

Objection to planning application 20/02453/F

There are many well documented and substantive issues in submissions by other objectors. It seems to me that CDC is confronted not only by these but by a lack of joined -up thinking across different authorities and departments resulting in competing and perhaps incompatible demands in various Plans over time.

The submission by Peter Frampton, document 040920-10364, (4/9/20) presents the trail of historical planning permissions for land use, especially in relation to OCC's MW.0090/14 and OCC MW 0076/16 and the current application, revealing that - if I understand it correctly - the permission of change of use for the Stone Cutter Yard was elevated to Class B2 whereby planning permission does not restrict development on the site to stone cutting only. What happened to conditions for re-instatement : were there none?

He claims that there is a perfect fit between the permission at HGQ , existing employment land and the benefit of permission for class B2 development; well away from significant building and that the provisions of the planning permission do not restrict the form of B2 development. His conclusion is that the site has the benefit of full, legal planning permission for class B2 on an existing site, ready for Cherwell to 'focus on' employment development (Policy SLE1) in Banbury, Bicester & Kidlington and including rural areas. So here at HGQ we have a committed employment site that is presently vacant when employment development appears to be the dominant policy provision in the Cherwell Core Strategy? We are made aware of previous legal precedents lest challenge is a temptation.

We learn here too, that the move by CERTAS is prompted by the incompatibility of their current business location with the Canalside residential development; 'some industry may be more difficult to locate alongside new homes '... 'away from residential uses and amenities' and that moving to HGQ will allow also for the expansion of a more efficient operation, productivity will be improved for the company by this investment, that they are expected to locate on land allocated for development and that this application falls within the right of a 'flexible approach' by the Council.

In 5.2 on Highway Safety, we are given parameters on the number of fuel trucks per week, per day, as well as night time deliveries by super tankers, Mon-Sat., and of hours of operation. We're assured that this traffic will be confined to A roads and will have negligible impact on the local highway network and the villages surrounding them. (After all, permission can be refused 'if there is unacceptable impact on highway safety and if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe'). We can usefully contrast these numbers of vehicle trips with previously granted permissions for heavy road traffic.

In 5.29 he claims that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on residential amenity or offer unacceptable disturbance to the residential community because the operation of the site is considered acceptable from noise and air quality perspectives. So, no adverse impact, thus complying with the requirements of NPPF and the Cherwell Local Plan.

In his conclusion to section 6, he claims simply 'this is seeking planning permission for employment generating development on a committed employment site which has an extant planning permission for Class B2 development: it is compliant with Policy SLE1 and the proposals are consistent with other relevant policies in the Development Plan.' Additionally, CERTAS will contribute to the local economy and maintain existing employment. We also learn that the building might provide for 34 personnel and still be compliant with Policy SLE4.

How does all of that match up with reality?

There are numerous references in other objections to highway incompatibility for such proposed traffic flow; a hazardous stretch of A422, the dangers at the access point and turn for pedestrians, cyclists, less- certain visiting travellers as well as others ignoring speed restrictions, with all other ongoing traffic: a route which has pinch points in villages and at the northern access to Banbury, where traffic density has already increased due to recent housing developments and at a junction with a school. The villagers of Wroxton & businesses along that road, suffered many years of traffic when more quarrying was 'live'. The trucks carrying the stone to the stone yard test the track of that route and the difficulties of navigation and they are few in comparison to the proposed tankers, by previous decree/planning condition. In the other direction, through Warwickshire to the next M40 junction, the road is no less hazardous and I wonder whether consultation has been made with residents or Warwickshire CC about this proposed imposition of heavy, constant, traffic.

The Travel Statement appears over-optimistic in terms of employee access by car sharing and bus transport when taken into account with operating hours of the business.

Experience with planning applications would lead me to expect an expansion thrust in the future (are there hints here already?) leading to a subsequent application on the basis of established use and Class B2 permissions seemingly offer no protection.

Can it be sheer coincidence that there has been a flurry of CERTAS flyers through letterboxes this last week?

Safety, not only from traffic, but from accidental spills, mishaps, leaks, breakdowns; contamination of waterways, including - from my own perspective - of the Sor Brook... and from explosion. Did I miss the latter in the risk assessment? All of life is a risk, but conclusions such as 'unlikely' or 'mild', preferable and desirable as they are, cannot rule out possibility. The extensive OHES report , 8.3.3, still offers recommendations for potential pollutant linkages. Any of the above would have bad consequences for anyone in close proximity, especially the inhabitants of HGQ Farm, but also for Hornton village itself.

The Hornton Grounds Quarry Farm already offers employment and livelihoods. This plan threatens, by virtue of proximity of travel and projected activity of a fuel depot, the livelihood & amenities of the owners and their legitimate activities. How do you weigh /do you need to weigh 'fairness' in recognising that a fuel business is better suited away from a new, albeit more densely populated, residential area, but ignore the impact of proximity and activity to other fewer, established, residences and livelihoods?

Are there really no other brownfield sites nearer to the Motorway, thus saving even the to-ing and fro-ing and increasing consumption of vehicle fuel? We need a comparative study of options before jumping to action on this application.

There is no reality match and It is hard to square other CDC Plans and intentions with this proposal. This isn't simply a NIMBY reaction.

Better, surely, to think of a less intrusive, less hazardous use of this hole in the ground. Rather than a purely commercial venture of this nature, another - or a philanthropic gesture - marrying development and employability could enhance the lives of all local residents, the quality of life and local amenity value rather than threatening it.

A fuel depot in this particular location is not the answer and the application should be rejected outright.

mavis heron, gardners cottage, well lane, alkerton, banbury ox15 6nl