

West Green Cottage  
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Chesterton  
Nr. Bicester  
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OX26 1UQ

Ms Clare Whitehead  
Case Officer  
Development Management  
Cherwell District Council  
Bodicote House  
Bodicote  
Banbury  
Oxfordshire  
OX15 4AA

15<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Dear Ms Whitehead,

**Ref: Great Lakes UK Ltd – Planning Application No: 19/02550/F**

I wish to strongly object to the proposed development at Bicester Hotel Golf & Spa, situated in the village of Chesterton, for the reasons outlined below.

This proposal is not in accordance with the local development plan and there are no material considerations that would warrant planning permission being granted. It is contrary to Cherwell's strategy of prioritising business investment which centres on R&D with associated spin offs. Hotel rooms on the complex will only be available to Great Wolf Resort guests, which will not assist growth of other businesses in the area by providing visitors or employees with overnight accommodation when required. It is difficult to foresee any economic benefits to restaurants, pubs, shops and similar leisure based enterprises in the local area, as it will be Great Wolf's aim to keep all guests on site to use the resort facilities that will be provided. With the very low unemployment levels currently enjoyed in and around Bicester, it will be difficult to recruit the staff Great Wolf will require without a detrimental effect on established local businesses in the leisure and retail sector (which will have a negative economic impact), or by recruiting from out of area (which will increase traffic movements).

Although there's already a leisure facility on the proposed site, it's modest in size in comparison with that which Great Wolf are seeking. I believe this would be unsustainable and constitute over-development in what is a rural area on the edge of a small village. Furthermore, 2018 sports studies indicate that the Bicester area currently has the lowest number of golf holes in the district per 1000 population. With the increase in population in the area through to 2031 and England Golf's aims to increase golf participation, increase number of members in clubs and the strengthening of clubs, the future golf provision in Bicester is showing a shortfall. The recommendation is that existing golf sites should be protected and that positive planning policies are adopted to enable the development of new golf provision. This proposal, if allowed, would destroy what is a well-established, thriving, and much-loved 18-hole golf course, replacing it with an unneeded / unwanted water resort, for the use of out-of-area guests.

The water park is to be housed in a building approx. 80 feet high (the equivalent of a seven storey block of flats) and, given the artist's impressions, is not designed to blend in with, or compliment, local architecture. The addition of outside water flumes protruding from the building cannot by any stretch of the imagination be aesthetically pleasing when situated in the north Oxfordshire countryside. Furthermore, a four storey high, 500 bedroom hotel, while acceptable in the vicinity of a large airport or city, would be of an overbearing nature in this context. The adventure park would most certainly cause a high level of noise, which given the prevailing westerly wind, would be carried towards the village. Additionally, a resort of this size would undoubtedly be a source of light pollution which would be of an unacceptable level in a rural area and potentially hazardous to M40 traffic. I do not believe that it would

be possible to provide screening, using shrubs and trees as proposed to a level that would overcome these problems

At present, nine holes of the existing golf course are covering the proposed area for the resort. Currently this is open ground where flora and fauna thrive; if this development were to go ahead their natural habitat would be destroyed.

The public right of way which crosses the site from the A4095 to Akeman Street, a distance of just under 1000 metres, would need to be diverted. Although I'm sure this is possible, and is mentioned in the proposal, a footpath across what amounts to open countryside is a very different thing to walking around a purpose-built path surrounding a huge development incorporating a 900 space car park.

A resort that is hoping to attract 500,000 visitors a year and maintain a staff of 600 people will generate a huge increase in traffic locally. The roads in the area already struggle to cope with the large volumes of traffic that they currently experience and are frequently little more than car parks when problems occur on the M40 or A34 and traffic has to be diverted. Regardless of 'designated routes', if this development is permitted, the roads in Chesterton and the surrounding villages (many of which are minor roads, poorly maintained and are already used as 'rat runs'), will experience levels of traffic that they weren't built for and can't sustain. The huge increase in traffic will also have a significant impact on air pollution levels, which is not conducive to healthy living.

At full occupancy, the proposed complex could potentially have 2,000 visitors a day which would have a huge impact on the area; bearing this in mind Great Wolf should have worked with Cherwell to be allocated a site through the correct local planning process. This is a speculative planning application in the wrong location, which I hope will be refused.

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.