

31 March 2021

Dear Mr Smith

## Wroxton Motocross Track – Planning Application 21/00517/F



Sustainable motorsport on rural land-how it should look

I object most strongly to this planning application.

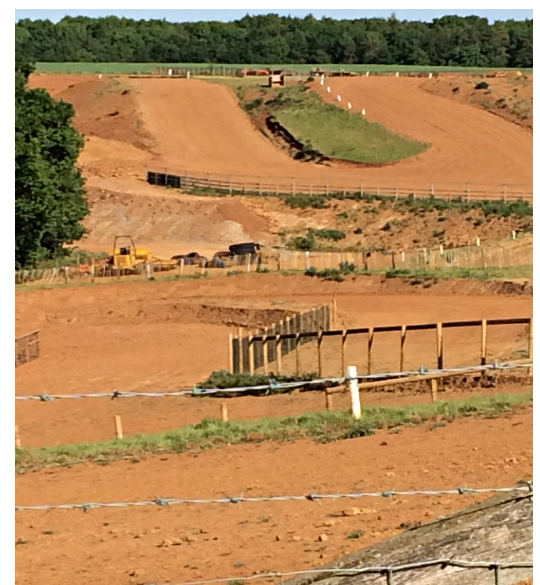
First of all, it is important to state that I am a keen supporter of motorsport and the concept of sport for all. I am also experienced in organising motorsport in rural locations. Most notably, I have been a stage commander for the October Rally Festival in my island home of Jersey, on behalf of Jersey Motorcycle and Light Car Club (JMCLCC) – see pictures above. I have hosted the club's spring festival on my island farm, with even my cows enjoying the spectacle. I know how to be a responsible landowner and how to ensure that prime agricultural land is not adversely affected and agricultural features restored after each event. This knowledge and experience – along with my ongoing role as farmer and landowner and my 'doorstep view' of everything that has gone on with Wroxton track as it is right in front of my home – cause me to object even more strongly to this planning application.



Permanent signs - main track gate off single-track lane

I knew that Wroxton MX track was on the boundary of our farm at Hornton Grounds from maps and plans made available in searches before we bought the property in 2009. I had understood from the vendor that there was permission for only 12/14 days per season, under Permitted Use agricultural land rules, requiring the site to be returned to agricultural use between events and permanent structures to be removed. I never considered the presence of the track and the subsequent few days racing to be a negative affecting our purchasing decision. My only surprise, once we had lived here for a while, was the overnight arrival of 'caravan city' that mushroomed on the morning of an event. But it was only there for the day – or weekend – and just as soon as it had arrived it drove away and the site was cleared up and always cleared well. There were a few beer bottles and cans in the field occasionally and, once, there was serious litter blown to the field following a very windy/stormy day during the race meeting. In those years, I never viewed the MX track as a nuisance neighbour. It was tolerable.

However, the unbridled intensification of the Wroxton MX track in the past few years has changed my view to one of strong opposition. There has been industrial-style construction of berms and banks on a massive scale, with huge boulders and slabs of rock being earth-moved down towards the brook, out of sight, and the racing course has been considerably enhanced and elongated. The circuit has changed in character almost



beyond recognition. It has transformed from being a local track for a local club to being a serious, highly commercial venture, attracting professional competitors from across the nation. I object most strongly to **this** planning application.

In light of CDC inaction over the past few years of this taking place, I also remain very concerned about how any future conditions could be policed or even enforced, should any level of basic Permitted Use permission be granted. 'Permission creep' seems to have been the name of the game with this track so far. The '14 + 14 Day Rule' is nowhere to be seen. It has become a behemoth running amock.

I am grateful to distant commentator, Jennifer Scarsbrook of Stow on the Wold, for her comments to the portal: it is indeed a superb family sport and ideal, not just for fun but for the many life skills learned in the hurly burly of rough competition. Winning or losing be damned, you grow up when you fall off! Her best comment is not followed up by many, if any, other correspondents: when the bikes are electric we won't hear them any more.

(Our only inconveniences, at that point, would be traffic, dust, water abstraction, landscape ruination and a transient encampment.) Sadly, I believe, this track has fallen victim to the power and pursuit of mammon and is not likely to lead the way forwards by becoming an electric-only event. As a result, I remain most strongly opposed to **this** planning application.

Another question should be posed: how is the track currently licensed and through which sporting body? I pose this question as, given the tenuous legitimacy of the existence and use of the track, one wonders if the competitors' and event managers' insurance policies are valid or void?



A bowser soaks the track before racing using water abstracted, without permit, from the brook

Much emphasis has been placed by the applicant on how local businesses will benefit. I am not aware of this: on the contrary, at Hornton Grounds we have two of the four local consumer businesses and neither benefit, with one of them suffering a clear detriment due to the track noise. And why, then, did the applicant choose as her planning agent a Mr Phil Plant of Shifnal? Wroxton is a long way from home when you work from Shropshire.

You aren't likely to receive many objections from track neighbours who are also landowners, local business owners and motorsport fans. I qualify under all these headings – **and I object most strongly to this application.**

Your sincerely

Mr Graham Vint