

Public Session – APP/C3105/W/20/3259189 - Speakers List on behalf of Parishes Again Wolf ‘PAW’

Order	Key Themes	Content	Info
1	Diane Bohm	PAW	To run through run through formation and membership of PAW and strength of feeling against the proposal
2	Stephen Webster	Strategic View	Site search flaws – why this site? Opportunistic rather than as a result of a considered site selection process. Relevance of sequential testing. Driven by commercial reasons not planning
3	Tom Brewerton	Strategic View	Misconception that site is on edge of Bicester – is in fact edge of Chesterton. Rebuttal of comparison with allocated site on edge of Bicester and the site not being sustainable. Design hasn't changed.
4	Neil Bryson	Traffic	The effect on cycling in the area / traffic
5	Philip Clarke	Planning	Historical planning background and impact on Chesterton village
6	Richard Jones	Planning	In principle planning objection – not in accordance with development plan and consultation process
7	Robert Cornford	Planning and Economic effect	Villages outside Bicester are separate entities. Little economic impact from single destination developments
8	Kym Jones	Landscape	In support our landscape objection from local professional located adjacent to the site.
9	Andrew Banks	Architecture/Design	Incongruous design, overbearing massing and completely out of keeping with the local area.
10	Prof. Alistair Fitt	Traffic	Impact on Little Chesterton and casting doubt on GW's signage strategy which is fundamentally flawed. No review of the impact on Little Chesterton has been made to date.
11	Jonathan Rees	Traffic	Impact on Middleton Stoney junction and that this development will only exacerbate these issues
12	Neil Mullane	Traffic	Overall traffic impact from point of view of Weston on the Green and

13	Peter Stoddart	Traffic	Mid Cherwell and Traffic issues
14	Hugh Williams	Traffic	The impact on those living on the A4095
15	Isabella Newton	Residential Amenity / Ecology etc	The impact the development will have on the neighbouring property and run through other environmental issues
16	Nick Dolden	Ecology and Environment	CPRE's view on the impact on ecology, the environment and landscape
17	Natalie Bohm	Water resources and the natural environment	Update on impact on environment
18	Fiona Boyer-Warland	Environmental	View on the proposal from a local, environmental professional
19	David Jones	Flooding and Ecology	The impact on flooding in the area and ecology.
20	Tim Hibbert	Flooding	To run through the local issues in relation to flooding of Gaggle Brook and other drainage which the GW proposal will contribute to. Particular reference to impact on Wendlebury.
21	Paul Brain	Golf	Viability of the Golf Club. Member's view of the GW proposal and impact on membership and the contribution golfers make to the viability of the BHGS
22	Roberta Miles	Golf	Golf need and the fact that with the proposed population growth throughout Cherwell and in the Bicester area in particular together with the imminent closure of North Oxford Golf Course the need will increase even further
23	Mark Horseman	Golf	Representation on golf from a family perspective
24	Judith Keeling	Local Community	Emphasis on the fact that this is not a facility for the local community

25	Jack Martin	Local Community	12 year old's view of the development
26	Diane Messum	School	View of the development from young families in Chesterton and the perspective of the primary school
27	Rev. Gareth Miller	Church	View of the development from the perspective of the five Churches in the area.
28	John Floyd	Bruern Abbey School	View of the development from the perspective of the specialist school in Chesterton
29	Rachael Hucker	Local community	A community leader's view
30	Karl Moore	Local Community	Ability of local businesses and trades to conduct business
31	Ian Corkin	Strategic View	View of Cherwell / OCC from local Member(Speaking solely as a local resident). Wrong development in wrong location - not in accordance with development plan. Great Wolf's attitude wrong and not consultative. Ian has other commitments that evening but will join when he can and may speak earlier on depending when he joins the session.
32	Caroline Chipperfield-Twiddy	The campaign	To talk about the campaign, how many involved, bringing together the community, during difficult times

Speaker 1 – Diane Bohm

Good Evening

Feb 11th

My name is Diane Bohm and I am the Chair of Weston on the Green Parish Council, a village in close proximity to Chesterton. I am retired but by profession am a teacher, an educator and a consultant specialising in managing educational change.

From the early days of the initial application to build the resort/hotel in Chesterton, a few surrounding villages came together to discuss our concerns and common issues. Once the application was unanimously rejected by Cherwell Planning Committee, there was no further need for this group.

However, when the Appeal was known, Chesterton Parish Council appointed a member of their PC to lead a committee managing their objection, I was approached to become involved a second time. My role specifically was to speak with surrounding parishes and see if they still had a strength of feeling regarding their original objection.

The first initial parishes were quick to lend their support to the campaign and we called our 'group of objectors' Parishes Against Wolf. (PAW) We began to contact parish councils in the area asking for their support. However, there were problems getting in touch. Covid19 has had a major impact on being able to get out and meet people. Leaflet drops to engage the wider community were slow as many of us are retired and needed to self-isolate. We couldn't have public meetings to raise awareness of the appeal. The campaign had to be virtually led and we needed to be in touch with the right people, at the right virtual address – quite a challenge.

Importantly, the decision to support Parishes Against Paw needed to be a parish council decision agreed at a public meeting. There were many obstacles to this communication – the fundamental one being the scheduling of parish council meetings during partial and full lockdown.

Some Councils meet every second month, others don't meet in December. Councils have had to deal with emergency flooding, traffic problems with regards to infrastructure and development applications – all this alongside January Budget & Precept decisions. With such pressure, we needed parish councils to decide if being part of this objection was a priority.

By the time of the early January 12th, 2021 Proof of Evidence submission we had five more villages signed up – with a total of 24 villages.

Alongside the work with parishes, members of the Stop the Wolf umbrella group communicated with villages via Facebook. Awareness began to increase regarding the scope of the Great Wolf application. A huge fundraising drive was ongoing in the most difficult of environments – food banks, shelters, charities were all competing for the charitable part of one's income. The local community was beyond generous in its response to the campaign. Parish Councils contributed funds.

Then in February, something happened, villages just kept joining. Funds continued to be raised.

Opposition to this proposal exposed two main factors in planning discussions - local voice and planning policy. Certainly, there are times when parishes feel unimportant when planning decisions are made or when government targets are announced.

Where and how is our voice heard?

Sir, it is my duty in these few moments to get across the overarching concern represented today by Parishes Against Wolf.

We are a group now of 35 parishes, representing 25,000 people and covering a fairly wide area beyond the proposed site (as seen by the map submitted by our team). We range in size from small parish meetings to substantially large villages of two thousand people. Some of us will be directly impacted by the development (if approved), others will be indirectly affected by a range of issues.

You will hear from individual parishes this evening with representatives discussing concerns affecting them.

But there is a bigger picture. That is: the concept of place, the understanding of scale and size, the knowledge of pressures on the area's roads, the purpose of this proposed resort/hotel.

These are leading reasons why this proposal is not accepted across the area. This is not a NIMBY objection. It is an objection from the rural area. It is also a request that certain rubrics (protocols/) are fully accepted: the role of Neighbourhood Plans (see the MidCherwell and Weston on the Green's response), respect of the Local Plan, respect for the environment,

respect for beauty. Rural England's visual heritage is in the heart of our villages and central to the opposition by the 35 villages who are part of PAW.

By grouping together in this collaborative way, Parishes Against Wolf has found a voice that is stronger than if each village stood alone. The local voice can be drowned out in regional initiatives. Perhaps we have found a way to be heard!

We urge you to hear our voice.

We urge you to refuse the request to approve the proposal of a project that is completely 'out of tune' with the environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard.

Diane Bohm

Parishes Against Wolf (PAW)

Speaker 2 – Stephen Webster

Stephen Webster
Bignell Garden House
Chesterton

By way of introduction I am a Fellow of The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. I was a main board director of one of the largest property advisory businesses in the country and have over 40 years of experience in the property development industry throughout the UK as both adviser and principal.

I have lived in Oxfordshire for 30 years and moved to Chesterton just 4 years ago. As you might expect I considered the location of our house carefully and any issues that might affect it. I fully recognised that Bicester itself was a growth town but that all its expansion had been plan led with the current plan scheduled to last until 2033. So I bought in if you like to the nearby Bicester story based on planned growth in residential, retail, employment and leisure uses in the town. Chesterton is a completely separate village in a rural setting. Like many other villages in the area it had delivered two small residential schemes as is important to the health of any village. The planned expansion of Bicester has a defined limit and to support this the provision of a community woodland is to be constructed as a part of the plan to act as a buffer between the two settlements.

I mention all this simply to make the point that everyone has a right to live in an environment which is planned not where (completely left field) a proposal comes forward which is so contradictory to that approved plan as to undermine its very validity. It is clear to me that the promoters of this scheme felt simply that they might be able to “swing it” from a planning point of view compared with other options simply because Chesterton lies close to a growth town.

I don't propose to go into any detail as to the planning reasons why this completely inappropriate development should be refused as the compelling case will be made by our planning team during the Inquiry and indeed supported by my fellow speakers this evening-- save for the point just made about the need to uphold an approved plan that has been subject to proper process and furthermore that anything on such a large scale as this scheme should clearly be plan led.

I would though now like to turn to the matter of site selection. I have read the planning statement and subsequent proofs for the appeal and I make the following points.

I found no evidence of a structured approach to searching for a suitable site—no property advisers reports or analysis. Do they this exist? The GW operation is undoubtedly more suited to an urban or semi urban location in keeping with the majority of GW's US operations- but fundamentally if it is a business that relies completely on the car it needs to be sited adjacent to a motorway/highway junction- as is also the case in the US. Basically it is a big shed and massive destination hotel which if permitted staggeringly would be the largest hotel in terms of bed capacity outside London(6 per room according to the planning statement accompanying the application) (3000+) and unbelievably bigger than every hotel in London by a factor of 50% other than The Royal National Hotel a budget hotel in Russell Square. It would be bigger than any hotel in located in Birmingham, Manchester ,The NEC and any airport. It is incredible to contemplate that this would be allowed in any rural environment.

As to catchment, in the US, Great Wolf work on a catchment of 5/6m and remember because of lower densities this means travel times are twice as long as in the UK, Even were we to double the catchment to say 10m with a drive time of 120 mins the development could be sited in so many different locations in the UK. It is also incomprehensible even on the GW stated preferred catchment of somewhere between London and Birmingham that in a belt between the M1 and M40 there is only one site that they deem suitable --- so an area 40 miles wide by 120 miles long (that is a massive 5000 square miles). They seemingly have rejected any land which has a planning permission for development or is allocated as such. The reason I would suggest is that land values for sites allocated for development are at least three times the figure that GW has an option for on the subject site. As an example Milton Keynes has an inordinate amount of land available but its likely to cost £1/1.25m per acre rather than the £250k per acre GW are paying. As you may know land in the US is considerably cheaper as a) it is more plentiful and b) planning permission is much easier to obtain.

All of this brings me to the following conclusions.

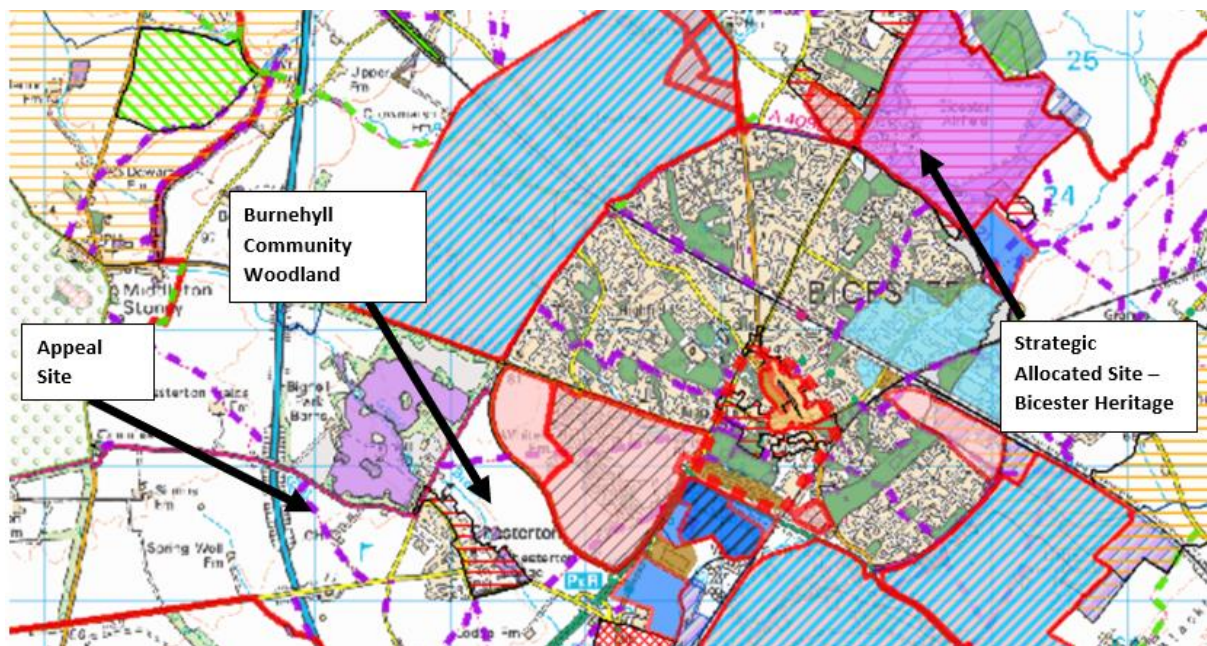
- No proper site selection process was undertake- if so where is it
- It was availability and price of the Chesterton site that dictated a retro fit of GW's locational criteria
- GW couldn't afford to play UK land values so have piled money into trying to get a consent on an appeal for land which otherwise would not be consented.
- They have decided against a plan led approach which is essential in my find for a project of this magnitude
- GW decided to go down an appeal route from the outset knowing they would be refused at local level.
- Such a destination use is fundamentally reliant on the motor car and thus requires direct access from a motorway/highway junction as is the case in the US. .
- It is a footloose activity and could therefore be accommodated in very many different locations in the UK where it may be possible to build something that is acceptable -I do have my doubts though given the scale and massing of the project and reliance on the car
- Whether this US business model works in the very different culture and settlement patterns of the UK is to my mind also extremely doubtful.
- If this appeal were to be allowed it would be open season for almost any proposed development in Cherwell.

Speaker 3 – Tom Brewerton

I will be speaking in objection to the proposed Appeal as a Chartered Surveyor who moved to the village of Chesterton in 2018. The objection is made on two grounds:-

1.Lack of understanding of the local context

- The Appellant continues to treat Chesterton as part of Bicester.
- Cherwell District Council is seeking large scale developments to be situated in Bicester or Banbury, not on the edge of a rural village.
- Reference to Cherwell Council’s Local Plan proposals map shown below illustrating the comparison in location of the Appeal site when compared to Strategic Allocated sites in the local plan – particular reference to the Bicester Heritage site.
- Reference to the Burnehyll Community woodland project providing separation between Bicester and Chesterton



2. Reliance on land outside of red line planning application boundary

The proposal continues to change (even in the few weeks up until the Inquiry) and there is more reliance on the land outside of the red line boundary – examples as follows:-

- Changes to the retained golf course provision – two tee system
- Changes to driving range and new academy course
- Ecology – stating potential need to rely on works on retained land outside of red line

Speaker 4 – Neil Bryson

Great Wolf Resorts appeal against planning permission for hotel complex in Chesterton.

- Neil Bryson – chair of Bicester Millennium Cycle Club, a sports cycle club affiliated to British Cycling with over 200 members located in Bicester and surrounding towns & villages.
- I have lived in the neighbouring village of Kirtlington for 30 years. Kirtlington is 3 miles from Chesterton.
- I work locally as a GP based at Islip surgery. Chesterton lies in the surgery's catchment area.

I would like to explain my objections to the Great Wolf proposal to build a 500-bed hotel and resort complex in Chesterton, based on the impact the resulting increased traffic will have on safe cycling in the area.

Our cycle club regularly organises group rides from Bicester. Many of our routes out of the town must pass through Chesterton on the way to the Cotswolds and the Ridgeway and other areas south and west of the town.

1. The roads around the Bicester are already near saturation, as the town is already massively expanding with the Bicester Village shopping area a major draw for people outside the area.
2. During the two year construction phase of the resort, we can safely anticipate a high number of heavy lorries and plant in and around the site. These lorries will need to come into the village via the A4095 (Witney to Bicester road) or the B4030 (Bicester to Middleton Stoney road which has access to the M40). The other access to the site is via the minor unclassified road on the southern perimeter of the site called Akeman Street (an old Roman road). Our cycle club uses all these roads to leave Bicester to the South and West. The increased heavy traffic during the construction phase will have a significant impact on the safety of our members. I know how this will affect these roads as 4-5 years ago there was major work to renew the railway between Oxford and Bicester via Islip. As I work and cycle on the road that serviced this project, I was aware of how the heavy traffic made cycling along this road dangerous in several ways.
 - The lorries caused considerable damage to the road edges.
 - Quantities of stones and mud were left by the trucks on the road surface.
 - And there were inevitable conflicts between the fast moving heavy lorries and lighter road traffic.

It is not hard to predict similar problems affecting the three access roads to Chesterton during the construction period if the resort proposal is allowed.

3. When opened, there will be a significant increase in traffic density on the roads leading to the resort due to the large number of visitors and deliveries coming to the area. As mentioned before, these roads are at times near traffic saturation levels already. How will this impact cycling?
4. From personal experience, I know that with higher numbers of vehicles on a road used by cyclists, as they overtake cyclists there will be increased numbers of close passes, putting slower more vulnerable road users at risk. The issue is not just with the first car to pass: the following two or three vehicles will not necessarily be aware of the slower cyclist and may try to squeeze past following the car in front, at times dangerously and closely inappropriately overtaking when there is approaching traffic on the opposite side of the road, putting the cyclist at risk. This can happen on any road and at any time but is much more likely when there is heavy traffic on both sides of the carriageway. In addition, the current poor state of our road edges means that cycles have less scope for riding close to the gutter to minimise getting in the way of overtaking vehicles.
5. Finally, I am aware that with central government funding, local councils are implementing measures to promote cycling to the south & west of Bicester. The aim is to increase the number of people walking & cycling for fitness and pleasure as well reducing the number of car journeys in the area. If the proposed resort complex is built at Chesterton, the increased traffic that the resort will generate will directly conflict with these plans by making cyclists feel less safe. This will affect not only experienced cycle club members but also less confident cyclists such as families taking up riding for the first time.

In summary, the proposal to build a massive hotel complex in Chesterton will inevitably cause a significant traffic increase which will negatively affect the safety not only of experienced cyclists such as our club members, but also on less confident riders and families in the area. This flies in the face of the local councils' plans to encourage cycling in this part of Oxfordshire. I urge you to reject the appeal by Great Wolf Resorts against the previous refusal of planning permission for this proposal. It is quite simply the wrong development in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Neil Bryson - Chairman BMCC - 8th Feb 2021

Speaker 5 – Philip Clarke

SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF “PARISHES AGAINST THE WOLF” (PAW)

I am speaking on behalf of Chesterton Parish Council where I have been the Chair for the last 6 years. My background is not in planning but in education as a retired Headteacher.

- (i) The Parish Council were approached by the Great Wolf team before the public consultations. This was not a very helpful time because it was clear that Great Wolf staff were both patronising and dismissive, unwilling to countenance our views at this stage, with a general view that our views were irrelevant because we should be thankful for their choice of Chesterton for their American style Waterpark., Hotel & Entertainments Centre .This was totally out of sink with our working relationships with other developers and we found the Great Wolf Resorts “steamroller” approach daunting with no real understanding of local issues and concerns.
- (ii) We soon realised that we need a professional campaign working with other local villages who like us, were to be negatively impacted if this ill conceived scheme went ahead and the opposition to this ill thought out proposal has reverberated around this whole area.
- (iii) I would like to say that the Parish Council has never adopted a “Nimby approach” to developments in the village – we have two new housing estates which have enriched village life and ensured the future of our local Primary School and Play Group.
- (iv) This proposal for a Waterpark , Hotel and Entertainments Centre and all that that entails is quite monstrous and has generated opposition on an unprecedented scale that we have never experienced before. This model from the USA it is not aimed at local residents but at a clientele from much of the South & Midlands of England who will come by car.
- (v) Finally it has to be said that the Planning Inspector who heard the appeal in 2016 for a further housing development on a narrow country road next to the Golf Course in Chesterton made it very clear in her dismissal of the case that it was clearly unsustainable – a view which the Parish Council and local residents hold to with

respect to this GWR appeal against a unanimous rejection by CDC Planning Committee.

- (vi) Please take account of our views and those of local parishes and dismiss this appeal in the interests of Chesterton & the wider communities.

Speaker 6 – Richards Jones

Great Wolf Resorts, Chesterton, Planning Appeal Presentation - Richard Jones

Appeal Reference: APP/C3105/W/20/3259189

Proposed Development of Land to the East of M40 and South of A4095, Chesterton, Bicester

Introduction

I am a resident of the Otmoor, a neighbouring area to Chesterton and have had a close association with Chesterton for over 30 years. I was a parish councillor for 10 years and have also had experience of successfully challenging several local planning decision appeals.

I believe passionately in preserving our natural environment and limiting new development to that which is absolutely necessary so I have registered my strong objection to the proposed Great Wolf Lodge Resort development in Chesterton in a detailed submission to the Planning Inspectorate, the outline of which I will now cover.

General Overview

It would appear manifestly inappropriate to shoe horn an American style waterpark attraction and accompanying contemporary golf resort hotel into a classically picturesque and traditional English countryside setting. With the intrusion of this vulgar, garish icon of American leisure culture - the commercialised all-in leisure resort - into the very heart of the remote, tranquil, natural and beautiful English landscape it is hard to fathom a more incompatible and incongruous fit.

If this were to be permitted it would significantly diminish a valued and cherished rural amenity, cause irrevocable harm to the established intrinsic character, beauty and charm of the surrounding area and deprive the local community of an important part of its green infrastructure and related ecosystem services.

Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreational Provision

The venture is being cynically promoted on the exploitation of government open space, sport and recreation planning practice guidance specifically meant for the benefit of local communities when in reality the local Cherwell communities would have severely restricted

access to this resort's facilities; a point made evident by the fact that the main feature of the plan is a disproportionately large, 498 room hotel.

Economic Effect

With its own restaurants, shops and amusement facilities this type of resort is intentionally designed to be a self-contained entity, with a captive resident audience, so that the trickle down economic benefit to the local community of resort guests venturing out to spend money in local shops, bars and restaurants would be severely limited.

Employment

The prospect of 600 new, predominantly unskilled jobs becoming available in an area where skilled, knowledge based jobs are being prioritised would be a potentially unhelpful burden on the local community.

Traffic Impact

The impact of enormously increased, unplanned for, motor vehicle activity, both guests and staff, on an already constrained local road system, during construction of the resort and thereafter, would be severe and damaging of the rural tranquil ambience particularly within the close knit confines of the historic villages of Chesterton and Middleton Stoney despite what the Traffic Impact report would have you believe!

The various mitigations Great Wolf has volunteered to alleviate the transport infrastructure issues are patently inadequate, ineffective and simply not fit for purpose. The proposed 900 place, floodlit car park gives the lie to the amount of motor vehicle traffic that the planners have based their calculations on and are catering for. They are, after all, referencing the American model of almost total dependency on the motor car.

Planning

Opposition at County and District Council level and the overwhelming majority of respondents to Great Wolf's public consultation says a great deal as to the lack of popularity and undesirability of this project to the area. Indeed, the key arguments put forward to justify this development in this open countryside, rural setting do not accord with the sustainability requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Cherwell Local Plan and other relevant documents, examination of which clearly lends weight and substance to the

inappropriateness of this proposal. Moreover, the mitigations to the resort design and operation to allay concerns of lack of sustainability – economic, social and environmental – appear flimsy, poorly considered and simply included for cosmetic convenience.

This style of resort development is best suited to areas in need of economic regeneration (typically due to the demise of legacy industries) which have real estate of relatively low economic and environmental value, have high unemployment and which already have or can easily obtain viable transport infrastructure leading directly to the development. **This is Oxfordshire, not Orlando, Florida!**

Conclusion

This proposal is highly speculative and opportunistic, masquerading under a thin veneer of social and environmental responsibility as well as relying on a promotional campaign of misdirection, falsehoods and deceit. It is perversely at odds with the historic and continuing natural theme of the area. The bulk of the economic enrichment from this resort will accrue to Great Wolf Lodge Resorts Inc., not the local community, at the expense of an unsightly, grotesque carbuncle of a development on the English countryside, the emasculation of a previously popular sporting facility, clogged local country roads, vanishing tourist footfall in an historic market town and the permanent loss of an innocently pleasing natural swathe of sensitively nurtured rural landscape.

I would hope that the Planning Inspector takes into account and gives proper consideration to the many and wide ranging, compelling arguments against the Great Wolf Lodge Resort development proposal and reaches a decision to reject this appeal

Speaker 7 – Richard Cornford

Outline of presentation to Planning Appeal Enquiry for Great Wolf Resorts proposal for a resort complex in the Oxfordshire village of Chesterton.

Outline from Robert Cornford

- ♦ Resident in Launton since 1986, seen much development in the area.
- ♦ Editor of *Launton Lines* the monthly newsletter for the village and co-ordinator of the group organising (until pandemic restrictions) the village Fete.
- ♦ Launton is one of a group of villages surrounding Bicester that have all seen major changes as the town has grown. All villages have made strenuous efforts (mainly successful) to maintain distance from Bicester, and to maintain the ambiance of village living. Many still have one or more pubs, some have kept shops and post offices. All are living communities – all still at village scale.
- ♦ Why, specifically, do I want to argue against the proposed development? Because it is entirely out of keeping with the scale of life in the village of Chesterton, a village with a population of 850 at the 2011 census and now probably just over 1,000.
- ♦ The proposal is for a destination site that will attract about half a million visitors a year, with on-site hotel accommodation. Most visitors will be arriving by car direct to the site. The nearest public transport links do not offer easy access to the site.
- ♦ Traffic flow has been a major concern in the villages around Bicester, and the impact of cars bringing in that number of visitors will be devastating on small country roads.
- ♦ Drainage issues have also affected all the villages as more and more building is done, and more ground is built on or paved over. Where will all the surface water go? Eventually into the Cherwell and the Thames: but in Launton it has come up through sewer covers as drainage can't cope with heavy rainfall. The proposed development will add to the fragile drainage infrastructure of the area.
- ♦ Finally, I can see only negative impacts on the local community from the proposed plans. We have seen the impact of the primary destination sites at Bicester Village on traffic flows and disruption, on major traffic congestion and the degradation of transport routes, and the very limited economic impact of such self-contained sites on neighbouring communities. It is very unlikely that many of the 500,000 annual visitors will contribute to the local economy through using shops, pubs, hospitality or other venues - see the impact that opening of Bicester Village has had on the High Street in Bicester Town Centre.

Speaker 8 – Kym Jones

The Threshing Barn, Bignell Park Barns,
Chesterton, Oxfordshire, OX26 1TD

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File Note (FN011)

Date: 8th February 2021

Project Ref: ALD 856

Prepared by: Kym Jones Local employer, Managing Director at Applied Landscape Design

Re: **Key points for the Public Session at the Great Wolf Appeal Inquiry**

In support of the landscape objection from local professional located adjacent to the site.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 I am Kym Jones, Chartered Landscape Architect, Managing Director and Owner of Applied Landscape Design – a landscape architectural design practice registered with the Landscape Institute
- 1.2 I hold a Masters Degree in Landscape Architecture from the Ohio State University, a Diploma in Landscape Architecture from Sheffield University, and an Honours Degree in Landscape Design and Plant Science from Sheffield University. I have been a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute since the end of 1997.
- 1.3 Applied Landscape, and therefore my place of work, has been based at Bignell Park Barns for over 12 years – our office is at the end of the driveway directly opposite the proposed development site.
- 1.4 I live 7 miles away in the village of Marsh Gibbon, and when the weather allows and I'm not in meetings, I make the journey to the office on the bike. I'm also Club Secretary at BMCC.

2.0 Specific area of objection

- 2.1 In my role as a Landscape Architect, we strive to be custodians of the environment, we move to enhance landscapes, drive forward sustainability, promote health and well-being, create places for people, and contribute to the creation or expansion of communities that can live, love and learn in well-founded sustainable landscape settings.
- 2.2 In taking a countryside site and imparting on it a large water park and hotel development footprint, with ancillary structures, utilities connections and car parking - an erosion of the soft landscape is inevitable and potential significant – changing the character of the site from green and growing – to an interconnection of hard forms and finishes.
- 2.3 Yes, swathes of the existing 'green' may be closely managed, but its soft landscape which is interlaced with ecology, amenity, leisure and water management.
- 2.4 The infrastructure planting, the hedges, trees, and topography capture and embrace the managed landscape such that the existing land use has little if any notable impact on the surroundings - other than a stray golf ball or vision of golfers walking the fairways.
- 2.5 That managed landscape is however visible to users around the proposed development boundary – something acknowledged by the LVIA.
- 2.6 The very fact that its green allows the golf course and its associated infrastructure planting to sit within and contribute to the overall countryside environment.
- 2.7 Change it to parking and road surfaces, add in task and safety lighting, bring on vehicles, cars and deliveries – with engine noise and moving head lights, and the space grows an artificial life of its own

- no longer in context with this countryside setting and no longer green - despite attempts by the planting proposals to soften the proposed car park with island beds, formal avenues of trees and the addition of planting mixes in areas that are already ecologically valued.
- 2.8 Acknowledgement that landscape will be lost along the frontage to the A4095 increases the potential impact of these changes. Recognising a gap in the LVIA process, additional viewpoints were requested by the Landscape Officer at Cherwell District Council. The outcome is that those potential visual receptors were visited when leaves were already on the trees and hedges – with these views assessed well into the month of April.
- 2.9 Despite CDC recording that the LVIA is a comprehensive and competently written document that complies with guidance – it is not normal for an LVIA to record some of the key viewpoint locations under those conditions. In recognising the deviation it would have been useful to see verified views – wire frames or massing of the built form, with the proposed landscape represented - in the case of the leafy viewpoints, a review of the site plans indicate that this would have depicted a boundary side substation and routes for utility connections. It would illustrate eye level views through the boundary, and would depict an inevitable removal of existing planting and opening up at entrance as Great Wolf look to impart their brand and presence on potential visitors and passers by.
- 3.0 Additional points**
- 3.1 As a local employer with an active graduate, year out and new starter strategy in place, we interview and appoint people entering the profession who we are increasingly finding are not car drivers.
- 3.2 With no public transport links, these employees, and others (including myself) cycle to work.
- 3.3 We are a small business - I am personally concerned that an increase in car traffic arising from an operational leisure facility as proposed, would present a greater risk to the individuals that we know and work with as part of our team.
- 3.4 From a business perspective, we fear that additional traffic, the debris arising (even with wheel wash facilities) and the multiple wagon movements particularly during construction will actually prevent individuals getting to work as a result of concerns for their safety, and this will impact our ability to recruit new comers who don't drive.
- 4.0 In conclusion**
- 4.1 As a Chartered Landscape Architect and local employer, experienced in landscape and visual impact assessments, I have an understanding of the process of site analysis and feasibility studies, of design and integration of development.
- 4.2 Travelling by and around the proposed development site on an almost daily basis, the local knowledge gives us an insight into the landscape character through the seasons.....but I'm not here to 'landscape and visual impact assess according to the 2013 or even the new 2020 guidelines' – I'm here with 14 years experience of being here – experiencing and engaging with this landscape setting. This countryside environment. Working here. Employing here.
- 4.3 With this local insight, there is nothing 'comfortable' about the scale of Great Wolf proposed build form and mass car parking that is trying to helicopter onto the Oxfordshire Landscape – in two words it is described as a 'major development' – the landscape character, the visual context, the transport network, the community, the ecology associated with the existing landscape, isn't in a position to accommodate a Major Development without impact. **On this basis I hope this appeal is rejected.**

Speaker 9 – Andrew Banks

My name is Andrew Banks and I am a registered architect and a Chartered Member of the Royal Institute of British Architects. In addition I am Principal of Banks Design – Architects, an RIBA Chartered Practice. I am also on the RIBA Conservation Register as an architect with a special interest in the conservation of buildings of historic or architectural importance and I am a member of the Design Review Panel for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils advising on design issues in planning applications in those districts.

Whilst I object to the application by Great Wolf for many reasons I am confining my comments here solely to matters relating to design and scale, an area in which, in my opinion, the proposal is exceptionally poor and does not meet the requirements of the Cherwell District Council approved Local Plan

Policy ESD 15 of the Cherwell Local Plan relates to the character of the built environment and contains the following specific policy requirements:

“Successful design is founded on an understanding and respect for an area’s unique built, natural and cultural context. New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. All new development will be required to meet high design standards.”

The policy goes on to state that new development should *“Respect the traditional pattern of routes, spaces, blocks, plots, enclosures and the form, scale and massing of buildings”*

The design of the proposed buildings does not meet the requirements of this policy being of the poorest quality imaginable and demonstrating a complete lack of appreciation of the style and scale of local vernacular architecture. A superficial window dressing of “vernacular” materials tries and fails to conceal the true bulk of a building which is completely out of character with rural North Oxfordshire

The detailing is crude and the use of a “faux” pitched roof completely unacceptable in design terms. Far from respecting local form and scale the proposed buildings are the standard designs imported from the appellant’s existing developments in the USA. This point is emphasised by the “Porte Cochere” which is a standard feature all GW resort.. As such they are completely inappropriate.

Recognising that the proposed development is extremely bulky, the appellant has tried to conceal this by claiming that the design philosophy is that of local “manor house” set in its own grounds with a hierarchy of forms from a central formal core, stepping down to a smaller scale for ancillary wings to either side. In my opinion the appellant has failed to understand that traditional manor houses were usually very much part of the fabric of the village and frequently originally developed from a farm house and rarely in extensive grounds. I believe that the appellant is referring to “country houses” of which there a number of local examples such as Kirtlington Park, (grade 1 listed), Middleton Park designed By Edwin Lutyens (grade 1 listed) and Bletchington Park (Grade 2* listed) These buildings are of exceptional quality and in extensive formal park settings but none remotely resemble the proposed GW development in scale, quality or massing. One key ingredient they all share is an integrity of design including the consistent use of materials throughout.

In my opinion the attempt to break up the apparent mass of the building by adopting a limited degree of articulation to the facades and the use of a variety of different external cladding

materials fails achieve the desired result but simply draws attention to the lack of a coherent design approach.

Turning now to the issue of local vernacular style the appellant appears not to understand why a certain style evolved in particular areas. North Oxfordshire is predominately an area where natural stone was the most readily available building material with slate or thatch for roofing which then dictates the minimum pitch of a roof.

This is why the majority of traditional buildings are constructed from these materials. Similarly the buildings are shallow in plan depth because the maximum span for beams was determined by the length of a tree trunk. This is typical domestic scale vernacular architecture. Generally the use of a variety of materials such as timber boarding or render does not appear in the vernacular style of Chesterton.

The palette of materials proposed for GW simply serves to emphasise the fact that it is a feeble attempt to disguise what is actually an exceptionally large and monolithic building with a height exacerbated by floor to floor heights of 3.5 metres which have been adopted for the hotel.

In no way does this respect the traditional form, scale and massing of the local area and as such fails to satisfy the relevant policy of Cherwell D.C. As result I respectfully request that the appeal by GW should be dismissed.

Speaker 10 – Professor Alistair Fitt

Good evening everybody. My Name is Alistair Fitt, for most of my career I have been a Professor of Applied Mathematics and for the last 6 years I have been the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford Brookes University, but I am speaking to you tonight as a resident for 10 years of Little Chesterton.

If the proposed development goes ahead it will have a catastrophic effect on our small village. There will be many consequences for Little Chesterton, all of them negative, but as I only have three minutes I propose to concentrate on the traffic issues. The single-track lane through Little Chesterton is already only just navigable. Frequently when there are traffic problems on the A41 the lane becomes a “rat run” and it’s completely impossible to proceed in a southerly direction down the lane.

Invariably SatNav systems and web facilities such as the AA route planner end routes to the proposed location of Great Wolf’s development with “after M40, exit onto A41, then turn left through Little Chesterton” and this already often leads cars, heavy trucks, coaches and other totally unsuitable vehicles erroneously down our lane. Numerous studies in scientific peer-reviewed journals cite the slavish obedience of drivers to their SatNavs – a recent large scale study carried out by the USwitch comparison group suggests that 94% of drivers will “always obey” their device.

I understand that Great Wolf’s signage strategy is based around an M40 sign that advises drivers not to use the A41, and A41 signage that advises drivers not to use the lane through Little Chesterton. Great Wolf’s suggestion is that 50% of drivers will obey the M40 signage but magically 100% will obey the A41 signage, a figure that they rely upon despite the fact that no review of the proposed scheme’s effect on Little Chesterton has been ever undertaken by Great Wolf or their consultants.

My statistician colleagues wryly joke to each other that “73.6% of all statistics are made up on the spot”. They find this very amusing. I leave it to your judgement to decide the potential success of Great Wolf’s signage strategy and what the consequences for Little Chesterton will be should this development go ahead.

I’m aware of our time constraints so I will end now with the observation that an undertaking that includes a massive tower, 500 6-person dwellings and a car park for nearly 1,000 cars as constituent parts of the biggest hotel built outside London is so obviously not a sustainable

development in the proposed location that in my view the scheme should be summarily dismissed.

Speaker 11 - Jonathan Rees

GREAT WOLF APPEAL: SPEAKING NOTES

1. Thanks for the opportunity. Speaking as Chair of Middleton Stoney Parish Council. MS is a small village of about 300 inhabitants about 2 miles from planned site, and on a direct route there from Junction 10 of the M40. My simple message is that the planned development is totally out of keeping with the local area which is still predominantly a rural part of Oxfordshire. In particular the traffic consequences of the proposal are not sustainable, and would be hugely detrimental to the health and wellbeing of people living in our village. We already have some of the worst air quality in the county, and the traffic associated with the proposed development would make it worse.

2. I have lived in MS for 25 years. When we arrived traffic was light and we were able freely to walk about the village. Now we face queues of standing traffic and heavy lorries thundering through our main crossroads- the heart of the village. The junction of the B430 and B4030 was simply not designed to cope with such high volumes of traffic.

3. Already to-day there is severe congestion at peak times in the village with standing traffic blighting in particular the lives of people on Ardley and Bicester Roads. Many of their houses are right on the road and built at a time of pony and trap not massive 4 by 4s and 30 tonne HGVs. The pavements in some parts of the village, especially near the crossroads, are very narrow. The traffic passes literally inches away and is unpleasant and intimidating.

4. So I think the Highways Authority was right to advise Cherwell to turn down the original application on the grounds of the existing severe congestion at the crossroads: the projected growth in traffic is simply not sustainable. I spoke to the developers at a couple of exhibitions and it was clear to me that they had not thought sufficiently about the implications of a large number of an extra 1800 daily movements coming from the North through an already gridlocked village. Indeed they mixed up the names of the roads and did not seem to understand the local communities whose lives they would be blighting.

5. But in the period since the original planning application was submitted the traffic forecasts have got significantly worse. Permission has been given for a new community of about 7000 people at nearby Heyford Park. This will involve an additional 25% increase in vehicles through the village with a near 90% increase in traffic on Ardley Road during the afternoon peak. This is the very time that visitors to this proposed Water Park would be using the road.

6. I know others have talked about flooding. Just to observe that the village also suffered unprecedented flooding just before Christmas: the first serious flooding that anyone can remember. We do not fully understand the reasons yet but it is difficult to believe that tarmacking over green fields, and the consequences of ever more traffic did not contribute.

7. In short the proposal by Great Wolf is contrary to the Local Development Plan, the Oxfordshire Transport Plan, would mean more noise and pollution for residents, make the village less safe and more unpleasant for pedestrians and cyclists, and exacerbate the total traffic gridlock at peak times.

8. I have concentrated this evening given the time on traffic implications for Middleton Stoney. But we share the concerns of others about the impact on the environment and our “place” in a rural community. This scheme brings no local amenity but is simply a speculative landgrab. The appeal should be dismissed out of hand.

Jonathan Rees

8/2/21

Speaker 12 – Neil Mullane

Great Wolf Resorts

- My name is Neil Mullane, I have lived in Weston on the Green for 7 years. My property adjoins the B430 directly. I have chaired the Weston on the Green Traffic Calming Advisory Group for the last 4 years and I have been a Parish Councillor for the last 2.5 years.
- On your visit you will have seen what a beautiful village Weston is. I am objecting to this scheme because of the unsustainable impact from the associated traffic, noise and environmental pollution on Weston on the Green and surrounding villages.
- There are three key areas that will be impacted on the Weston on the Green side of the development: The A34/M40 junction, the small roundabout entering the village, and the turning to access the site from the B430 and following impact. Each in turn and then combined with secondary effects demonstrate the unsustainability of the site and its transport plan.
- The B430 through Weston on the Green is already a very busy road with significant peak traffic periods of commuters and heavy goods vehicles travelling from North to South. It is already used as a cut through to the A34 and an escape route from the daily traffic snarls at the M40/A34 junction.
- I do not believe that OCC and Highways have considered the inaccurate assumptions in the timing of the traffic impact and of arrivals to the resort. The groups attracted to this resort will be young families. Parents cannot take their kids out of school during the week and so the majority of arrivals will start their journeys on Fridays between 3 and 4pm, arriving during peak rush hour. These are already the worst times for this stretch of road creating traffic chaos and pollution in the local area.
- The M40 junction cannot cope with existing traffic volumes, a Highways England paper reviewing its own pinch point scheme agreed that it had been a failure, resulting in more collisions. It is these collisions that create additional pressure on our rural environment. They primarily happen at the busiest times of the day. I see this from my property as regular queues of slow-moving polluting traffic form. The development will only serve to exacerbate this, increasing noise and environmental pollution.
- All vehicles arriving from the South will meet at a tiny roundabout outside the Chequers pub. The priority system here means that it will cause regular backups onto the already busy A34 in both directions. This is one of three small and tightly spread junctions on the Northbound A34. Any queue will cause further accidents. To avoid the queue's, road

users will come off a junction early and route directly through the centre of our beautiful rural village, changing it forever. Church road is a beautiful stretch of road through the village. It is narrow and single lane through a lot of it. We already see an unsustainable number of vehicles coming through the village shaking our beautiful historic houses that sit on very old foundations. The additional increase caused by the secondary effects of this development would be catastrophic to the residents and rural setting of Weston on the Green.

- The junction for the B430 turning into the site is neither appropriate nor sustainable for a development of this size. The priority routing means that those coming from the South will have to wait for traffic to be clear from the other direction. In rush hour you already have to wait minutes to cross and with arrivals being required to turn right it will create standing traffic back down the B430. These unsustainable traffic queues with standing or slow-moving polluting vehicles will have a demonstrable impact on noise and environmental pollution in the rural setting.
- When you add all this together it is clear that this development is unsustainable. The case made by the appellant is fundamentally flawed, the noise and environmental pollution will destroy the rural setting of the local area forever and for what...a water park. I ask that you reject this appeal on the grounds you have heard today and protect the rural setting and environment in this area.

Speaker 13 – Peter Stoddart

Precis of submission to Great Wolf Appeal for 11 February 2021

- Name
- Where I live and qualifications
- Involvement in local community
- Traffic - during construction
- Traffic - post construction
- General impact
- Impact on B34030 in light of the OCC traffic survey
- Conclusion - possible acceptable development in one neighbourhood can have disastrous consequences in adjacent areas
- Development not sustainable concerning traffic and runs counter to NPPF

Peter C Stoddart, 7 February 2021

Speaker 14 – Hugh Williams

Hello my name is Hugh Williams, I have lived, with my wife, in Chesterton for 3 years. Our home is Hillside cottage which is situated on the A4095 next to the Chesterton hotel. We are very proud to be living within the Chesterton conservation area which covers the historic part of the village.

We have seen huge growth in the local area over the past few years, most of which accord with the development plan and can see the benefits that these developments offer to the local amenity and local residents. The Great Wolf proposal does not seem to offer any real benefit to the local area, being almost solely dependent on the motor car. The use of public transport and provision of car charging points seems solely to label the development as sustainable and extremely unlikely to be utilised given the geography and the practicalities of travelling with young families, which would be the targeted demographic.

The 'pick and choose' associations that Great Wolf use when comparing themselves to Center Parcs, highlights their real lack of sound justification for what is a closed resort situated in a countryside location, rather than its more appropriate urban setting. We visited Centre Parcs when our children were younger and despite good rail connections would never have considered using public transport and this location is no different. The central dome in Centre Parcs was one of the attractions but we spend a lot of our time enjoying the outside activities and woodland walks and cycling. The similarities for Great Wolf end with the water theme and this sole attraction has no need to be located in a small village countryside location with poor road access.

The road system in the local area is under enormous pressure now and in the future with, what seems to be a lack of coordinated approach by OCC highways. In the statistics provided in the original planning application it showed that many of the junctions that would be affected by this development were very close to their theoretical maximum but due to conditions set by planning they seem unable to object unless these limits are exceeded, only the Middleton Stony junction was seen as an objection point which seems ridiculous.

Pre lockdown, living on the A4095 and spending a lot of time at home it is easy to see that the levels of traffic are inappropriate for what is a small village road. During peak hours and even off peak the types of traffic, vans to large articulated lorries cause blockages and the village easily becomes gridlocked mainly because of the narrow road and inability of motorists to coordinate navigation of the traffic calming chicane located outside the Chesterton Hotel. On days where the M40/A34 has any issues Chesterton and surrounding villages are deluged with vehicles following alternative Satnav routes.

This proposal is opportunistic and definitely inappropriate in any village location. The road network cannot support the levels of traffic it has and projected to have with additional demands that are in the local plan. It would seem in-appropriate that this resort type development go ahead and therefore this appeal should be dismissed.

Thank you

Speaker 15 – Isabella Newton

My name is Isabella Newton, I'm 23 and I live adjacent to the proposed Great Wolf Resort car park. I am fortunate to see the beauty of this incredible and nature rich environment every day. I have read the proposals with dismay and I strongly object, as have thousands of others.

This wholly inappropriate proposal plans to eradicate a beautiful and wildlife rich golf course with its associated woodlands and lakes by covering an area of 500,000 ft², with a 4-storey residential block and large areas of ground covered in hard surfaces, concrete and floodlights. It will require the removal of hundreds of trees, the infilling lakes and ponds, it will actively damage animal trackways, thereby eliminating wildlife through increased human activity, noise, light and air pollution. Furthermore, it will wipeout microhabitats for native plants including wildflowers and insects including pollinators.

Extreme revision and management of the rural landscape is contrary to Cherwell Local Plan policies EN27, EN30, EN31, EN34 and EN35. The proposed, re-modelled landscape will do absolutely nothing to preserve our natural species.

With our future in mind, we, the younger generation are looking to improve and protect our environment. I would like to just make it clear that myself and many many others of my age group do not believe this is an appropriate addition to our small historic village of Chesterton. The impact of this on the existing rural environment and natural habitats would be devastating and irreversible, at a time when we need to protect our environment not destroy it. Conserving natural habitats and protecting wildlife is fundamental, We should not look towards destruction of these areas as they need to be saved for our future generations. I would kindly urge you to dismiss this appeal, I speak not only for myself but also on the behalf of the younger generation to whom this will affect in the long term. we need to wake up and not allow this morally and ethically corrupt proposal to succeed in the pursuit of profit.

Thanks,

Isabella Newton

Speaker 16 – Nick Dolden

Great Wolf Planning Appeal

CPRE believes that reversal of biodiversity loss is not only essential for a flourishing countryside but necessary to contribute to addressing the adverse impacts of climate change. CPRE wish to ensure that biodiversity loss is avoided on all sites, not just the 'best in show' designated sites. The NPPF paras 174 and 175 require that all new developments should demonstrate a biodiversity gain and Cherwell District Council go further by requiring a 10% gain, a requirement that will be reflected in the proposed new environment bill.

Biodiversity gain can be demonstrated by inputting the habitat characteristics of a site through a recognised Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) calculator. This compares the number of biodiversity units of a site before and after proposed development. As with any numerical model, the results should be properly quality assured using appropriate professional judgement. CPRE are concerned at the misuse of BIAs as a substitute for proper transparency and rigour. Locally, CPRE were involved in the planning inquiry relating to the nearby Gavray Meadows where a biodiversity gain, falsely claimed by an Appellant, was successfully exposed and challenged.

In its letter of objection to the Great Wolf Development, CPRE challenged the basis of the 27% gain in biodiversity that was claimed by the Appellant in their Biodiversity NET Gain (BNG) report. CPRE did not believe that the Appellant's future proposals, with regards to biodiversity enrichment, were sufficient to compensate for the loss of over six hectares of existing habitat to essentially hardstanding. CPRE could not make sense of the calculator as submitted and suspected that some of the habitat had been wrongly classified. Due to these concerns, CPRE in conjunction with Chesterton PC, instructed the ecologist, Dominic Woodfield, to investigate the claimed 27% in the Appellant's BIA. Given what we see in Mr Woodfield's evidence, and the back tracking in Mr Patmore's, we believe that we were right to be concerned.

Mr Woodfield believes that one major flaw in the Appellant's biodiversity assessment is where amenity grassland has been classified as all being of poor condition. This seriously undervalues the biodiversity value of much of the golf course. This again was picked up in CPRE's original objection letter. Whilst CPRE recognise that much of the golf course is well-maintained grass of low intrinsic value, as Mr Woodfield's proof of evidence demonstrates, the larger part of the grassland classified as lowest quality amenity by the Appellant are roughs, comprising habitat that has somewhat more biodiversity value. Mr Woodfield has demonstrated that a prudent re-assessment of the grassland into moderate condition amenity grassland, or semi – improved grassland, significantly increases the biodiversity value of the baseline. As a result of this, the Appellant's BIA does not demonstrate the gains in biodiversity required by the NPPF or Cherwell District Council. We note that Mr Woodfield has also identified numerous other errors.

The Appellant is proposing to create isolated patches of wet meadow and semi-improved grassland between the front arms of the building by the North East facing entrance and also in other disconnected areas scattered around the site. CPRE question whether the Appellant has a robust plan on delivering and then managing these as a valuable biodiverse habitat. By its nature, and to have any biodiversity value, semi-improved grassland will have an unkempt appearance and this is unlike the highly ordered design shown in their Design and Access Statement.

The proposed habitat management plan is very light on detail. There does not appear to be a rigorous analysis of the risks involved in the achievement of new habitat creation and enhancement. What, for example, are the potential future impacts of climate change and availability of water for irrigation in what is recognised as a water challenged district?

In summary we expressed concerns at the outset regarding the claims of biodiversity gain made by the Appellant which we believe have been vindicated by Mr Woodfield's evidence, that will be heard later in the inquiry. Mr Woodfield's more realistic analysis shows that the development fails to provide the gain in biodiversity required by the NPPF and falls short of the 10% required by Cherwell District Council.

CPRE are also concerned that the development does not respect the character of the countryside which is at odds with the NPPF (para 83). The Cherwell Local Plan (para C243) states that "it wishes to protect the character appearance of our villages". CPRE believes that the development of a four storey hotel, tower and 900 bay car park is significantly out of keeping in appearance compared with any other buildings within the environs of the village. In addition, the influx of visitors and those working at the resort will cause considerable harm to Chesterton with increases in traffic leading to greater noise and pollution which are out of keeping with a quiet and characterful village.

CPRE draw the Inspector's attention to the list of other objections that we raised in our letter of objection dated 3 January 2020 and request that the appeal is dismissed.

From Nick Dolden on behalf of CPRE

Speaker 17 – Natalie Bohm

The UK government has pledged that we will build back better and greener. It aims to harness nature's ability to absorb carbon and foster biodiversity.

Great Lakes UK has put forward a proposal that satisfies none of these policies. This is a sizeable development that has significant environmental concern. I cannot see an impact assessment on local and surrounding area wildlife and biodiversity which is of key concern in this greenbelt. Neither is there an obvious comprehensive environmental policy statement or carbon offset plan. Instead there is a proposal for a development that:

- involves both a water park and a large residential building in an area of known water stress (Cherwell Policy ESD 3). In this application there has not been a full assessment of the impact of the water consumption for both a water park and a hotel on the water-stressed surrounding villages. The Thames Water Report supports only 50 of the 500 rooms from the existing water supply. The concerns around this appear to have been dismissed by Great Lakes who state that they feel that the increase in demand will be negligible on local supply despite not having completed a full study. This indicates their cavalier attitude to such a significant local and environmental concern. This is unsustainable and unacceptable.
- will result in air, water, noise and light pollution. Increased traffic will negatively impact on air quality; I can see no assessment of this impact for Weston-on-the-Green in the application despite the fact that Great Lakes has stated it will advise customers to use the village as one of the routes to the site. This is an unacceptable health risk in a village full of children and older people. The traffic, as well as the development itself, will also result in increased noise and light pollution which are of great concern to those of us living in a rural village due to its impact on our local wildlife. The potential for water pollution is not addressed despite the fact that this development will have water features. None of this is given full consideration in this green land area.

We are currently globally impacted by a pandemic that demonstrates what happens when we encroach on our natural habitats without consideration. How can we even begin to consider appeals such as this that destroy our natural environment at the very time when we should be focused on protecting it?

Speaker 18 – Fiona Boyer-Warland

Name: Fiona Warland (professionally know as Fiona Boyer-Warland)

Job Title: Senior Environmental Solutions Consultant

Experience: 22 years' experience working as an environmental specialist within the nuclear industry

Qualifications: Chartered Radiation Protection Professional and Practitioner of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

Sustainability is comprised on 3 pillars, social, environmental and economic. I have views based on the first two of these which I believe show that the Proposed Great Wolf Lodge is not a sustainable project that the appeal should therefore be rejected.

Firstly Social - A sustainable business should have the support and approval of its employees, stakeholders and **the community it operates in**. I have worked on projects supporting nuclear new build which are controversial planning projects and I have experience of how these projects have engaged with local communities to address their valid concerns. My experience with the Great Wolf public participation events was very different. They appeared to be indifferent to concerns of local communities and presented no evidence which demonstrated that they had undergone any studies to demonstrate that site they had selected was appropriate and suitable.

Next Environmental where a business should demonstrate how it's environmental impact has been reduced as far as reasonably practicable.

A carbon management strategy which is a requirement of the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017. The Energy & Sustainability Statement presents carbon production and estimated reductions only as a result of the operation of the proposed development, known as "operational carbon". It has not taken into account carbon arising from construction (embodied carbon) and therefore there is no consideration of whole-life carbon. There is also no consideration of end-user carbon (e.g. from visitors travelling to the site). The carbon management strategy is therefore incomplete and cannot provide clarity on whether climate resilience has been appropriately considered in the design and development of the Proposed Great Wolf Lodge.

I would like to refer you to the Waste Management Strategy presented as part of the planning application, particular the conclusions presented in paragraphs 4.2.1 and 4.2.2. In my opinion this document is not a waste management strategy because at no point does it demonstrate how the Waste Hierarchy has been applied and therefore it is not compliant with the requirements of the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011. Paragraph 4.2.2 is therefore incorrect. The waste management strategy presented provides no consideration of how the top two, most important, principles of the Waste Hierarchy (Waste Prevention and Preparation for Reuse) have been applied, this is confirmed by the appellant in the conclusion presented in paragraph 4.2.1 which states that "...the need to lessen the overall impact of waste generation through the recycling of materials from the operational phase of the Proposed Development". The strategy only considers that the waste produced at the development will be segregated into refuse, recycling and food waste. Across the site over 50% of waste arisings has been segregated as refuse indicating no consideration has been made to preventing or reducing the creation of waste at source. Based on this alone, I believe that the appeal against the original planning decision should be rejected.

I urge you to listen to the local communities who do not want their environment to be blighted by the development and reject the appeal.

Speaker 19 – David Jones

Prof David A Jones – My expertise is in Ecological Genetics and Chemical Ecology studying chemical variation in plants and the interactions between plants and animals. i.e. How to avoid being eaten when you can't run away. This work involves detailed analysis of the habitats where the plants are growing.

After 16 years as professor of Genetics in Hull and then 14.5 years as chairman and professor of Botany in the University of Florida, Hazel and I retired, in 2004, to a house beside the Gagle Brook in Chesterton.

Since 2007 we have bought 4 acres in Little Chesterton to maintain as a conservation area. We saw the potential because there were pastures of two ages, a stream, a pond, a marsh and two woodlands with different dominant tree species. We have added an orchard and a wildflower meadow. We own the adopted lane which is single track with no passing places.

The surface (stormwater) from the Golf Club land and the Bicester Sports Association fields flows along ditches and through our land along the stream that is little more than a wide drainage ditch. This stream is, by then, the only means for stormwater drainage to leave the two sites. It joins another from Simms Farm to flow through Wendlebury and on to Oxford.

Stormwater from the site does not drain into the Gagle Brook, because the A4095 road is along a ridge that separates the two catchment areas.

From 2012, we have had camera traps monitoring a bridge over the stream. The cameras have recorded mice, rats, squirrels, rabbits, stoats, domestic cats, muntjac, roedeer, foxes, badgers, and otters and recorded barn owls, herons, moorhens, magpies, crows, pheasants, kestrels, sparrow hawks and buzzards standing on the bridge. The foraging areas for some of these animals, especially the owls, includes the Golf Club. Any reduction in these foraging sites and the introduction of lights for car parks and security lights in a rural situation will have a serious detrimental effect on moths, owls and other nocturnal animals.

Using a rain gauge in Little Chesterton and another at home, we have recorded 5 major storm events since the end of June 2020: two in August, one in October, one in December and one in January 2021. Our cameras show that the bridge has been inundated three times in the past 4 months. We have never had any such event before.

The readings from the two rain gauges and data available on-line for Bicester are as similar as might be expected. These data show that over the past 25 months, Jan 2019 – Jan 2021, there has been a 354% increase in the annual rainfall compared with the previous 10 years. Furthermore, in the ten years from 2009-2018 there have been only 4 months when the average rainfall was over 50mm. Of the 25 months since then, 22 of them had averages over 50mm.

This suggests that the SuDS calculations are based on greatly out of date data and are now meaningless.

The five storm events mentioned earlier show that the increase in rainfall has come in intense bursts. The problems are, therefore, much more serious than seen previously with the lane in Little Chesterton being flooded regularly.

To summarise: The change in the rainfall is not a one-off situation. It has been going on for 25 months now. Thus, because the current situation is already unsustainable, I am fearful that any building upstream of Little Chesterton will be disastrous for the wild-life and the people of Little Chesterton, Wendlebury and beyond. Whatever SuDS mitigation and upgrade ditch works are proposed, there is nowhere else for the storm water to go other than through the hamlet and that village.

I strongly urge rejection of this appeal.

Speaker 20 – Tim Hibbert

WENDLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

EVIDENCE TO PLANNING INSPECTOR

APPEAL BY GREAT LAKES LIMITED

PLANNING REFERENCE 19/02550/F: REFUSAL BY CHERWELL D C

11 FEBRUARY 2021

My name is Tim Hibbert, Chairman of Wendlebury Parish Council. We are part of the group of 33 parishes opposed to this application, but specifically we are a close neighbour to Chesterton Parish Council.

Wendlebury is a small village of 175 households with no street lighting or pavements. It is a vibrant community that tries to maintain a quality of rural life, but with a history of residential flooding events.

The proposed development is directly on the catchment area for the Wendlebury Brook, classified as a main river by the Environment Agency.

Impact of flooding

Two major flooding incidents occurred in Wendlebury in 2020. The first in October and the second which is the basis of this evidence, on the 23/24 December 2020. This flooding was due to a burst of intense rainfall which led to a rapid increase in water levels. It is predicted as a result of climate change that these incidents will become more frequent and prolonged.

Investigations from the Environment Agency has proved that more than 34 homes are at risk of flooding, 13 very significantly, 12 have significant risk and 9 moderate risk. This equates to 19% of households in this community.

Following the December flooding, residents came to the January 2021 Meeting to remind the Parish Council of the wider human impacts of flooding including continuous distress, constant fear every time it rains, high cost or no insurance cover, displacement from homes and a general feeling that nobody cares.

It not surprising that residents have raised concerns with the Parish Council that the nature and the change in land use patterns proposed by the Great Lakes development, in particular large parking areas and water resort buildings, will place extra pressure on the catchment area, leading to increased frequency of flooding and risk to properties in Wendlebury.

Catchment Area issues

In the Parish Council's previous evidence dated 20 November 2020, reference was made to the three areas discharging into the culvert under the A41. It is important to reiterate this point as it is crucial in our objection to the development.

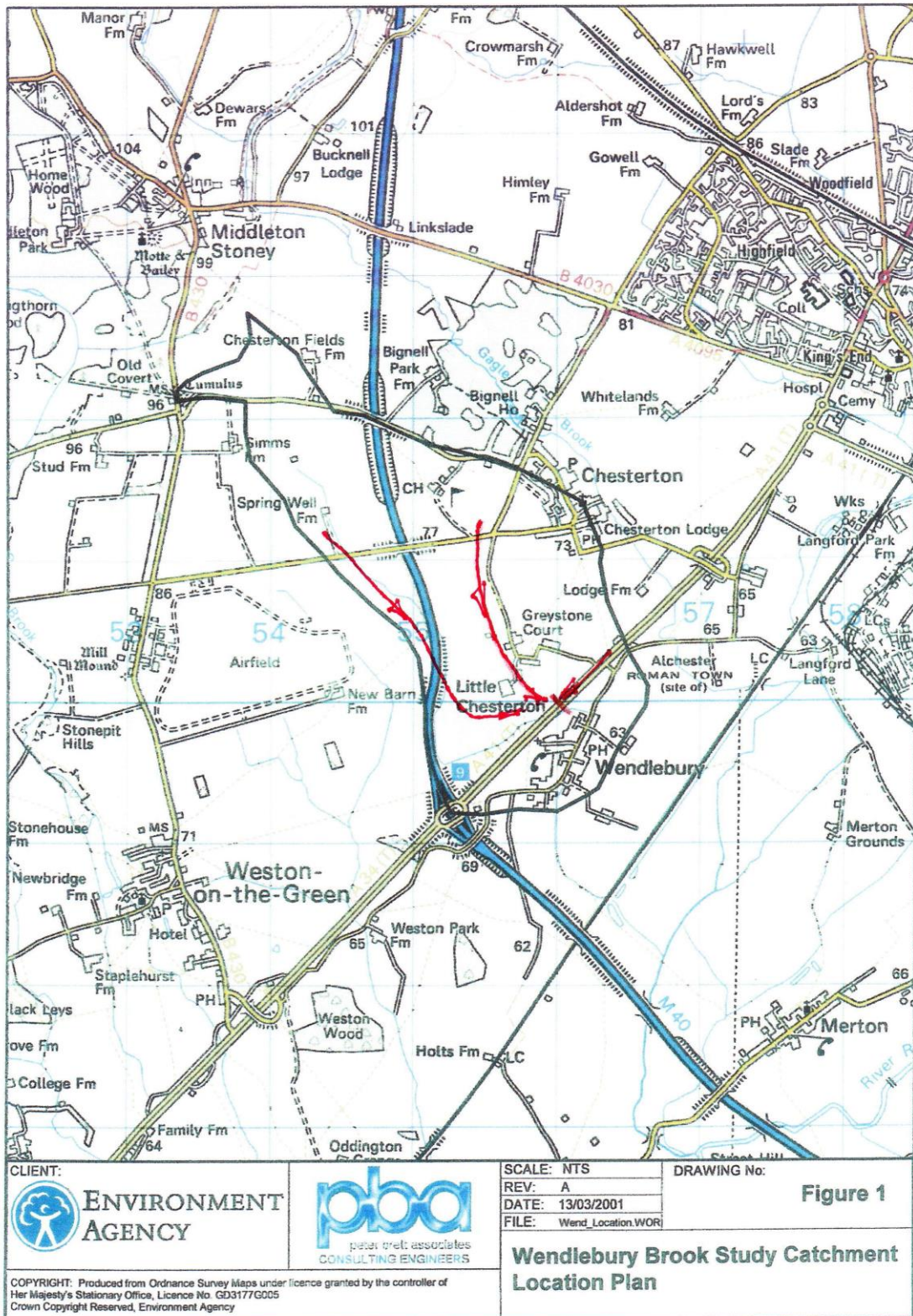
The three areas are:

1. A drain/culvert flowing from Spring Well Farm on the north side of the M40 (this is further West than the application site.
2. flow coming from the Golf course via Little Chesterton alongside Greystone Court.

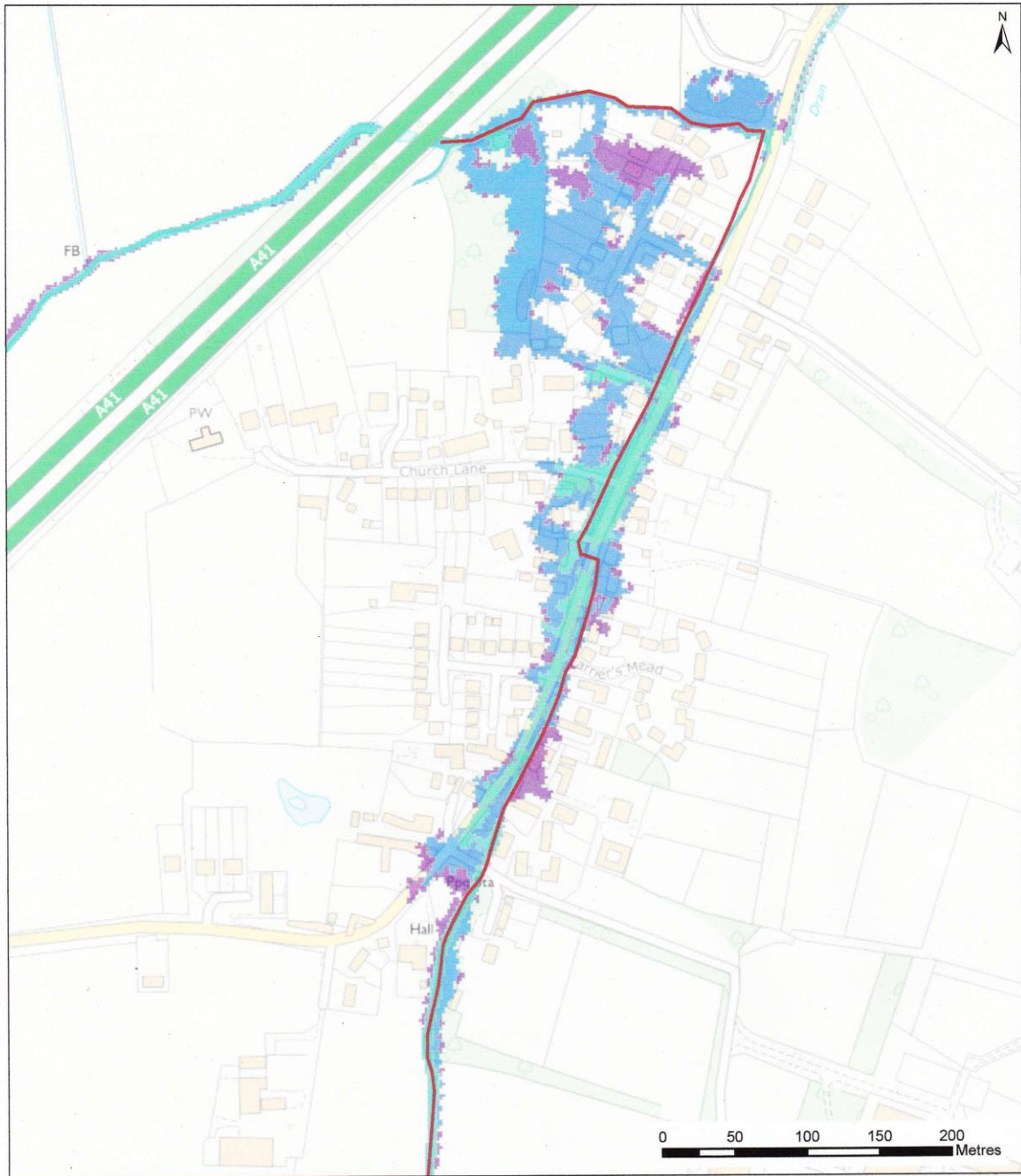
(These two flows join together in Little Chesterton and then come through the culvert under the A41 and flow to the right hand turn at the Bicester end of Wendlebury Main Street).


3. Surface water from the A41 highway.

In conclusion, the Wendlebury community would ask the Appeals Inspector to reject the Appeal by Great Lakes Limited on the grounds that the development will have an adverse impact on the living condition of the Wendlebury residents through flooding.



Discharges into A41 culvert marked in red from catchment area marked in black



 <p>Environment Agency</p>	<p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Main River █ 20% AEP Flood Outline █ 1% AEP Flood Outline █ 1%+20% AEP Flood Outline
<p>Wendlebury Brook</p>	
<p>Modelled Flood Extents</p>	<p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Map Produced: 17/12/2019</p>

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 Contact Us: National Customer Contact Centre, PO Box 544, Rotherham, S60 1BY. Tel: 08708 506 506 (Mon-Fri 8-6). Email: enquires@environment-agency.gov.uk

Shows impact of flooding from culvert

The following additional photographs show clearly the impact from flooding



As the December flooding took place at night this historical photo is typical of the Flooding at the bottom of Church Lane opposite Lion



Surge flooding where water from the A41 culvert joins Wendlebury Brook

Speaker 21 – Paul Brain

Bullet points, objection presentation, Paul Brain

- Introduction
- Potential for new members at an 18-hole course
- 9 holes not viable, reasons
- Competitions and matches, not viable on 9 holes.
- No visitors to a 9-hole course, not fit for purpose.
- Rear terraces overlooking the development.
- Driving range and academy course, not sustainable
- Dismissal

Speaker 22 – Roberta Miles

Great Wolf Appeal – public Speaking Session 11th February 2021

Roberta Miles FCA

Good evening Inspector, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am Roberta Miles, a chartered accountant, a resident of Chesterton (for 33 years), Finance Director of two locally based businesses and the current Lady Captain of Bicester Golf Club.

I would like to focus on the need for a golf course at Bicester and the viability of the current and proposed future golf offering.

The need for a traditional 18-hole course at Bicester is clear:

- Bicester town and the local area have seen a huge increase in population over the last few years and this will continue to rise as significant developments that already have planning permission but are yet to be built are completed.
- North Oxford golf course, which is a similar flat parkland course, where planning permission has been granted for housing, will close and Waterstock is under threat from development.
- Other local courses are oversubscribed, and we have seen members returning to Bicester from other clubs.
- There are very few clubs that are within a short drive time of Bicester Golf Club
- The legacy of COVID-19, encouraging new ways of working, less commuting, the emphasis on work/life balance and a greater emphasis on regular outdoor exercise has over the last few months encouraged many to come back to the game and/or take it up as a healthy lifestyle option.

Viability of the current and proposed model

Bicester Golf Club is a thriving, busy, golf club, with a challenging 18-hole parkland course. The owner of the course, hotel and spa has a blended business model where the golf income from members sits alongside the significant income from pay and play golfers, golf -breaks and golf societies who use the hotel, spa and dining facilities in addition to the golf course.

Membership at Bicester inevitably dropped since the original planning application was announced in 2019 but it is disingenuous of Great Wolf to use that fact to predict an ongoing trend should the proposed development not go ahead. Throughout the periods that the course was open in 2020 it was extremely busy with members and visitors paying green fees. This would lead me to believe that the current model was viable.

Most golfers want to play a traditional 18 tee, 18 green course and not the proposed Great Wolf system of 18 tees playing to 9 greens.

I am also sure that very few golfers would want to play on the proposed reworked course which would be completely overshadowed by a monstrous, overpowering, building that has:

- a 73 foot high tower (three times the height of the current hotel)
- a vast 65 foot high 3000 bed capacity hotel (the largest outside London)
- with a 520,000 sq foot build area (which is larger than the size of Selfridges on Oxford Street)
- a volume of over 14 million cubic feet
- and a car park the size of a long-term car-park at Heathrow airport

I believe that the proposed golf income forecasts in the Great Wolf plan, for a business that they do not even own, are flawed.

Why is there no scale 3-D model of the proposed development together with the proposed golf course I wonder. Would this just reflect how truly monstrous this development is and how damaging that it would be to the entire business model of BHGS.

As a resident, an employer and on behalf of the members of Bicester Golf Club I would urge the Inspector to dismiss this appeal.

Speaker 23 – Mark Horseman

Great Wolf Appeal – public Speaking Session 11th February 2021

Hi, my name is Mark Horseman. I live with my young family on the Langford Village estate on the south-east side of Bicester having moved here in 2003. My now wife Annabel and I moved here from opposite ends of the country to buy our first home together choosing Bicester as the ideal location for our work and social life together after due consideration of the area.

We soon got involved in local clubs and organisations including Bicester Badminton, Tennis and Golf Club as a great way to meet new friends and become part of the community. Annabel and I have been members of Bicester Golf Club since 2004, after playing a selection of local courses choosing Bicester as an enjoyable test but also as our local course. We quickly made some great friends through the club, many of which we still play with today, meeting other couples and individuals who welcomed us warmly – we soon felt part of the club. It wasn't long before I joined the men's committee working as the competitions secretary, my wife has been lady captain and in 2008 I proudly won the men's Club Championship.

Annabel and I now have two children aged 11 and 8 who we have encouraged to lead healthy outdoor lifestyles, and introduced them to golf through Bicester golf club. My daughter has had group lessons at Bicester. The driving range gave my children their first experience of hitting a golf ball and a facility to have fun, improve and gain confidence in the game. Thankfully they both continue to enjoy the game and are now capable enough that we can play the game as a family together, it's fantastic to see their enthusiasm and improvement as they grow. My daughter has now reached a level of competence that meant last year she was invited to join the Oxfordshire Girls County academy coaching scheme, after learning the basics at Bicester. The club has introduced 'junior' tees on the course making it more accessible to children and the relaxed nature of the club is welcoming where more traditional clubs can seem a bit cold. The friends we made when we first joined are now encouraging my children to play the game, in the same way they welcomed my wife and I some 17 years earlier.

Bicester Golf Club is a fantastic local community resource that is a social hub for local families to meet and spend quality time together with friends. If the Great Wolf development goes ahead the appeal of the club and the history of the club will be lost and the membership will be dispersed across other golf clubs further afield. A nine hole golf course with two sets of tees far less appealing to a golfer than an 18 hole golf course. A large and growing Bicester will be left without a golf course worthy of the town and its members will be forced to travel further than

necessary to seek 18 hole golf elsewhere, increasing traffic miles and possibly discouraging some from continuing to play. The Great Wolf development has no appeal for me and my family, wanting to spend our local leisure time supporting community resources rather than a holiday resort designed to encourage visitors from across the country, and perhaps beyond. If anything the development could turn me off the local area and some of the reasons that encouraged my wife and I to settle here in the first place. This is also the place where we see our children growing up and using the same golf club we have been members of for years. If the development goes ahead the club where I became club champion will soon be forgotten and my children will forget it too! My hope is you will dismiss this appeal and the Great Wolf development will not go ahead.

Speaker 24 – Judith Keeling

My name is Judith Keeling and I'm a national newspaper journalist writing on health (mostly for the Daily Mail) and a mother of teenage children .

I don't live in Chesterton but I do live in the nearby village of Kirtlington .

18 months ago I'd never heard of Great Wolf Resorts – but driving through Chesterton one day I saw the first Stop the Wolf signs, did some online research and that's how I found out about this proposed hotel complex.

To say I was disbelieving and horrified by the scale of what was proposed is an understatement.

I am here this evening because I believe the Wolf development is simply wrong – wrong in any village anywhere not just here - and also because I think a large area of countryside, villages and wildlife will suffer terrible damage if goes ahead.

One of the things that annoys me most is that this hotel and water park venture is NOT a local amenity. This really adds insult to injury as far as I'm concerned.

A glib and rather cheesy early marketing campaign portrayed the Great Wolf Lodge as a fun place where kids could enjoy themselves – and the implication was you could easily come along and have fun with your family too.

But the reality is that this is actually designed for people who've driven through our villages from miles away to stay the night. The more you look at it – and the Car is King mentality behind this business model – the more it seems as though we locals provide the picturesque route through which Great Wolf customers will drive.

GWR has made it clear there will be 'fewer' day passes for locals at the very times they will want to use them – weekends and school holidays. In reality if you spend any time on their US websites trying to buy a day pass in July or August, it soon becomes clear that fewer really means none at all.

Just before the first planning hearing Great Wolf announced a limited number of day passes *would* be available during 'off peak' periods but this would never amount under any circumstances to more than 20 per cent of the total number of guests at the water park. But given their target audience is families with children aged 2-12 who are bound by school holidays

- so would be obliged to use the park during peak times - this is an empty gesture, as I'm sure they were aware.

To get in, you'll realistically have to stump up for an overnight stay - and this can be surprisingly eye-wateringly expensive.

Last night I randomly googled the prices at a US lodge - I chose Anaheim, Ca., because I'd heard of it- and an overnight stay for a family of four ranges from XX to YY (check latest stats here)

Then there is the extraordinary offer of 30 so called 'sustainable' day passes a day for those who take a shuttle bus. That is so few - relative to the total number of guests in the park which is 2250 according to GWR's own figures - that it doesn't even qualify as a token gesture.

It's so few it's actually insulting.

I've been a national newspaper journalist for more than 30 years and held some senior newsroom positions during that time and I must say that I haven't witnessed quite such a shabby PR campaign as this in many years.

I believe that someone else will speak about the remarkable notion of marketing to primary school children using pester power - something that stunned a couple of my Fleet Street colleagues when I recounted it recently to them -(NOTE: OMIT?) so I won't dwell on that there.

You might think - as I originally did - that this is due to a cultural misunderstanding between two countries divided by a common language as the saying goes. But - with aggressive and highly paid UK consultants on the books and no shortage of local feedback this doesn't stack up to me, 18 months down the line.

Sadly, I've finally concluded that so long as they get what they want, GWR really don't care what we locals think.

Throughout, the Wolf campaign has been characterized by a few cheap last-minute gestures here and there, just enough to tick boxes. None of it bears any close scrutiny at all.

Throughout the local community has been treated with complacency and contempt.

But people can do the sums for themselves and they're not stupid. How can any firm that's serious about sustainability really believe that 30 people a day - 7 or 8 local families / 7 or 8 local

car trips can really make a difference in the face of 900 odd cars in a permanently flood lit car park? It would be almost funny it wasn't so deadly serious.

It seems to me that the local community bears all the risk for this business experiment – and to my mind it IS an experiment because this is not a proven business model in the UK.

Personally speaking I am not sure that families will flock to this Lodge in their droves as GWR claims – speaking as a parent I think it's expensive and relatively poor value compared with other alternatives already in existence.

If the Great Wolf Lodge were to be built there is another, potentially more horrendous prospect, in my view – that is that it does not succeed. Then GWR will simply go away and open another park somewhere else but we will be left with a blighted site.

One thing's for sure: it won't revert to countryside.

If I sound angry tonight, I make no apology. I am furious – on behalf of myself, my family, our villages and our countryside.

Thank you very much for giving local people the chance to speak and for listening to what I have to say.

ENDS,

Speaker 25 – Jack Martin

Please listen to my email to object to Great Wolf.

I helped my Mum deliver leaflets, put up signs and even went to a tv interview to stick up for my little village and stop the Wolf in March. Everyone around the table from the council said no and I can't believe I am writing an email again!

I cycle in our village and having 1800 more cars a day using our small roads would put me in danger. I rely on my bike to get me places locally (I'm too young to drive).

This is not for me and my friends to use. Tickets will be expensive. I've researched the USA prices and I don't think I will be able to go there.

Our wildlife which is beautiful will have their homes destroyed. I see lovely deer, swans, birds and many other animals from the public paths of the golf course.

Please don't let Great Wolf in.

Thank you for your time

Jack Martin age 12

Chesterton

Speaker 26 – Diane Messum

The Great Wolf Lodge Water Theme Park

Diane Messum MCSP HCPC BSc(Hons) MSc VetPhysio ACPAT Cat A RAMP

‘View of the development from young families in Chesterton and the perspective of the primary school’

My name is Diane Messum and I have lived on Alchester Road in Chesterton for 7 years with my husband and two children, now aged 8 and 6 years, who attend Chesterton Church of England Primary School. I have been a Chartered Physiotherapist for 18 years, now specialising in Small Animals. My family and I are very active and enjoy walking, running, cycling and pony riding within the local area using public footpaths and local highways in and around Chesterton.

I speak this evening on behalf of the young families of Chesterton and will be addressing the following points:

- The increase in **traffic and road safety concerns** during both the construction phase and when open. The danger an increase in up to 1800 cars a day on our roads to children walking to and from the primary school within the village and to older children walking to secondary schools within Bicester along the narrow pavements of the A4095. The ongoing work to reduce the speed limit to 20mph outside of the school as there have been too many near misses and the potential for this number to rise if there is more traffic on our local roads. The potential for gridlock within the village and disruption to day to day life for everyone including families getting their children to and from extracurricular activities. The refusal of the recent Bicester Sports Association (BSA) planning application on the grounds of traffic concerns and where the traffic generated for the BSA development would have been significantly less than The Great Wolf Water Theme Park.
- The **School Eco Council** and their concerns regarding climate change, increased car emissions and erosion of our natural environment/biodiversity. The schools ‘walk to school’ scheme.
- The **irreversible change to the rural character of the area** that The Great Wolf Water Theme Park would bring, with no safe rural walks. The traffic that would approach via Bruern Abbey or through Little Chesterton where satellite navigators already frequently direct drivers particularly when avoiding traffic that is approaching Bicester

Village. The several occasions of careless and fast driving already seen whilst walking, running, cycling or pony riding, from the current high level of traffic and which would inevitably increase significantly and thus increase the risk of accidents.

- **Noise and Air pollution** from construction traffic and visiting traffic thereafter and the building itself having long term effects on the children's health. The predictable changes to the air quality from increased traffic and the potential for this to increase the number of young asthma sufferers in the community. This would also likely impact the 250 children training and competing regularly at the BSA grounds on Akeman Street.
- The concerns regarding **flooding**, particularly given the extensive flooding, water and sewerage, already seen in Chesterton, Little Chesterton and Wendlebury in the past 18 months. The local developments within Chesterton having already outstripped what the infrastructure can cope with and with waste water/sewerage from the resort, how this would likely be to the detriment to the drainage of Chesterton.
- Children suffering all the negative impacts of the resort but never being able to use it. Families don't want **limited and unaffordable day passes**. This is not a development that would benefit the local community.

I really feel our fragile world can ill afford such continuous bombardment from such developments reasoned only by the requirement for endless growth. There has been a genuine disregard for the concerns of the local community and for all of the reasons I have discussed, I strongly urge you to consider that this proposal is dismissed

Speaker 27 – Rev. Gareth Miller

- Villages wish to remain rural in character.
- Environment has changed rapidly over recent years with massive impact: M40, A34, Bicester expansion, Bicester Village – that is enough.
- Trying to maintain a sense of community.
- Trying to maintain a sense of tranquillity.
- Our seven churches are in need of repair and upgrading, but money is being sucked away into fighting this campaign. We are not funded nationally - we have to raise all our own money.
- I am Area Dean of Bicester – NONE of our local churches are in favour.
- We are not against change – just this kind of change.
- Development seems greedy. David and Goliath.
- People are exhausted by pandemic. They need time to recover and settle – not feel overwhelmed by something big from ‘outside’.

Speaker 28 – John Floyd

Thank you very much for taking the time to hear my concerns - I have been both the Headmaster of Bruern Abbey School and a resident in the village of Chesterton since the summer of 2011. Much has already been eloquently laid out by my fellow parishioners and local members of the public so I will focus purely on the specifics of Bruern Abbey as a school.

Bruern has tried over the past decade to forge links across the local community - we use the local church for our weekly services, use the Bicester and North Oxford playing fields and we link up with Chesterton Primary school for cross country, cricket, rugby and football. We have used the golf club too and hope to use the new fitness facilities when they're re-opened. We also run cross country routes through the and around the footpaths of Chesterton, Little Chesterton and when we are really keen over to Ambrosden. All of this movement around the village and engagement will be threatened by the surge in traffic that will be a consequence of this development. We simply will not be able to use our existing routes (many have no pavement) to access all these facilities with the pupils we have. This will be a loss to us, and a financial loss to the community too. Great Wolf resorts claim a positive community involvement but from my stance this development will drive Bruern away from the local community.

The second big impact for us will be due to flooding. As fellow speakers have mentioned the consequences of this development will change the flooding risk and a 200m section Gaggle brook runs right through our pupils play area at the rear of our school. Greater flooding risks will render more of our grounds either regularly unusable or unsafe. We do not see why the quality of Bruern pupils education should suffer so significantly as a consequence of this development.

I strongly urge you to decline this application.

Speaker 29 – Rachel Hucker

Great Wolf Appeal Speech: Rachael Hucker

Introduction:

My name is Rachael Hucker and I currently live in Bicester having been a resident full or part time since 1996. In 2020, I bought my own property in Bicester and moved away from my parents who live in Wendlebury. I am a member of Bicester Hockey Club, a regular attendee at Wendlebury Church and a leader of a Brownie pack in Bicester and hold Division and District committee roles. I have a Msc in Health Psychology, a Bsc in Psychology and have a Care certificate. I am a key worker and work with young offenders in the local community.

I am objecting to the Great wolf resort based of some key factors; the environmental impact, the negative social impact and the impact it will have on me personally.

Environment:

- This development is likely to cause significant damage and destruction of wildlife habitats. As a member of Girlguiding we promote conservation and making positive change to our environment including the protection of animals. This development goes against this.
- The proposed hard surfaces of the hotel, car parking, and other facilities will increase the volume of storm water which will significantly impact on the brook that runs through the Villages of Little Chesterton and Wendlebury and floods when overloaded.
- Local farms fields and villages are likely to be at increased risk of properties being flooded.
- Growing up in Wendlebury, I have experienced first-hand the effects flooding; the emotional and financial trauma it can cause. Allowing the development would only impact the local residents further.

Negative Social Impact:

- This is not designed to be a public amenity, building a large scale development in a village that will not support the local economy is ridiculous
- This will have a negative impact on the history and heritage of Bicester.

- The local community are opposing this, the developers are not members of this community and therefore interests are not in the community but in themselves.

Personal impact:

- If this goes ahead, I will witness and experience further flooding to my family and the people I grew up with including elderly neighbours who live on their own
- If this goes ahead, I will have to explain to the children in Girlguiding why something so damaging has been allowed to happen.
- If this goes ahead, Parishioners of Wendlebury will not be able to attend their church much of the year as they will have to battle the flood waters to get there.
- If this goes ahead, travel times for me to see vulnerable young people in the community will increase meaning I am spending more time in my car than helping protect the community and prevent further offending. Many, many keyworkers, doctors and nurses will also be impacted by this.
- If this goes ahead, local sports groups will spend less time playing their sport and more time battling roads to get to matches and local pitches.

To conclude, I have given my reasons for why I cannot agree with the Great Wolf Resort plan and I hope you will take these into account. There is a saying that we borrow the Earth from our children and Grandchildren, so lets do what's in their best interests and not allow this project to go forward.

Speaker 30 – Karl Moore

- Karl Moore
- Builder, carpenter and joiner
- Have worked in the area for 30 years
- Worked on several houses in Kirtlington in the past few years, working on house in Chesterton at the moment and bidding for two other houses in Chesterton
- Main concern is the additional traffic this would bring to the area and the effect it would have on local businesses
- When someone asks me to quote for a job I have to factor in access and parking
- I have to pay my staff time and petrol costs, when they are in the van it is a cost to me
- If there is bad traffic in an area I need to factor this in - this can make my quotes non competitive or simply make it too expensive for the client
- This can make local businesses like me less inclined to work in areas of high traffic - many of my competitors refuse to work in Oxford for this very reason.
- Sub contracts often refuse to take on work in areas with bad traffic for this very reason
- Oxford has already become a no go area for some people - pushing organisations further over towards Gloucester
- Currently, our suppliers in Bicester are able to drop supplies to Chesterton in a few minutes - if a van is available at the end of the day
- If these villages are known for bad traffic, suppliers might want to wait until they have a full van to make deliveries - causing delays in our business

Speaker 31 – Cllr. Ian Corkin

Will provide a verbal update only

Speaker 32 – Caroline Chipperfield-Twiddy

- Moved to the village in May - had been against GW but hadn't fully appreciated how inappropriate the development was
- The scale of the Development is extraordinary - out of place, incredulous that this could even be contemplated in such a rural setting
- Team have come together through Covid, bereavements, shielding, home schooling etc
- Representing 25,000 people in villages along with the people of Bicester who have also objected to this
- Almost 800 people wrote letters
- Over 2,200 people have signed the Change.org petition
- Over 100 local businesses have signed the business petition against the development
- The pathetic attempts to 'appease' the community with badly thought through pathways - no sensitivity to the community
- Last minute appeal application had us on the back foot - left us shocked and up against the clock for objection letters
- Very difficult to run a campaign during lockdowns
- No events to communicate progress to those not on social media or online
- No events for fundraising
- Not being able to see people in person
- Great Wolf made no attempt made to engage Chesterton Parish Council or any villagers since March
- They haven't even provided statements when asked by national newspapers
- We have had to raise a great deal of money to ensure we had our say - this has been really difficult
- Chesterton Church has had to delay its renovation fundraising because so many of us are focused on the Stop the Wolf campaign]
- Huge team of people across villages fundraising, wreath making, calendars, raffle, 200 club etc
- So many people have dug deep, children have donated pocket money, pensioners have donated from finite pensions etc
- Put huge strain on people and their relationships
- But PAW have pulled together to fight this shared goal
- This isn't just about us, this is about the British countryside and everything it represents. It is about our environment, our quality of life.

- Please say no to this appeal, please show that Big Business cannot ride roughshod over anyone they like. We will be hearing about many planning precedents over the next few weeks - please do not let this be a precedent which makes other villages vulnerable to this type of bullying behaviour.
- Please Stop the Wolf