

Date: 15th December 2019

Development Management
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury OX15 4AA

Ref: Great Lakes UK Ltd – Application Ref: 19/02550/F

Simon Chapman
Foxtownsend Farmhouse
Heyford Road
Kirtlington
Oxon
OX5 3HS

Dear Sirs,

I object in the strongest terms to this application for a large-scale water theme park in the small village of Chesterton. Such a development in this location is not in line with the local development plan. Moreover, this development will cause significant environmental damage; will place a significant strain on already overstretched local infrastructure; and it will bring no meaningful benefit to the local area and population.

This is currently a stunning greenfield site providing a healthy sporting facility, which will be lost to a vast, inappropriately sized concreted area with large uncharacteristic buildings for a small village. The 900-space car park indicates the anticipated huge volume of extra traffic that will be travelling to and from the site, bringing with it a substantial increase in noise pollution, not to mention a decrease in air quality and the potentially adding to the associated health issues currently being identified nationally.

The development will be a private resort attracting a proposed 500,000 visitors, and their vehicles, annually into an area already suffering from severe traffic congestion issues on the M40, A34, A41, A4095 and B430. The infrastructure of the area will simply not be able to sustain this proposed development, to the detriment of thousands of local residents and businesses. The Conference facilities will also attract an unknown but substantial extra number of car movements and resulting congestion. This congestion will be at its worst when the area faces the most severe strain such as bank holiday weekends.

Economically, the development will provide very little benefit to the local area. The resort will offer low-skilled, low wage jobs in an area which already has very low unemployment. Its requirement to employ 600 lower skilled staff will either attract employees away from existing local businesses (already struggling to find staff) or necessitate new employees travelling into the site from some distance, thereby increasing car journeys and environmental damage further. (There is no provision for staff accommodation on site). These low-skilled employment opportunities are also contrary to Cherwell's strategic aim of prioritising knowledge-based investment as a priority. In short, the economic impact of the resort moves Bicester and the surrounding area in precisely the opposite direction to the one that will best develop the area's long-term interests.

I have direct commercial experience with operations of this nature and the business plan is based on achieving very high occupancy levels which necessarily precludes access to non-resident guests. Offering even highly priced day passes will run counter to the resort's business model. To the extent that there is any availability this will be at off-peak times when the vast majority of the local population will have limited opportunity to take advantage of any available passes. The resort's aim is to achieve the highest level of occupancy and to ensure customers spend their money on site: as a result there will be negligible economic benefit to the local economy.

Once again, I strongly object to this unwanted and unneeded proposal, completely out of keeping with its rural location, and ask that it be refused.

Yours faithfully,


Simon H Chapman