ST MELLION TIMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION. (SMTOA) JANUARY 2020.

COMMENT ON PLANNING APPLICATION REF NUMBER PA/1910510...

INTRODUCTION
SMTOA represent the circa 400 Timeshare owners who Lease one week or more per annum at the Timeshare Village from Crown Golf at St Mellion. The Timeshare properties were built to a very high standard in the 1980’s when the land was owned and developed by the Bond family.

Originally there were 30 Lodges and the village had planned further development of 12 additional lodges. Due to the financial collapse in 2008 and the subsequent recession and bad reputation of the Timeshare market, the popularity of Timeshare as a structure diminished. In the last 2 years, Crown Golf agreed to vary the terms of the Lease, which had an end date of 2064, allowing Owners to terminate their Lease early – i.e. in 2018. Therefore, the number of Timeshare lodges fell from 30 to 11 in 2018/19.

The facilities originally enjoyed by Timeshare owners included squash, badminton and snooker. Without consultation these facilities were withdrawn over a period of time and Timeshare owners were given access to a new pool and gym facilities. The Lease also entitles Owners to 10 free rounds of golf per week on the Kernow course. Many Owners who purchased their Timeshare week in the 1980’ and 1990’s return every year and many lodges are owned by second generation family members. The principle of “quiet enjoyment” has applied to the Timeshare Village for almost 40 years. It should be remembered that Crown Golf applied for planning permission for the area to be incorporated in and around the Kids Club many years ago. The development failed and they have left that area derelict for 10 years.

COMMENTS.

The proposal has been examined with the strategic plan for Cornwall County Council WebSite.

**Our Values**

**We Listen; we will work with the people of Cornwall**

Crown Golf is owned by a multinational investment company based in Melbourne Australia- probably as far from Cornwall as it is possible to get on earth. This proposal is not working with the people of Cornwall.

**We are responsible; we will use resources wisely**

This application for holiday home development changes the nature of the St Mellion site dramatically, from a quiet secluded peaceful resort, to a much larger holiday village. We believe that the proposal represents over –development putting pressure on local roads, utilities, especially water and sewerage and refuse facilities. Holiday home users tend to purchase more pre- packaged and take- away meals and are less likely to be conscientious about recycling, putting pressure on landfill sites in the county.

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**We act in the best interests of Cornwall- putting people first.**

The current Timeshare properties are built of largely Cornish stone & slate sourced locally. The proposed cedar lodges will involve the cutting down of trees out of the UK and many carbon miles to bring the timber to UK. There is currently a shortage of staff in the hospitality industry in Cornwall with many employers recruiting EU personnel to fill the vacancies. The remuneration of such- largely unskilled-staff is likely to be at or just above the minimum or living wage. Many will be employed on zero hours’ contracts. Any small recruitment of local staff reinforces the image of Cornwall as a low skill – low wage economy and does not offer any opportunities in the “new high tech = high skill economy”. Furthermore the development of so many new holiday properties takes away land that could be used for social or private development for rent or purchase by local residents. In short this proposal does nothing for the people of Cornwall.

**OUR AIMS**

**Ensure everyone can live well and safely together**

This proposal is designed to increase traffic on the A388 and other nearby narrow country lanes when holiday makers inevitably go sight-seeing.

By creating a ”Holiday Village” atmosphere, Crown Golf are risking the alienation of local people who have seen their local shop pub close in recent year. The increasing influx of short term visitors goes alongside the very little effort being made by Crown Golf to work with the local community. Most of the events staged at St Mellion have involved activities such (concerts etc. using entertainers who are not local.

The golf club and spa members at St Mellion are largely local residents. They may well find their access to the golf courses, pool and gym facilities restricted by the large influx of visiting golfers on 2- or 3-day trips. This will apply to Timeshare Owners too.

**Create More Homes and Jobs for Residents**.

This proposal will do nothing for local housing needs and given the proportion of non Cornish staff employed at St Mellion it looks highly likely that it will do little for jobs in Cornwall either. Many of the jobs in hospitality at St Mellion are currently performed by non Cornwall staff, including many from EU countries. Not only will the increase in activity add to this population but will also put pressure on local housing, given that there is no plan to provide accommodation for staff within the plan.

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**Protect and Enhance the Environment**.

We have not been able to calculate how many trees will be removed to make way for this project but it will be in the hundreds. Parts of St Mellion that have hitherto been a safe haven for birds

 insects and small mammals will be lost. The risk of water pollution will be increased. The level of noise will increase, especially from a Kids Club located next to Lodges 7 ,8, 9 and 10.

The development is out of keeping with the existing buildings , being of an entirely different character built very close to them and increasing the density of buildings significantly.

**SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATION.**

It is unfortunate that Crown Golf have decided to use this method of application – i.e. a resubmission- as a method of dramatically increasing the number of properties included in the new scheme.

The fact that they decided that after “months of preparation “ to lodge the application to coincide with the minimum number of working days during which Comments could be made, should also not go unnoticed.

In our view, the unacceptable aspects of the application are

1. The number and proximity of the new lodges both to each other and the existing lodges, particularly in Phase 1 between the reservoir and existing buildings – Lodges 35-39 and 1-6. There are to be 27 Lodges on the former development site- a much larger number than in the original plan.
2. Despite public statements to the contrary by Crown Golf Property Director, Jason Mills, there will be a big impact on the Kernow golf course from the new lodges , wedding venue and Kids Club especially those close to the 9th tee, fairway and green. The safety of wedding guests, golfers and pedestrians is all put at risk by these activities. The proposed Kids Club is close to the 16th hole, making it potentially noisy and unsafe for the children.
3. Removal of Trees. The application does not even estimate the number of trees to be felled. The current rural feel to the area will be changed from a rural county setting – the 9th ,16th, 17th and 18th holes of the Kernow course will resemble a suburban golf course.
4. The Kids Club is wrongly located, drawing in traffic to the farthest corner of the whole property. There is no definition of how the membership of this club is to be organised and manage, so it would be possible for local residents to join the Kids Club to use the facilities and then drive across the whole site to access them. It would be much safer for the Kids Club to be located at the north end of the area to be developed. It will also generate noise next to Lodges 7,8, 9 and 10.
5. The new lodges are to be built of cedar and are not in keeping with the existing stone – built lodges.
6. The development puts at risk the status of St Mellion as a 5 star resort.
7. The massive impact on the infrastructure of water electricity and refuse.
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8. There is no attempt to hide or mitigate the impact of more petrol or diesel cars using the site- e.g. no electric car charging point. The small allotment – for which no management plan is mentioned, is a token gesture in this regard.
9. The plan reflects a lack of understanding of the topography of the site. Massive earth moving equipment will be required for both Phases, but especially Phase 1, when the narrow roads will have to be used to deliver heavy earth moving equipment. We believe this to be an unacceptable risk.
10. The existing Timeshare owner’s population have enjoyed years of peaceful enjoyment with outstanding country views in a private, safe and relaxed environment. These proposed changes are in stark contrast. The area will have more traffic- and therefore more risk, more noise and pollution.

OTHER FACTORS

St Mellion currently enjoys a 5 star rating within the RCI international Rating system, enabling Owners to swap weeks to properties of the same rating worldwide. The Application does

not refer to the preservation (or otherwise) of this status.

The Timeshare owners Committee is **NOT** against all development at the site.

The development of the area to the north of the lake (formerly part of the golf course) would not impact on the Timeshare Village if a reduced number of Lodges of similar character were built.

The area (including the Kids Club) can also be developed without too much impact, but the plan should be redrawn, with the Kids Club at the opposite end to which it is shown,

reducing the impact of noise and traffic caused by families driving through the Village to get to and from it.

St Mellion Timeowners Committee

January 2020.