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04 March 2020

Ms Clare Whitehead
Development Management
Cherwell District Council
Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury
Oxon OX15 1AA

Dear Ms Whitehead

Planning Application Ref 19/02550/F - Great Lakes UK Ltd

I write to make my **Strong Objection** to the above application.

Having moved to Chesterton two years ago with my family, we enjoy a quiet and leisurely life in this lovely rural village we now call home, and I fiercely object to the proposed Great Wolf Resort for the following reasons:

The proposal to create a resort of this size and nature in this rural location, which is currently a soft green landscape, would destroy the natural flora and fauna, would be detrimental to those of us who live in Chesterton, and also the neighbouring villages of Little Chesterton, Wendlebury, Weston on The Green, Middleton Stoney, Ardley and of course the already congested town of Bicester.

Population v Transient Population

The 2011 census records a population of 850 in Chesterton Parish. Considering the recent housing developments of Alchester Park and Audley Gardens, and based on an average of 3 people per household, I feel it's safe to assume a population growth in Chesterton village of 237; an increase to approximately **1,087** within Chesterton to date.

Assuming an average family of 3, the proposed Great Wolf Resort could accommodate **1,800** guests in the proposed 498 rooms (**3,090** guests at full capacity according to their Operational Management Plan) at any one time.

In addition to this, approximately **153 staff** at any one time (based on proposed 460 employees split over 3 shifts), a significant number of conference attendees can be accommodated within the 550 m²/5,920.15 sq. ft. (in the region of **250 or more delegates**) and also the potential **30 day pass visitors**. The total number of staff, guests and visitors could range between **2,233** and **3,523**.

To increase a village as small as Chesterton, with a transient population of more than twice that of its residents, with a changeover of guests approximately every 3 days, is obscene and incomprehensible.

Highways

Accessing the resort, guests will approach from all directions:

- from the north and south via the M40;
- from the South and west via the A34;
- from the east along the A4095; and
- from the South East via A41

each travelling through one or more of the aforementioned villages, depending on their choice of route and/or sat nav guidance. The following are examples of google route plans;

- M40 North/South J9 via A41; Little Chesterton (single track road); The Hale to join the A4095
- M40 South J10 via B430 through Ardley, Middleton Stoney to join the A4095
- A34 via B430 through Weston on the Green; Akeman Street; The Hale to join the A4095
- From the East through Bicester to Chesterton via A4095
- From the South East via A41; Vendee Drive; to join the A4095; or alternatively, A41; Wendlebury Road and through the village of Chesterton via The Green; The Hale, A4095 or Alchester Road; A4095

These are just a few of the routes offered. Other suggested routes go through Weston on the Green or even Bucknell. None of these routes are suitable for an increase in traffic.

These country roads, especially in and around Chesterton, are narrow, un-lit and are already potholed, and in an increasingly poor state of repair due to the increase in rat running traffic.

To increase the traffic on these roads by upward of 1,000 daily vehicles movements is irresponsible, and with the addition of large delivery vehicles, dangerous and unsustainable.

Access and Car Parking

I have huge concerns over the proposed access to the car park, which is directly off the main access road (A4095), and with the addition of a ghost lane to a road which is currently a narrow, un-lit country road would be dangerous.

Car parking, in my experience, is always under-estimated and in a location such as this could quite easily, and very quickly, become a huge problem for the local residents with long queues in both directions along the A4095 and inappropriate parking on the road or verges into the village of Chesterton, as happens with rugby and or football festivals at the BSA sports facility, where vehicles park along Akeman Street and the narrow road to Little Chesterton, two routes that could also be used to access the proposed resort. To serve as an example, to mitigate such issues Centre Parcs provide a long drive from the main access road to the car park (please see attached satellite images).

Bearing in mind there is **no public transport** to Chesterton, when the resort is at full capacity, (school holidays for example) there could, potentially, be as many as:

- 498 cars with staying guests (*potentially 996 on a changeover day);
- Approximately 230 staff vehicles (due to shift crossover);
- Possibly 125, or more, vehicles with conference attendees;
- Average of 10 vehicles with day pass visitors

*Assuming the resort would operate like those in the US; check in at 4:00 pm but the waterpark can be used from 1:00 pm and check out at 11:00 am, but they can continue to use the facilities until closing (9:00pm). On a changeover day, the car park could easily reach capacity with the crossover of departures/arrivals and there could be a significant and insurmountable problem with parking availability.

This would significantly disrupt the flow of traffic along the A4095 and surrounding roads, cause a noise nuisance and reduce the air quality for residents in and around the resort.

I cannot see any coach spaces on their plan. One would assume companies using the conference facilities would be urged to use minibuses or coaches in order to reduce car parking required? Where would these park?

Benefit to the Local Area

A resort of this nature, not dissimilar to Centre Parcs (of which **Woburn is only 37 miles away**) will bring very little to the local area.

- It will rarely, if at all, be open to the general public, and is not easily accessible without a car to residents of the local area;
- Local people who could be employed there would need to travel there by car as there is no direct public transport to or from Chesterton, and there is no safe alternative route by foot or bicycle;
- given the low unemployment within the local area, employees will be sourced from further afield, again adding to the traffic, and using valuable parking spaces within the resort itself;
- Unless the proposed shuttle bus would provide a continual hop on/hop off service throughout the day and evening, anyone staying at the resort and wishing to visit the local area (predominantly Bicester Town Centre or Bicester Village) would have to do so using their own transport, again putting more strain on the limited car parking that Bicester has to offer.
- A shuttle bus would bring its own problems, not only because of the narrow roads and tight corners through Chesterton but also the noise and air pollution this would generate.

As much as guests to the proposed resort may be given the option to use public transport, and the proposed Great Wolf shuttle bus, I believe families with young children, pushchairs, suitcases and possibly bikes would, for ease and convenience, travel by car.

The teenage population of Bicester and surrounding villages desperately need somewhere to go locally, and independently, but the proposed Great Wolf waterpark and facilities are not designed for use by teenagers. According to their website, teenagers under the age of 18 (presumably staying at the resort with family) must also be supervised by an accompanying adult.

Great Lakes UK Ltd, newspapers and media, have promoted this resort to the local community as, primarily, a Waterpark, this was ill considered and an undeniable misrepresentation of the Great Wolf Resort to gain the support of the local community in Bicester and surrounding areas.

The Great Wolf Lodge is a "holiday resort". The target consumers, as stated in their Draft Operational Management Plan submitted with the application, are:

"young families seeking indoor leisure destination breaks"

and the

"Primary Audience" are "Parents with kids aged 2-12 and living within 1.5 hours of the lodge"

(3)

It must be noted that the proposed resort is for staying guests. It is not inclusive to the local population or general public as the vast majority of supporters have been led to believe; unless you are staying, or lucky enough to secure some of the 30 day passes they propose to make available (a mere 0.01% of the resorts capacity).

Having viewed the American Great Wolf Lodge website, and checked the availability of day passes at the numerous Great Wolf locations, there are months with no dates available, in particular June, July and August, presumably when the resort is at full capacity due to school holidays.

A "waterpark" such as Aylesbury Aquapark; Coral Reef Waterworld in Bracknell, or the Oasis Leisure Centre in Swindon for example, is open to the local population/general public, but even a facility such as this would bring similar commuter issues because of the location.

This is just plain and simply THE WRONG LOCATION for the proposed use.

There are many other valid planning reasons why this is not the right location or development including:

- Not in accordance with the local plan
- Not in keeping with the character of the local area
- Goes against the Cherwell Strategy of reducing car usage

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my objection to this application.

I trust, for the reasons I have highlighted, this application will be strongly recommended for refusal.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Michelle Hardcastle.

Michelle Hardcastle
Enc.