

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

Date 5th January 2020

Dear Ms Whitehead,

Objection to Planning Application Ref: 19/02550/F – Proposed Water Park by Great Wolf

I wish to object to the above planning application. I have been a resident in Cherwell District for over 40 years and seen the significant changes that the area has encountered over this time. I work in Bicester and have seen the significant changes in the area due to the additional housing and associated facilities. Whilst it has been significant, it has been plan-led with the right sites being allocated so the associated infrastructure can be planned by Cherwell.

The Great Wolf proposal is purely speculative, opportunist and does not accord with the local plan. It is in the totally wrong location for such a huge facility that will have such a massive impact on the local area. On this basis I hope the planning application is refused.

My objection is on the following grounds:-

1. Unsustainable form of development

This is a significant development that will attract high levels of visitors every day and Cherwell District Council's (CDC) Policy SLE3 states that such developments should be located in highly sustainable locations adjacent to a multitude of transport modes to reduce the reliance on car usage. Policy ESD1 also seeks to distribute new developments to sustainable locations to tackle Cherwell's commitment to climate change. The site is on the edge of Chesterton village in an inherently unsustainable location with low accessibility to public transport and the scheme provides for 900 car parking spaces (therefore promoting car usage) and is therefore contrary to Policy SLE3 and ESD1.

The site is currently greenfield, open space and policy BSC10 seeks to ensure there is sufficient quantity and quality of open space, sport and recreation provision by protecting and enhancing existing provision. The planning system should be supporting the redevelopment of previously developed, brownfield sites, or allocated sites in sustainable locations adjacent to public transport modes, not on a greenfield site that will irreversibly remove valuable open space. This is totally the wrong location for such a proposal and whatever gestures or promises the applicant provides for in terms of improved access, bus services or cycle routes, the site is in an inherently unsustainable location and not appropriate for such a development.

2. Landscape Impact and Design

The proposed scheme is not in-keeping with the local area which is characterised by 2/3 storey buildings which are detached and in clusters. The Countryside Design Summary (2008) published by CDC provides guidance for developments in locations such as this and supports developments of small scale, low height and detached. Also saved Policy T5 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 states that new hotels in rural locations will only be approved where they would largely be accommodated in existing buildings or totally replace an existing commercial operation.

Policy ESD13 states that successful design should contribute to an area's character representing the traditional form, scale and massing of buildings. Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

The development consists of a large bulk of 500,000 sq.ft of built form and mass and at a significantly greater height than any of the other buildings in the vicinity of the site and this is all to be delivered on what is currently greenfield site with no buildings on it. The proposal is therefore contrary to the Countryside Design Summary, saved Policy T5, ESD13 and paragraph 170 of the NPPF.

3. Traffic

Policy ESD1 supports new developments that reduce the need to travel by car and Policy SLE4 states that new developments should facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport. CDC's 1996 saved Policy TR7 states that developments that will attract a large number of vehicles onto minor roads will not normally be permitted.

The existing road infrastructure cannot cope with the projected extra 1000 – 1,500 daily car movements. Chesterton is already a 'rat-run' and experiences major congestion as an escape route during the many traffic issues on the M40 and A34. The applicant is seeking to re-route traffic down the A34 particularly and doesn't appear to appreciate the issues that we already encounter on the A34. The slip road at Weston on the Green is notorious for accidents due to the short length of the slip road. Great Wolf is directing traffic to use this slip road so will exacerbate the already significant issues. There is no reference or consideration for this aspect in the Applicant's Transport Assessment.

The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies SLE4 and saved policy TR7.

The proposal is not in accordance with the development plan and represents an unsustainable form of development delivering 500,000 sq.ft of built form on a greenfield site whilst also putting significant pressure on the existing road network. It is totally the wrong location for such a significant development and as such this planning application should be refused.

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Mrs Susan M Brewerton.

Mrs Susan M Brewerton