



Mill House
Beacon Lane
Northiam
East Sussex
TN31 6PJ

9 March 2018

Samuel Batchelor
Principal Planning Officer Team Leader
Rother District Council
Town Hall
Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex
TN39 3JX

Dear Mr Batchelor

RR/2018/258/P. Lamb House, West Street, Rye TN31 7ES

Proposal Change of use of Lamb House, from residential to sui generis visitor attraction, and change of use of Lamb House Annex from residential to sui generis visitor attraction

The Executive Committee of Rye Conservation Society met yesterday and discussed the application for a change of use for Lamb House and the Annex to a wholly visitor attraction use.

The Society is fully aware of the importance to Rye of Lamb House as a primary visitor attraction and the vital part that tourism plays in Rye's economy. It also believes that the Trust's concept of enhancing the House and its garden is to be welcomed.

However Lamb House sits within the very centre of the Citadel, the garden being surrounded by up to 14 other homes. Access is from West Street which is one of the narrowest streets in the Citadel. The question of any resultant loss of amenity arising from what the Trust proposes would be of great concern to the Society.

It is there that we have a problem, as we are not sure what the Trust actually proposes. A number of our members attended the open day, met members of the Trust and have read the information available at the open day and with the application. Yet the question of where the proposed entrance will be is still not clear. Some believe that the ticket office will be in the Annex but a visitor will then have to go out into West Street and enter Lamb House through the front door. You indicated to me last week that a visitor would enter through the Annex and then proceed via an internal door to the main house. However there does not appear to be a linking door on the plans submitted. This matters as it would mean that groups would assemble outside the Annex, which is far closer to the adjoining residential users than the current entrance on the corner of West Street as it turns towards the church.

We believe it is essential that a clear set of plans showing exactly how the buildings are to be used should be provided, with the areas of each separate use indicated.

Honorary Secretary: David Bookless, Top Flat, Faraday House, The Mint, Rye TN31 7EW

Main email: ryeconservation@gmail.com

Planning matters: ryeconservationsociety@sky.com

www.ryeconservationsociety.org

Registered Charity No 283888

We also understand that you are requesting details of the hours of opening. It is important that the Trust's intended use of the gardens is clearly set out. When a question was asked at the open day about any future use of the gardens for separate events, the answer 'well it won't be for weddings' did not help to set the questioner's mind at rest. If not weddings, then what and when?

The narrowness of West Street poses its own problems particularly if the main entrance is moved to the Annex. Delivery vehicles avoiding pedestrians have already damaged the steps and handrail to a listed building nearby and to the pavement; the problem will get worse with a doubling of visitors. Increased use of Lamb House and the provision of a shop and café will inevitably mean an increase in deliveries. If consent is to be granted, the Society believes that these should be conditioned to between 8-10.30 am Monday–Saturday. The Trust should be asked to agree to limit the size of access vehicles.

Until the residents of Rye are made fully aware of what the NT intends, we believe that a fully-reasoned assessment of the application cannot be made.

Yours sincerely

Julian Lockett
Chairman, Planning Committee
Rye Conservation Society