

Holloway House  
Bell Street  
Hornton  
Banbury  
OX15 6DB

George Smith  
Senior Planning Officer  
Cherwell District Council  
Bodicote House  
Bodicote  
Banbury  
Oxon OX15 4AA

22 March 2021

Dear Mr Smith

**Re: Planning Application Ref 21/00517/F**  
**"CREATION OF A MOTOCROSS TRACK AND SOFT LANDSCAPING SCHEME AND THE CHANGE OF USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND TO HOLD MOTO-CROSS EVENTS INCLUDING SET-UP, TAKE DOWN AND PRIVATE PRACTICE SESSIONS, WITH ASSOCIATED CAMPING SITE, FOR UP TO 65 DAYS PER YEAR AND AGRICULTURAL GRAZING (RETROSPECTIVE)"**

I am writing to object in the strongest terms to the above application.

My family has lived in the village of Hornton for over 60 years. We and other village residents have co-existed for a long time with the Wroxton MX track when it really was a "local track for local people". Although the track still operates under the Banbury MX banner, the latter is no longer the case as clearly evidenced by the 2019 and proposed 2021 fixtures lists, which show that it is used predominantly by other national MX clubs.

Over the last 3-4 years, the track has expanded out of all recognition: not only physically, but also in the frequency of meetings and huge increase in the number of participants and bikes. Our peaceful, rural environment has been blighted by these changes. The public footpath runs parallel to the track, right next to the holding area where the riders gather prior to the commencement of a race, revving their engines to such decibels that one cannot hear oneself think, let alone engage in conversation with one's walking companion!

The physical changes are staggering! Major earthworks have been undertaken (even during the first Covid lockdown in April 2020, witnessed by me and my husband) to increase the length of the track to give it international status. Huge rocks have been excavated and pushed to one side; the course of the small stream (a tributary of the Sor Brook) has been

dammed and lagoons created for the extraction of thousands of litres of water to spray the track before, during and after race meetings. All this work has been undertaken without planning permission, within the last 4 years or so, in this beautiful area of the Ironstone Downs. It defies credibility that this land, with all its permanent structures, can revert to agricultural use between meetings as required under the original agreement; even though this is a claim made in the applicant's submission.

The access to the site is via a small rural road, the surface of which is much damaged and potholed and completely unsuitable for the size of vehicles now attending the race meetings.

As for the suggestion in the Application documents that these meetings benefit the local economy, this is patently untrue as witnessed by the objection posted on the planning portal by the Indian Queen restaurant. There are no local shops (the closest being 4-5 miles away in Banbury or Tysoe) and the participants certainly do not frequent the Dun Cow public house in Hornton on race weekends and probably no other local hostelrys either.

It is not the intention for the track to be closed - just for it to return to the original 14-day racing (plus 14 set-up days), which are allowed under "Permitted Development Rights". The proposed 65 days is totally unacceptable and would make village life intolerable. In my opinion and those of many others, the MX Track proposals pose an even greater threat to the local community, surrounding landscape and nature conservation than the Hornton Grounds Quarry application (Ref 20/02453/F), which was refused by Cherwell District Council in December 2020.

I fully support Hornton Parish Council and their planning advisor in the fight to save our village and countryside from irreparable harm.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Alison Higgins