

[REDACTED]
*Odd Tymes, Northampton Road
Weston on the Green, Oxon OX25 3QX*

December 16th 2019

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



Dear Ms. Whitehead,

**RE: Great Lakes UK Ltd.,
Planning Application No. 19/02550/F**

I refer to the captioned application for the construction of a 500-room hotel and water-park resort in Chesterton under the management of Great Wolf Resorts Limited. I am a resident of Weston on the Green.

I strongly object to this application. There are three fundamental concerns about this project as it relates to Weston on the Green. They are:

- 1) Traffic and air quality;
- 2) Water quantity and quality;
- 3) Light pollution.

1) Traffic and Air Quality:

The applicant acknowledges the existing road network in Chesterton is inadequate to meet the potential demands for vehicular access to the site during both the construction and operational phases. The Chesterton road system is too narrow. The forecast volume of traffic using the existing road system will represent a danger to motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. This inadequacy is acknowledged by Great Lakes UK Ltd. in their application and in their public meetings.

The supposed mitigation measures contained in the document "Framework Travel Plan for Great Lakes UK Limited" are subject to certain caveats:

- "Following occupation of the development a baseline travel survey will be undertaken to establish, in particular, a baseline mode share for staff and guests.....". Surely this type of information was used in their original location assessment. How did they determine a need for a 900-space car park?

- The assumption is customers will abide by Great Lake UK Ltd's formal travel plan rather than automobiles. Modern travel patterns do not support this contention.
- They are ignoring how the GPS navigation system directs people to the location, which is through Chesterton.

The mitigation proposal involves using shuttle buses to meet staff and customers at either the Bicester North or Bicester Village rail stations. The supporting maps show the routing of the shuttle buses use the streets of Chesterton for access to the site. The applicant intends to use a two-hourly cycle for the shuttle buses, which bears little relation to train frequency. People will not be prepared to wait for extended periods of time for a shuttle bus.

A 900-space car park implies Great Lakes UK Ltd already know how the overwhelming majority of their customers will commute to the site.

These concerns about traffic through Chesterton were raised at public meetings. Great Lakes UK Ltd's response was they will encourage clients to exit the M40 at junction 9 to the A34 and then the B430 through Weston on the Green. This routing will also apply to HGV's during the construction phase. There are two fundamental problems with this proposal:

First, the A34 at Junction 9, in both directions is at full capacity most times of the day. This encouragement will only add to the burden on that artery. The extensive planned housing developments in Oxford, Bicester and elsewhere in the A34 corridor renders this proposal unsustainable. Simply put the infrastructure is lacking.

Second, Cherwell District Council is aware Weston on the Green is in the final phases for approving its Neighbourhood Plan. Part of the Plan responds to the villagers' concerns about vehicle volumes, noise, speed and air quality on traffic presently using the B430. The Parish Council has an active sub committee seeking to implement various measures to calm the traffic flowing through the village. This is a very serious and legitimate concern.

In their air quality report there is no assessment of the potential impact on the air quality in Weston on the Green. I find it disturbing that Cherwell District Council has not set up a baseline monitoring point at Weston on the Green in response to Great Lake UK Ltd's pre-application submissions. The current application implies the impact at Middleton Stoney monitoring point is negligible. This may be true because the applicant is recommending its customers and contractors should approach the site from Weston on the Green.

Weston on the Green is used as an escape route in the event of traffic congestion on both the A34 and the M40. The proposed routing will only add to the burden on the village road system and cause further deterioration of air quality.

In the application it is stated that the project proponent is awaiting a response from Cherwell on its energy strategy. Will this strategy address the issues of carbon footprint, climate change and air quality? This is a prerequisite before any decision can be rendered.

2) Water Quantity and Quality:

I note Cherwell District Council's water consultant, Tyrens, has stated there is a necessity "to reduce water demand in this highly water stressed area." Cherwell's Policy ESD 3 states "*Cherwell District is in an area of water stress.*" The proposal seeks to increase the "draw" on resources from 1,596,000 litres per annum to 192,600,000 litres per annum before any mitigation measures. This figure has now been reduced to 141,512,00 litres per annum. Even this lower figure is a huge increase in water demand. The measures cited by Great Lakes UK Ltd to reduce this consumption are deceptive because they are the industry norms, not unique. The 141,512,000 litres should be the baseline.

Thames Water indicated the present capacity is sufficient for 50 of the 500 rooms. What about Thames Water's ability to service the water park features of the project? I have to conclude their response relates solely to the hotel segment of the project. Thames Water has suggested they undertake a modeling study, which will take 18 months from the time of commissioning the study. Great Lakes UK Ltd's application document contains the following statement:

"Once the identified remedial works have been carried out, the sensitivity of the capacity of Thames Water's cold water infrastructure network can be considered low and the magnitude of change post mitigation is considered negligible. Therefore, there is likely to be a negligible residual effect on the Thames Water mains cold water infrastructure network (not significant) following the implementation of mitigation measures. The resource requirement will however remain significant (i.e. circa 141,512,000 litres per annum)."

In the Summary of Residual Effects the 88.7-fold increase in demand is deemed to be negligible before we have the results of the Thames Water study. On what basis has this conclusion been made? I am concerned about the impact of such water consumption and sourcing on the area surrounding Chesterton. Where will the water come from? The application deals with the consumption issue in isolation and does not take into account the extensive residential development in a "water stressed area". I contend the issue of water quantity makes this application unsustainable.

I am also concerned that the water table at the site is 250mm below the surface and it is not clear if any assessment has been made about the impact of a project of this magnitude will have on the immediate and surrounding water table in an area of water stress.

Referring to the issue of water quality I am amazed that the management company, Great Wolf Resorts Limited, does not have a comprehensive environmental policy statement. Surely a company reliant on clean fresh water must have an agreed policy applicable to its many corporate ventures. At the very least it could provide a

benchmark to assess the company's performance in other jurisdictions. It is not clear from the documents I have seen how the company recycles water, treats effluent and reduces its discharge of waste water, other than a passing reference to the use of grey water. How is the water in the water features treated and discharged? This is extremely important when the water table is so near the surface. An analysis of the extent of the water table beyond the immediate site should be made to determine the potential impact on adjacent communities.

I think one of the fundamental questions Cherwell District Council must ask is what is Great Wolf Resorts Limited's track record in its other resorts. The question needs to be asked to both the equivalent of district councils and local residents.

The absence of an environment policy statement should raise questions about the company's policies on plastic use, carbon footprint issues and carbon-offset policy. Where is the corporate commitment to the environment?

3) Light Pollution:

It is difficult to assess from the application what the impact of the lighting of the operational project will have on Weston on the Green. But I note that throughout the documentation there is a constant reference to a four-storey hotel on the site. Yet in the document entitled "Illumination Impact Profile, November 2019, the illustration only shows a two-story structure. Why?

Where is the assessment data for the tower housing the water features? This may well prove to be an eyesore not only for residents of Chesterton, but also surrounding communities. I am concerned about the reflection of the lighting on clouds in the sky and what the possible impact may be on residents living in dark villages such as Weston on the Green.

I am opposed to this application because it is basically an unsustainable proposal on the edge of a small community, which will have adverse effects on surrounding rural communities.

Yours very truly,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

c.c The Clerk, Weston on the Green Parish Council 