

Lamyatt Parish

Meeting Notes – Village Hall 6.30pm – 17th January 2024

Lamyatt Lodge - Planning

Attendees: George Hallam, (Lamyatt Lodge), Ben Pridgeon (Bidwells Planner), Fabian Gathercole (Bidwells Planner), Clare Sully (Somerset Councillor) Paul Chadwick (Lamyatt Parish Meeting Chair) David Ash (Lamyatt Planning Group), Romy Smallwood (Lamyatt Planning Group) & a further 20 Village attendees (see list at the end)

Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided 2 Parish notices in advance of the actual planning meeting commencing: (1) Unless villagers decided otherwise there would be no Parish precept in 2024/25; the Unitary Council tax level would be set soon and for the background to the Council budget please see the Somerset Council website or the link from BBC Somerset news website (2) The Welch Almshouse Charity was seeking a new Trustee who would be able to join in discussions around ongoing maintenance and developing plans for major refurbishment that would be required in the future.

Paul introduced GH, BP, FG and explained that the Parish planning group had called the meeting so that all would have the opportunity to hear more about the planning applications for holiday accommodation at Lamyatt Lodge. The group itself was interested in hearing more about the scale and potential impact of 'gatherings'. The Lamyatt Matters webpage will have a link to the applicant's Planning Statement and the notes taken at this meeting.

PC welcomed George as the new owner of Lamyatt Lodge and opened the questions by asking specifically if it was his intention to live at the Lodge. He confirmed this to be the case. As the Parish was always keen for neighbours to be consulted in advance of any applications GH was asked if he had discussed his plans pre-application with any of his neighbours. GH confirmed he had spoken only to Guy & Victoria Ogilvy. BP was then invited to speak about the various Lamyatt Lodge planning applications for which Bidwells were the agents.

BP explained that all the plans and drawings were available on the Council website and that Bidwells were willing to be engaged should there be any queries from local residents. He explained that planning had recently been granted for GH's Bruton pub project and that they had tried to overcome the number of issues which had been raised there by local residents.

He re-iterated that GH would be living at the Lodge and confirmed that the two recent applications were for Holiday Accommodation in the adjacent buildings and were alongside the earlier application for modifications to the Lodge itself. BP also confirmed that the leisure facilities applied for in the Barn were not for open access but confined to the occupants of the Cottage, Stables and Lodge and family and friends.

BP felt that numbers could potentially be restricted to perhaps no more than double the residential occupancy. The frequency of "gatherings" could also be further clarified and restricted.

BP indicated that a pre-application meeting with the conservation officer and planning department had been verbally positive and was advised that change of use to holiday accommodation as opposed to ancillary accommodation would be feasible. BP confirmed that some comments from consultees, Highways & Environment, had already been submitted.

Dick Skidmore explained that not only Lamyatt Village but those in Milton Clevedon could also be affected by any potential noise or increase of traffic. He commented that Lamyatt Village roads were subjected to high usage from a variety of large farm vehicles from surrounding Wyke, Westcombe and the Clothier farms. Roads are very narrow with few passing places and blind bends.

PC noted that Lamyatt was a friendly community and that there were occasions when a wedding, birthday, or other celebration would take place and to which villagers had no objection. Frequent such events could, however, cause concern, as was the scope and potential for future developments, such as with additional temporary structures – marquees, teepees, yurts, etc – on the potential numbers attending any 'gatherings'.

With reference to the noise management plan submitted in the planning statement, PC felt that this could be improved upon and BP confirmed that this could be reviewed to be clearer and stronger to limit possible impact. The complaints process and monitoring would also require clarification.

Kevin Sherrard asked if fireworks use was intended and suggested a restriction to be noted. GH confirmed it was not his intention to have fireworks and suggested that it would for example adversely impact on those with horses nearby.

PC confirmed that contact with the Council planning officer had been made by the Planning Group to request information on other similar applications in the locality and the planning officer had been most helpful. The group could see that the proposed conversion of the unused buildings

would be welcomed if they brought them back into use in a sympathetic and appropriate way.

DA asked for confirmation on whether there would be any commercial use of the leisure facilities - was the intention for it to be a party venue? Or as a wedding venue? GH confirmed that it wasn't a commercial venue but purely for B&B lettings. He suggested a site manager would live on the site (possibly a couple). The B & B lettings would help to boost the local economy and holding big events was not the intention.

David Gallagher queried why the change from ancillary accommodation to holiday lettings had been made subsequent to the pre-app discussions with planners. BP explained that together with the Lodge the number of bedrooms available could be deemed excessive and that it was more appropriate to apply for Holiday Accommodation. So far only verbal advice had been provided on this at the pre-app stage by the planners and not in writing.

GH suggested that the cart shed/garage outbuilding would provide accommodation for site manager/s and RS asked therefore whether a further application would be made to convert this building to residential use. It was agreed by BP that this would likely be the case.

RS asked if the ultimate intention was to have a "mini-Babington" or Sparkford Hall which would include Lodge and other accommodation. Although found an amusing suggestion GH confirmed it wasn't the intention. However, GH did suggest that should work take him away for six months or a year it would be inappropriate to leave the Lodge empty and he would look at letting it.

SA asked about water on road outside Lodge. GH commented that recent heavy rains had flooded his cellar and also flooded the road on the blind corner at Lamyatt Lodge. He explained that although he had been carrying out evergreen tree removal and planting of some 200 trees that the water did not come from his field. He also explained he had removed the pheasant pens. He suggested perhaps a new spring was the cause.

Victoria Lang asked how long the building works were likely to take. BP/FG suggested approx a year for the Lodge and a further year for the outbuildings. Possibly up to three years. FG confirmed a management plan would be put in place to limit traffic, possibly routing it from Milton Clevedon rather than through Lamyatt Village. BP/FG confirmed that subject to planning approval that they would then advise commencement and had a very good construction manager with good communication skills. GH suggested the village could be kept informed via Village Mail.

PC checked that some queries raised by Mark Schofield (absent) had been adequately raised - the size and frequency of gatherings, noise and light pollution control, traffic issues, and routes for construction vehicle traffic. With regards to light pollution the point was made that any use of the Lodge should have regard to minimising the impact in that regard.

Nick Smallwood commented favourably on the detailed application as long as it was adhered to. He hoped that the controversy surrounding the Bruton pub application would not be replicated in Lamyatt. His primary concerns were the implications of noise and light pollution and increase in village traffic.

CS asked if planning officer had advised on usage. In her experience other villages who had experienced similar applications had been concerned that future use could become more commercial. She asked if the intention was purely for private use. FG confirmed that it was GH's intention to live at the property and that the planning officer had advised that Holiday Accommodation would be an appropriate use. Any gatherings involving the sale of alcohol, say, would require licensing.

BP suggested that this application was due for determination by 31st January. The earlier application for Lamyatt Lodge made in September also remains to be determined.

PC explained that the planning department were aware of tonight's meeting and would await formal comments from Lamyatt Parish Meeting.

PC closed the meeting with thanks to all for attending and suggested further comments could be provided to him prior to a submission from the Lamyatt Parish Meeting planning group, or could be made direct on the Somerset planning portal.

He also clarified when introducing CS as one of our 2 Divisional Councillors, the other being Alex Wiltshire, that Claire had her own website and was very active on local issues should anyone wish to contact her direct on this or any other matter of concern.

The Meeting ended at 7.25pm

Present

Lamyatt Planning group – Paul Chadwick, Romy Smallwood, David Ash (apologies from David Colman)

George Hallam (Lamyatt Lodge), Ben Pridgeon & Fabien Gathercole (Bidwells)

Other Villagers present – Nick Smallwood, Simone Ash, Keith Pascoe, Malcolm Frapple, Hillary Pascoe, Denise Wyatt, Kevin Sherrard, Helen Rutter, David Gallagher, Anne Sherrard, Victoria Laing, Gordon McCarthy, Sally Schofield, Jennifer Richards, Dick Skidmore, Mike O' Donnell, Sylvia Anderson, Jonny Tapp, Kira Tapp, Ned Newton (apologies from Dick & Caryl Joyce, Mark Schofield)