

Lynne Baldwin

From: Bob Neville
Sent: 30 November 2020 10:24
To: DC Support
Subject: FW: Planning application 20/02453/F: Hornton Grounds Quarry - Proposed Fuel Depot

From: Graham [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 November 2020 17:59
To: Bob Neville <Bob.Neville@cherwell-dc.gov.uk>; David Peckford <David.Peckford@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>; Sarah Stevens <Sarah.Stevens@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning application 20/02453/F: Hornton Grounds Quarry - Proposed Fuel Depot

Dear Mr Neville, Mr Peckford and Ms Stevens,

Planning application 20/02453/F: Hornton Grounds Quarry - Proposed Fuel Depot

Ahead of the scheduled Planning Committee on 10 December 2020 which will consider this application, we are contacting you to re-emphasise the strong objections we have already submitted to the Planning portal.

The proposed site is only 270 metres from our home, a Grade II listed building. It is 6 metres away from our farm livestock. Since moving here 11 years ago, we have developed our farmhouse into an award-winning AA **** Bed and Breakfast – a rural retreat. We are also a working farm, tenanted by a young farmer, and home for three families. Our site hosts a farm shop, 'livery yard and 'Park and Ride' holiday business, providing work for eight people daily. The impact of the proposed 24-hour per day operation over seven days per week, with noise of tankers and light pollution, would be devastating to guests, livestock and wildlife.

Pre-application advice was given to the applicants in January 2020. This current application was finally submitted on 8 September 2020 and has since been subject to further delays and lobbying by the applicant. During recent months, the stress on our lives and impact on our businesses have been enormous. There is no reason not to deal with this matter at committee on 10 December 2020, so we appeal to you to make sure it goes ahead on that date.

An almost identical application to that submitted for the former Hornton Grounds Quarry was refused, at nearby Sugarswell Barns, in October last year. At that time, it was stated that no other sites had been identified: Hornton Grounds Quarry (formerly Woodville Farm Barns) was not mentioned, yet it is less than two miles away and was being very actively marketed by the landowner in 2019. It was not a prime site at that time – and remains completely inappropriate to this day.

Here are the main objections as we see them (please also refer to our submission to the Planning portal of 8/10/20 – attached here):

- The proposed site is at a high point on the Ironstone Downs on the edge of the AONB. There are many springs rising to the North, South, East and West of the site. If oil leaks into the substrata it can go literally anywhere.
- The current rain water that flows, and often floods, from the rising springs out of the aquifers of the existing quarry site drains over our farmland, only six metres from the proposed site, and onwards into the Cherwell. In the application, the rain water from the access road is not shown to be collected. It will flow into the open ditches either side of the access road and onto our farmland.

- This access road is a risk site for tanker crashes which has not been assessed in the application.
 - We are deeply worried about the precedent this application would set for this wonderful area of the Ironstone Downs, identified as requiring protection in the new draft Cherwell Local Plan. Moreover, this site is only ever going to get bigger: there is already a seventh tank planned (see indications on the submission drawings in the application) and the applicant-landowner owns the piece of land (currently a stone cutting yard but on a short lease) right next to this proposed fuel depot site and the land to the west and to the north.
 - In November, during a Zoom meeting requested by the applicant, Certas stated to Hornton Parish Council that there would **not** be any petrol stored on site. Untrue: it is stated on the application that one tank shall be 'gasoline' (petrol).
 - There is no credibility to the proposed vehicle movements in the application at all. For example, the application does not identify all likely vehicle trips, notably the delivery of fuel to the site by large tankers.
 - The A422 west of Banbury is NOT identified on Oxfordshire's lorry route map (and for good reason).
- The site is completely inaccessible by sustainable forms of transport (eg. public transport and cycling).
- The site access has proven to be significantly deficient in terms of available visibility - well below the required standard - and is on to a stretch of road with permanent ice hazard signs. (See Planning portal submissions for evidence.)
- The increased traffic would have a severe impact on several local communities, especially Wroxton and Drayton, and harm local highway safety.

In summary, to site a fuel depot here is wholly inappropriate when there are other locations by the M40.

It would be madness to jump at this option merely to satisfy the apparent need, in coming years, to relocate the Certas depot from Banbury. This option would inflict decades of harm and perpetual dangerous planning precedent on this part of Cherwell's most precious countryside. Cherwell District Council is the custodian of this countryside. Moreover, this application flies in the face of both national and local planning policies.

We strongly object to this application and urge you to refuse it on 10 December 2020. That will release us from this threat and allow us to re-focus on maintaining wildlife and soil health and producing environmentally sustainable food from field to fork at Hornton Grounds.

Catherine and Graham Vint

Hornton Grounds.

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