

Comment for planning application 20/02453/F

Application Number	20/02453/F
Location	Hornton Grounds Quarry Hornton
Proposal	A fuel depot including ancillary offices, the installation of plant and hardstanding
Case Officer	Bob Neville
Organisation	
Name	Cindy Koberl
Address	Tourney House, Bell Street, Hornton, Banbury, OX15 6DB
Type of Comment	Objection
Type	neighbour

Comments

Hornton Parish Council unanimously object to this application believing it to be wholly inappropriate in this location on several grounds and, indeed, in principle as it directly contravenes CDC planning policy. We believe that the factors to be considered in rejecting this application are: 1. The principle - The application is completely at odds with CDC development policy in a rural area as outlined in the current Local Plan and NPPF guidelines for sustainable development. This would be an alien intrusion, completely out of character with the surrounding countryside and set an alarming precedent. The rationale, as noted in the previously rejected Sugarswell application 19/01202/F, is equally applicable here: "The proposals are therefore contrary to the provisions and aims of Policies SLE1, SLE4 and ESD1 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework." 2. Highways concerns - The site has no easy access to the Oxfordshire Lorry Route Network. - The two outline permissions (for B2 use) at the site granted by the County (as Minerals authority and highway authority) limited trips to/from the site: "The number of lorry movements shall be no more than 10 (5 in, 5 out) per day. Reason: To control the number of HGVs through the village of Wroxton. Policy TR10 CLP." The applicant is looking to increase this, according to the submission, to 158 tanker movements per week. - Highway safety: this road has a reputation among motorcyclists as a high speed route, little policed. Crashmap shows serious accidents directly by the proposed access onto the A422, on both carriageways. The bend on the A422 heading towards Banbury, just before the Hornton Grounds access, is a hazard for HGVs and other traffic which invariably travels too fast down the long straight stretch past the Alkerton Business park. Current quarry lorries only operate during normal working hours which tends to be daylight. Fuel tankers will exacerbate the problem as they can only turn slowly off the main road and would operate day and night. - Lack of public transport - NPPF Policy SLE4. If the applicant is serious about workers arriving (at 5.30am?) by public transport or walking/cycling miles then they clearly have never tried this on the unlit A422 with no pavement in the dark, nor looked at the bus timetable. (It is noted that the Sugarswell application stated that all employees in the CERTAS Banbury depot currently arrived by car.) - Public Safety and the risk to walkers. The A422 on either side of the entrance to the site forms part of the D'Arcy Dalton Way, one of the most popular and heavily used recreational walking routes in north Oxfordshire and the adjacent Cotswolds AONB. A poorly maintained and frequently overgrown verge means that walkers, often with dogs, are obliged to walk along a 250 metre stretch of the unlit A422 which would be shared with lorries from the proposed depot. This is clearly a hazard. 3. Impact on neighbours - The noise of a 24 hour operation of a fuel depot (peak activity at 5.30am), lorry movements with reversing alarms, lighting impact on dark skies from 5m tall lights on the site itself, round-the-clock movements with attendant vehicle lights, and the very real risk to the water table and agricultural land from oil leak or spill all make this unacceptable. Plus the Buncefield explosion in 2005 shows that, should the worst happen, there is significant risk to life and huge potential impact on the local environment. The thriving B&B and farm shop business at Hornton Grounds will be severely impacted should this proposal be allowed. Their USP is based on a quiet, unspoilt, rural retreat with dark skies. Security is also an issue. The stone cutting works normal duty hours, so the barrier is down and locked at nights and weekends. If a 24 hour operation exists, presumably that barrier stays open all the time allowing anyone greater access to farm land and buildings unless actively controlled. - CDC's adoption of NPPF Policy TR10 also directly applies to villages, such as Wroxton, which states: "The Council will resist proposals for the establishment of HGV operating centres where they would create problems or adversely affect the amenity of residential areas or villages." 4. Environmental and water risks. - The site overlies a principal aquifer as noted in 2020 Adams Henry Consulting (ADC) "Mineral and Waste Sites Assessment. Minerals and Waste

Sites Local Plan" when rejecting Site 222 Wroxton Fields, which is basically the same site. - Policy ESD8 appears to be relevant to rejecting the application. - A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, which is limited in its scope, is inadequate for a proposal where a major fuel spill could have a catastrophic impact on wildlife associated with the stream which originates just downhill and becomes (via Horley) one of the main tributaries for the Sor Brook (which eventually feeds into the Cherwell). Its potential impact is likely to be widespread. Preliminary pond dipping in the lake nearby produced a healthy list of freshwater invertebrates and submissions from the owners of Hornton Grounds highlight the abundant wildlife locally. - Evidence over recent years of flooding after heavy rains and run-off from the site into local watercourses again reinforces the on-going risk to the environment. Support for our objections: There are clear recent parallels with both the previous application ref 19/01202/F rejected at Sugarswell in 2019 and the 2020 Adams Henry Consulting (ADC) "Mineral and Waste Sites Assessment. Minerals and Waste Sites Local Plan" report which outlines why Site 222 Wroxton Fields, very close to the proposed fuel depot site, was rejected as a preferred inert waste site. The rejection of CERTAS' application for a fuel depot at Sugarswell was based on three key factors, directly applicable to the 20/02453/F application. 1."The proposed development represents an unjustified and unsustainable form of development in a rural location, which lack of opportunities for sustainable travel to and from the site and would in significant adverse impacts on the character of the surrounding environment, for which it has not been demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist for such development in this unsustainable location. The proposals are therefore contrary to the provisions and aims of Policies SLE1, SLE4 and ESD1 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. 2."By virtue of its siting, scale and form and associated lighting, the proposed development.....would appear as an alien feature within the rural landscape..." "...The proposals would have a detrimental visual impact on the rural character and appearance of the locality, causing significant and demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the area and valued open rural landscape. The proposals are therefore contrary to Policies ESD13 and ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1, saved Policy C28 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework." The third concern was around the risks to local water courses and appears to be equally pertinent, if not even more so, to the current application: 3. "The applicant has failed to demonstrate that an appropriate surface water drainage strategy, and mitigation measures necessary in the event of spillage of fuel, can be achieved at the site that would ensure that the proposed development would not be to the detriment of the water environment/surrounding natural environment and that water quality would be maintained and enhanced by avoiding adverse effects; contrary to the provisions and aims of saved Policy ENV1of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996, Policies ESD7 and ESD8 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031Part 1 and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework." Turning to the 2020 Adams Henry Consulting (ADC) "Mineral and Waste Sites Assessment. Minerals and Waste Sites Local Plan" in rejecting Site 222 Wroxton Fields concludes: "The site is not on the Oxfordshire Lorry Route and lies over 5km from Banbury. The site also lies a considerable distance away from access onto the Oxfordshire Lorry Route Network (A361). The site also overlies a principal aquifer. Given the remote rural location and distance from the Oxfordshire Lorry Route network, this site is not considered to be suitable for a new waste site and will therefore not be considered further." The factors, we contend, are equally applicable to the current application, Site 222 being within a few metres of the proposed fuel depot.

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Attachments