

To: Mr George Smith MSc, Senior Planning Officer, Cherwell District Council  
Planning - Cherwell District Council

CC: John Orfford  
Chair, Hornton Parish Council

Date: 8 September 2020

**Ref: 20/02126/CLUE “Unauthorised change of use of land from agricultural to motorsport with significant intensification over recent years and erection of timber fence”**

We have lived in the village of Hornton since April, 1987 (we moved to the area late in 1986). At that time, to our recollection, there was no motocross facility. However, latterly, we are acutely aware of the increase in the noise generated by motorsport and related traffic, conducted in the adjacent valley. We live approximately half-way up Millers Lane and are directly in the noise ‘shadow’, generated by the events.

We do not wish to be “kill-joys” or prevent people involving themselves in a sport which on the face of it provides lots of fun and interest.

However, we are concerned that the increase in noise pollution is escalating to a point which we believe is unreasonable. There must be a balance.

Unlike the headline (Banbury Guardian - 2019) which states Environmental Health Officials have been drawn into a dispute between residents of Hornton and organisers of a popular motorcross site, we maintain it is the responsibility of the local planning authority to monitor and regulate such activities.

We understand the matter is now being formally raised with the Cherwell District Council for adjudication.

It seems clear that the organiser (2019) - Mr Pounder - and the landowner (2019) - Sandra Curwood, may have vested financial interests in the events continuing, but additionally, there does seem a big disparity between 14 authorised race events per year (28 claimed by the organiser) and the site being involved in 42 days per year, as quoted by the Parish Council Chairman, John Orfford.

Not sure what advice was given to the landowner by a planning specialist but wonder how this equates to the current national focus on environmental concerns being raised on a range of issues. I’m sure our local MP would be interested.

The landowner says that the problem has probably been manifest by the number of villagers taking an opportunity to be outside in their gardens more - is this wrong? And should they be confronted by noise pollution which has been forced on them?

There must be a potential safety impact with the amount of traffic generated on the main road leading to the track - A422 - and have any contingencies been made with regard to the risk to other road users during access/egress times?

What are the sanitary arrangements for such a large gathering? Are we to believe that those taking part and related personnel, use the facilities in their own vehicles? We understand there is no mains connection.

And, more importantly, have arrangements been made in terms of the recent Covid19 pandemic? Is it wise to have a range of people entering the area from various areas of the country and are they socially distancing themselves?

Additionally, what process was involved in changing the consent from 14 events to 42 days? Where is the responsibility and accountability? Where is the evidence such permission was granted?

The landowner also says "It is a very good site and accessible and things have to do be done somewhere". Can I suggest that those taking part in the sport, consider locations which are closer to their own domiciles - that way they'd fully consider the insidious background noise that is created.

Hornton is a peaceful village and it should stay that way. Noise pollution is just as bad as other forms of pollution and should be regulated and controlled accordingly.

Given the reasons above, we strongly oppose any Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) being granted and advocate the site being used for a maximum of 14 events per year, as was originally intended.

Steve and Julia Whitby  
Hornton