

# Comment for planning application 20/01127/F

<b>Application Number</b>	20/01127/F
<b>Location</b>	Hatch End Old Poultry Farm Steeple Aston Road Middle Aston Bicester OX25 5QL
<b>Proposal</b>	Demolition of existing buildings. Erection of replacement business units, ancillary hub and associated external works.
<b>Case Officer</b>	James Kirkham
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Stuart Ferguson
<b>Address</b>	Merlins, Fir Lane, Steeple Aston, Bicester, OX25 4SF
<b>Type of Comment</b>	Objection
<b>Type</b>	neighbour
<b>Comments</b>	<p>The site is essentially only accessible via Steeple Aston as exit/entry to/from the north (Middle Aston) is constrained by very narrow roads and the fact that the Middle Aston to A4260 road is designated as unsuitable for large/heavy vehicles and not accessible to/from the northbound lanes of the A4260. The roads of Steeple Aston have many very narrow sections and are already used by full sized service and school buses plus agricultural vehicles. Head on meetings between large vehicles without banksmen to guide reversing is very problematic. The plan does not mention the parking restrictions which would likely be required at some points/junctions. Furthermore, the site is adjacent to a primary school (and adjoining playgroup) where traffic is very congested at the start and end of school (playgroup) day owing to many pupils being brought by cars which are often parked for 10 minutes or so, as many parents like to accompany their children into school. In addition, school buses arrive/depart. There have been near misses with cars and children meeting in the middle of the road. OCC has steadfastly refused to allow a 'lollypop' lady. Thus a ground for objection is that the plan does not realistically address the difficulties with traffic management during construction. If the development is permitted then the travel to work plan is not realistic. The proposed provision of 97 car parking slots and 48/50 bicycle racks suggests that an employment number of around 140-150 is envisaged. Only around 1,000 people live within reasonable cycling distance, that is to say Middle and Steeple Aston. No evidence is given that the site would provide work for significant numbers of residents of these villages. Available skills and local unemployment figures are not considered. To cycle from further afield, eg the Heyfords, Deddington or even Bicester, along busy and hilly main roads is something that few people would wish/be able to do. The idea that employees will travel via Heyford station ( a 30 minute walk away and up and down hills) is implausible. The traffic plan says that there are daily bus services to Bicester and Chipping Norton. In fact these are once/twice weekly and thus irrelevant. There is an hourly bus service to/from Oxford/Banbury with the nearest bus stop being 15/20 minutes walk (up and down a steep hill) with the last part being along an unlit road with no pavement. The journey times to eg Kidlington and Banbury are quite long and the hourly frequency means that the timings will very probably not fit in with start/end of working day. So realistically, the vast majority of employees are not going to arrive by bus but by car. More than 97 car parking spaces, and fewer cycle spaces, would be needed if parking along the Middle to Steeple Aston road is to be avoided, especially if some allowance for parking slots for visitors is made. Is it CDC/OCC policy to allow new substantial employment hubs where essentially all employees (not to mention support workers such as cleaners) must arrive by car? Notwithstanding this point, of the order of 150 employees arriving by car between 0800 and 0900 would result in approximately two extra cars per minute passing the primary school with the possibility of a more concentrated pattern of arrival at certain times within that window. (Car sharing rarely works - different working hours, places of residence too far apart, desired flexibility about route home after work etc), That may sound trivial for an average road, but the road outside the school is heavily congested, even blocked at that time. Thus a further ground for objection is the incompatibility between the size of the development, and thus generated traffic, and the particular constraints on the road capacity adjacent to the primary school (and playgroup).</p>
<b>Received Date</b>	29/05/2020 12:42:24
<b>Attachments</b>	