**NOTE OF THE ODDINGTON VILLAGE MEETING HELD 7PM WEDNESDAY 4 AUGUST 2021**

**TO DISCUSS PARKING IN THE VILLAGE**

Present: Cllr David Thorpe (Chairman Oddington Parish Council), Cllr Mark Makenzie-Charrington (GCC), Cllr David Cunningham (CDC), James Roberts (Director Daylesford), Janet Eustace (Parish Clerk).

52 Members of the public. Six members of the public were unable to join the meeting but submitted written comments. These are at appendix A to this note.

1. Cllr Thorpe opened the meeting, welcomed residents and introduced the speakers. He summarised the Parish Council’s objections to the Fox application as being chiefly related to parking. One idea to come forward from Daylesford in recent days had been the suggestion of a car park on land in their ownership off Church Road. He emphasised that this proposal was at a very early stage and that no formal approach had been made to any of the statutory authorities.
2. Cllr Cunningham updated the meeting on the progress of the Fox Inn planning application. As the District Councillor representing the village, he had been consulted by the planning officer and had registered concerns about parking and congestion. It was noted that the Highways Officer had said that the additional guest rooms and covers were insufficient to justify an objection. Councillor Cunningham had asked for the application to go to the Review Panel which had concluded that there were no material planning issues and that the application should be delegated to officers. The outcome should be known within the next few days but Cllr Cunningham said that he thought it highly likely the application would be approved.

Residents expressed concerns about the planning process and the fact that the Highways Officer had made no objections. The Chairman reported that the Parish Council had raised detailed concerns on behalf of residents and had submitted a parking survey demonstrating a shortage of on street parking. Despite these representations the Planning Officers had concluded that the application did not raise material planning issues. At this stage, with a decision due imminently, it was too late to reopen discussions.

1. James Roberts reported that Daylesford had purchased the Fox Inn in January. It was recognised that parking in Lower Oddington had been a problem for many years. Daylesford wanted to work with the village to find a solution. He confirmed that Coachman’s House was being renovated but would remain as a house. A planning application is currently with CDC.

In discussion residents expressed grave concerns about a possible car park off Church Road which would be highly visible and accessed via a very narrow country lane. It was felt that there was other more suitable land in the ownership of Daylesford. Mr Roberts confirmed that there had been no pre application discussions with CDC planning officers about the land off Church Road and that he was not aware of any further proposals coming forward which would adversely impact upon the village.

**The Chairman asked the meeting if it opposed the idea of a car park off Church Road. It was unanimously agreed that this was the case.**

1. Cllr MacKenzie-Charington briefly outlined the processes involved in obtaining the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) that would be needed if parking restrictions were to be introduced. The cost would be at least £10k and the process would take 18 months or more. Once in place, enforcement would be difficult. Many villages were facing similar problems. A car park would need to be surfaced which in itself would cause ecological and drainage issues. He could arrange for the Regional Highways Officer to carry out a survey of the village to see what might be achieved with or without a TRO. Options included bollards to stop parking on the pavement, involving the police when obstruction occurs, parking on only one side of the road and additional white lining.

In discussions questions were raised about the provision of a car park including surfacing, locking up, overnight parking and lighting.

**The Chairman asked the meeting if it wished the Parish Council to pursue the TRO route as a means of easing parking problems. The meeting voted unanimously that it did not wish to investigate TROs any further**.

1. In general discussion, the Chairman invited residents to put forward suggestions for easing the parking problems. It was agreed that Daylesford should be asked to:

* Provide a car park in the park land opposite Oddington Lodge
* Investigate providing parking spaces behind the blue gates on the bend by the Fox
* Consider the possibility of providing valet parking from the car parks at Daylesford organic
* Clarify whether the 6 car parking spaces to be provided at the Fox would be reserved for guests staying overnight.

Mr Roberts said he would report back to the Parish Council within the next two weeks.

The meeting expressed concerns about the expansion of the Daylesford and the impact that this was having on the village. It was felt that the Estate needed to find a long term sustainable solution which would benefit both local residents and customers of the Fox.

1. The Chairman thanked the speakers and those who had attended. He said the Parish Council would consider proposals emerging from Daylesford and would keep the villagers fully informed.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

ANNEX A

Comments from those unable to attend the Village Meeting

**James and Natalya Bremen**

**Green Farmhouse**

**Lower Oddington**

My wife Natalya and I purchased Green Farmhouse in the village in January of this year.

I learnt today that mischief is afoot and that as part of the slow acquisition/assimilation of the villages around Daylesford Farm the intention is to turn these fields into a car park for their latest acquisition, the Fox Inn. Apart from the clear significant financial and personal impact this will have of my wife and I (we have no desire to redevelop a property at a cost of millions of pounds to overlook a car park) this would very materially impact the quality of life, and indeed the fabric, of the entire village. Undoubtedly the Daylesford business and investments have contributed to the economy of the surrounding villages but the never ending expansion of that business has also led to the erosion of the character of the surrounding villages which is detrimental to the lives of the residents, notwithstanding any economic benefits.

We only learnt of these plans today. We do wish to see the details. However it is unlikely that they will improve the situation given the purpose as I understand it. I am also unaware of the position of the Cotswolds Council in relation to this issue, or indeed the parish council. From a personal perspective I would like to lodge, on behalf of my wife and I, our strenuous objection to this proposal. Should the parish council also be opposed and if this scheme ultimately is approved by the Cotswolds Council then we would be willing to support, assist in (I am a litigation solicitor, and a partner in a leading City litigation firm) and financially contribute to planning litigation seeking a review of any approval of the Cotswolds Council of these plans.

I would be grateful if you would ensure that the Parish Council is aware of our objections and also if you could let me know what information is available and how I may access it.

**Statement from Toby, Charlotte, George (3) and Plum Chapman (1)**

**Lower Oddington residents**

**Full transparency:***we live in a small cottage on Church Lane, but right at the top and with no view - so do not have a significant bias here re car park proposal*

 We moved to the village earlier this year, and already feel very lucky to live in such a beautiful place that is clearly cherished by its community.

1. We entirely agree with the concerns raised by the PC – and would like to thank the council for doing such a thorough job (and other residents for lodging many similar objections independently)
2. It is particularly egregious that Daylesford (as we understand) have given the village a “Morton’s Fork” of impossible alternatives – either we flood the village with cars, or we build a valet car park 500 metres away at the other end of lower oddington in an open field, and shuttle our customers backwards and forwards – between the car park, the pub, and inevitably our other properties in the area (the farm shop, the Wild Rabbit restaurant, the proposed 33 bedroom hotel in Kingham). This will:
   * Create an eyesore – utterly ruining the view down from the ridge for many residents
   * Spoil the countryside irreparably for walkers and visitors and decrease the overall appeal of the village very significantly
   * Add substantial and dangerous traffic to a tiny lane – which is currently played on by local children (including our own 3 year old) and enjoyed by walkers from across the village and beyond
3. There is a paved area owned by the same family directly opposite the Fox behind blue gates – this is the blindingly obvious location for a car park, and it seems an extraordinary feat of arrogance not to offer this to the village. The family owns substantial land between their house and the A road which is also a far better option than spreading traffic deep into the village
4. We are especially concerned that this a “thin end of the wedge” moment – the family own multiple properties and are trying to purchase more – if this car park is allowed to go ahead it will expand over time to serve potential hotel / members clubs developments which have long been rumoured
   * Clearly the Bamfords have been a force for the good in many respects in the local area. However, aggressive business interests are now clearly making a mockery of the company’s ethos of preservation and sustainability. We find it extraordinary that the business and the family should risk ruining the aesthetic and safety of their local area and also their relationship with the community
5. We urge the business in the strongest possible terms to
   * Revise the proposals to scale back the planned expansion of the Fox
   * Use the site opposite the pub for parking for their guests
   * Guarantee no future developments which will spoil our village further  – Daylesford is nice, but we don’t need it plastered across the landscape

**Ed and Justin**

**1 Church Road**

We can’t make the meeting on Wednesday, and unfortunately I think that the majority of council tax payers on Church Road will be in the same position.

I’m getting lots of snippets on the proposal to build a car park. Based on what I’ve heard (which I realise might not be fully accurate), I’d like to share my views ahead of the meeting:

- A village car park is actually a pretty good idea, but to work it would need to be on the A436 side of the village.

- locating it down Church Road will mean that all traffic will need to drive through the village, which will not enhance the local environment.

- Church Road itself is used extensively by pedestrians. There is no footpath.

- The road is effectively single track and when the pub is busy there will be vehicles arriving and leaving simultaneously with very limited space to pass.

- My experience living in the village for the past 5 years is that customers at The Fox will not be prepared to walk long distances and I expect that many would continue to park on the road anyway.

- The junction at the top of Church Road is a blind turning and additional traffic will make a bad junction worse.

- I can only assume that to parking issues at the pub the car park would need to be 50 or 60 spaces, which I think would be out of scale for the village. Far better would be in the field opposite Oddington Lodge which is close to the Fox and, with a crossing, would have access to the existing pavement which would safely take visitors to the fox and along into the village.

**Guy Chapman**

**Rose Cottage**

**Church Place**

Despite being away in Germany news has reached me that there are plans to discuss the building of a new car park in a field adjacent to Church Lane and once completed this will be leased to the PC.

I would like to raise objections:

A. This will create an eyesore in the village and increase traffic down a small lane

B. People usually the fox won’t park this far away - they will still park on the main road.

C. If valet parking is introduced it doesn’t solve traffic issues

D. I presume that for safety late at night there will need to be lighting so we increase light pollution in the village

If Bamford’s needs a car park in order to get its planning permission the more logical site is in the field almost opposite the Fox, which they own, which would minimise traffic the village. General parking is of course an issue but it would be helped if those with garages and off street parking used them rather than the something more convenient street side parking.

**Kirstin Eriksson**

**Lodge Cottage**

We have already made detailed opposing comments as to the parking situation in the original planning application.  The proposed development of The Fox Inn under the Bamford Group of Companies will result in:

* an increase in covers in the restaurant and bar
* exponential increase in guest accommodation
* increase in staff (who required both, accommodation as well as parking)
* increased footfall due to the longer and extended opening hours and additional attractions on offer ie pizza oven

This all will put an exponentially higher traffic and parking demand on an already overstretched small village community. The pub is positioned on a narrow village road, with parking for only  5 – 6 cars at best (if the forecourt indeed will become a parking lot).  It is clear that this increase in traffic and parking demand will result in total chaos if at all allowed to progress any further than the first houses where residents are beginning to park. Post the pub the road gets so narrow that it is at times not possible to pass one way, let alone with oncoming traffic. This is also highlighted in the expert report in the planning application.

 Hence we strongly suggest to explore solutions outside the village and away from the pub, maybe parking in one the first fields straight by the main road which belong to the applicant? To allow this traffic into the village will cause chaos, noise and air pollution, will be dangerous for playing children and a complete eyesore. It will make life for villagers not only inconvenient but unbearable.  There are of course other means of opposition by the village, however these would be incrementally more harmful to the future success of the Fox Inn. Hence opening up a field for parking seems the most logical, practical and acceptable solution for all involved.

**Val and Mike Clark**

**End Cottage, The Green**

We are sorry, we won’t be able to attend your meeting as we will be away for a few days. However, we are concerned about the parking that is going to get worse with the re-opening of the Fox. We will support whatever is decided to be the right tack to preserve the flow of traffic through the village with sensible parking. As along with many others, we cannot understand why some of the land owned by the Bamfords cannot be used in an appropriate manner to provide suitable and adequate parking for the patrons of the new Fox.