrying in to the hillside to enable the development to take place. Councillor M Whell said it would be very difficult not to quarry into the hillside if the site were to be developed. He said that we should not be totally against change. Councillor S Ratchford said that affordable housing would be unrealistic on the site and the proposed development is too big for Golant. He said the resultant traffic would be horrendous. Councillor S Fitzgerald said the question is whether twelve houses on this site are acceptable.

The Chairman said that, in his view, the loss of another parish asset would be regrettable but some homes are better than a decaying hotel. He said that twelve houses is too big a development for the parish and that the proposed dwellings would not be very attractive places to live with no amenity space, no play area, a steep access road and no visitor parking. He said that fewer homes would provide quality places in which to live. He said that the scale of the proposed development is out of character with the needs and viability of this residential cluster.

It was proposed by Councillor S Ratchford and seconded by Councillor J Luddington that an objection is made to the proposal. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal except for Councillor M Whell who abstained from voting. The proposal was therefore carried. It was proposed by Councillor S Ratchford and seconded by Councillor J Luddington that the reasons for the objection are: excessive scale, excessive density of development, detrimental to the visual amenity of the AONB, the specifics of the site and contrary to the views expressed in the neighbourhood plan questionnaire. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal. The proposal was therefore carried.

## **5. Date of next meeting**

**To confirm the date and venue of the next meeting on Tuesday 22nd November 2016**

The date of the next meeting will be on Tuesday 22nd November 2016, commencing at 7:15pm in Golant Village Hall.

There was no further business and the meeting was closed at 8:32pm.