



Vineyard Farms
Court Lodge
Luddesdown Road
Luddesdown
Kent DA13 0XE

4 June 2021

Dear Gary,

Following consideration of the Wine Vault presentation meeting on the 27 May, Cuxton Parish Council acknowledge the quality of the proposal for the Wine Vault, and the measures taken to minimise the impact the building has on the residents of Upper Bush, and the landscape of Bush Valley and it's wildlife habitats. However, there were some important areas of the project that were only covered briefly or as part of the Q&A session at the end of the presentation. Below are some of the questions that Cuxton Parish Council wish to raise, as a result of discussing the presentation and hope that the concerns expressed below will be received in the spirit of co-operation and mutual benefit.

1. Infrastructure Issues

Whether coming by car or by rail and electric vehicle, visitors to the Wine Vault will arrive via the M2 (via Cobham or Strood) or the M20 adding to congestion on an already over capacity A228. Medway Council is fully aware of the current issues related to the Bush Road/A228 junction. The promised traffic lights agreed under a Section 106 agreement more than 10 years ago are still not installed, because of the negative impact several trials of traffic light systems have had on traffic flow on the A228.

With an estimated 300 visitors/day at peak times Cuxton Parish Council are extremely concerned at the negative impact this additional traffic will have on our community. This will apply especially to during the summer and at weekends, when it is assumed the number of visitors to the Wine Vault will be at their highest.

Questions:

- a. **What infrastructure changes will be made to reduce the traffic flow problems this proposal will create?**
- b. **What other alternative access routes have been considered? For example, a link with the A228 roundabout at the bridge to Peters village?**

2. Access and Egress

The proposed access road will begin on Bush Road, which is the main road through the village and part of the road linking Cuxton and Cobham. The Parish Council appreciate that the position of the access road on the current plan avoids being immediately close to houses, however, traffic will merge from both directions when it reaches the proposed access road. As Bush Road is barely wide enough for two cars to pass each other the potential for gridlock on Bush Road seems huge.

Question:



- c. **What measures will be in place to ensure that traffic will flow freely on to the access road and not result in traffic grid lock in the village?**

3. Traffic Movements and Tour Schedules

The traffic survey report was not available at the meeting, but it was stated that the potential 300 visitors/day will not have a significant impact on the traffic volume on Bush Road. This is difficult to believe even allowing for the use of electric vehicles to transport visitors arriving by train.

Questions:

- d. **Can the traffic plan be made available for scrutiny so the evidence to support the report's conclusions can be understood?**
- e. **When was the traffic survey conducted? Was it during the pandemic?**
- f. **What will the schedule of tours look like and how large will each group be?**
- g. **Will visitors have to book, in order to visit the Wine Vault?**
- h. **How will travelling by train be incentivised?**
- i. **What evidence is available to support the view that incentivised travel by train will be successful?**
- j. **What size are the electric vehicles that will be used to transport visitors through the village to the site?**
- k. **How many traffic movements are anticipated in Bush Road at peak times?**
 - i. **Through the village?**
 - ii. **Via Cobham/Luddesdown?**

4. Parking

During the presentation very little time was spent discussing the location and visibility of the facility car park or why 90 parking spaces are planned when travel by train is being incentivised. It was also suggested that local walkers would have access to a café area to access refreshments during their walk. This café would have a separate entrance and presumably no need to book. This proposal is made with the best intentions, but local walkers do not expect to come across a café on their walks. Instead, the proposal could raise the prospect of visitors parking in Upper Bush or along Bush Road and walking to the centre to look at the architecture rather than pay to visit the Wine Vault. This type of uncontrolled parking is already a problem with visitors to Ranscombe Farm and so this idea needs revisiting.

Questions:

- l. **How will the parking area be screened from view from Bush Road?**
- m. **Why are so many parking spaces needed if visitors will be coming by rail and linked electric vehicles?**

5. Heavy Goods Vehicles

During the presentation it became clear that the underground structure will be primarily concrete and that some HGVs will need to access the site on a regular basis.



Questions:

- n. How many concrete deliveries/day will be accessing the site via Bush Road during the building process?**
- o. How many HGV deliveries/collections are expected/day once the facility is up and running?**

6. Employment Opportunities

It was stated that the facility will provide 75-100 employment opportunities. This prompted the next set of questions.

Questions:

- p. How many of these job opportunities will be full time?**
- q. How many of the job opportunities will be part-time or seasonal?**
- r. What proportion of the seasonal workers will require accommodation and where will that accommodation be located?**

We hope that sending you the Parish Council's current questions you will be able to respond positively to their concerns, and that this process will also assist you in your preparation for answering the questions from the public at your planned public meetings.

Yours sincerely

June Nicholson,
Parish Clerk,

For and on behalf of Cuxton Parish Council



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