

Comment for planning application 20/02126/CLUE

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| Application Number | 20/02126/CLUE |
| Location | Wroxton Motorcross Track Land Used For Motorcross Stratford Road A422 Wroxton OX15 6HH |
| Proposal | Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use for the use of the land for a mixed use of agriculture and as a motorcross track with race meetings for up to 24 days a year (excluding set up, preparation, clear up and private practice sessions) |
| Case Officer | George Smith |
| Organisation | |
| Name | Kevin Matthews |
| Address | Birchwood House,Pages Lane,Hornton,Banbury,OX15 6BX |
| Type of Comment | Objection |
| Type | neighbour |
| Comments | <p>We have become aware that Wroxton Motocross Track has applied for a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC). My understanding is that currently, the activity has no planning permission and is conducted under the 14 day 'permitted use' rule. We have lived at Birchwood House, Pages Lane, Hornton for 17 years and over the last 3-4 years the noise level from what was originally a small scramble track has increased markedly, with the size and scale of the race meetings transforming beyond recognition. On race meeting days it can be difficult to hold a conversation outside in the garden and the noise can be easily heard from within the house with all windows and doors closed, requiring the TV volume to be increased. We believe that this level of noise surpasses the Governments 'significant observed adverse effect' level where action should be taken to mitigate the noise. The activity of these major track events has had a real impact on our enjoyment of our house and garden on race weekends. The incessant noise, which seemingly occurs almost every weekend from May to September, continuing throughout the day with races from 9am to late afternoon, makes living in Hornton on these weekends highly stressful. The frequent noise disturbance has deterred us from inviting family and friends to our garden during the spring and summer, especially over the last couple of years. We strongly object therefore to the granting of a LDC and believe that the activity should be curtailed within the current guidelines as a scramble track only. We believe that if the District Council is seriously considering awarding a LDC there should be a full impact assessment. Any upgrade should require a full assessment of noise pollution levels both in the village and at the track site at a typical race meet. If there is still a view that approval should be granted consideration should be given to a requirement that all machines using the circuit to comply with static noise test limits stipulated in the Noise Council's Code of Practice on Noise from Organised Off-Road Motor Cycle Sport, published in 1994, and measured in accordance with the protocol devised by the Auto-Cycle Union. The maximum number of machines allowed on the track should also be limited with entry onto the circuit limited to one machine at a time, thereby reducing noise levels rather than the current 20+ bikes all starting at the same time. Furthermore an effective noise barrier could be erected such that the bike jumps do not result in the bikes surpassing the level of the barrier. Finally, the configuration of the circuit should be designed to minimise noise levels. We have also observed at a distance what appear to be high levels of emissions from individual machines and a brown haze hanging over the course. It is noticeable that there is also a strong smell of vehicle fumes when using public footpaths that pass nearby. We would suggest that particulate levels are measured to determine whether they comply within the safe limits as set down by DEFRA. The Governments own website highlights the importance of the impact of noise on wildlife. "Where noise adversely affects wildlife and ecosystems. Particular consideration needs to be given to the potential effects of noisy development on international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity." It should be noted that a breeding ground for Curlew, Balscote Quarry, which is a Banbury Ornithological Society Reserve is situated only 0.5km from the noisy motocross site. The UK's breeding population of Curlews is recognised as being of international importance and their IUCN status is Near Threatened and the bird is a UK BAP priority. The site also has other rare declining species such as Brown Hare, a priority species, as well as Lapwings. The impact of the noise from the Motocross on this important site and the potential disturbance to breeding Curlews and Hares should be assessed. The public roads leading to the Motocross site entrance have been badly damaged by heavy use of camper vans with trailers and have required repeated repair to make them safe for use, especially for cyclists. In addition, a high volume of large vehicles can make the single track roads near the site highly</p> |

dangerous and impassable with a steady stream of vehicles at the beginning and end of the meet. I have personally narrowly avoided a collision when cycling due to a large camper van with a trailer swinging widely to navigate the tight road junction near the site. Therefore, access to the site should be reviewed and improved. Overall, we believe that a Motocross Track that is used for large race meetings and generates a significant amount of noise is not in keeping with a conservation village such as Hornton and the aspiration of Cherwell Council to encourage tourism in the area. There are often walkers and rambling clubs in the village and on a number of occasions during race days I have been asked how I bear the noise, "Such a beautiful village. Shame about the noise." Yours sincerely, K Matthews and S Hall
Birchwood House Pages Lane Hornton OX15 6BX

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Attachments