

Walnut Bank
Bell Street
Hornton
OX15 6DB

31st March 2021

OBJECTION to Planning Application - 21/00517/F

Dear Mr Smith.

As a resident of Hornton for almost 4 years we knew of the small track when we moved here. The scale of development there in just the last four years has been staggering and CDC have been informed of this for at least two years. It should never have come to the stage where we, our community, are having to fight our local authority to stop illegal development of a national motor racing circuit on our doorstep. That we have had to bring you to site to see the illegal dumping of waste materials to build the site. That local farmers have their land encroached upon; a watercourse dammed; a lagoon created; trees removed; a campsite for 300+ vehicles is allowed and on and on and on!

Having always lived in the countryside I'm aware of the need for diversification, but this is not that. This is monetisation without a care for the consequences to the environment or the blight to people's lives and homes.

I am writing not only to object to this retrospective planning application, following the failed LDC application last year which had been demanded by CDC, but also to highlight a few of the many errors, possibly deceits, it includes. I think it is important that the planning authority have all the facts and not this gilded application which belies the truth!

I would like to state that, contrary to the maelstrom whipped up in MX social media by the site operators, I and others in the community are not seeking the closure of the motocross site but would like to see the site and its use returned to the size and scale that prevailed pre 2010 when it was used for primarily small local events with significantly less impact on residents in the neighbouring parishes of Hornton and Wroxton, Balscote and Shennington.

Number of days use: I can only find one reference to 65 days and that is on the portal "Proposal" title. The application documents themselves seem to make no further reference and indeed in many cases 24 days seems to be being requested. Of course, the track has already been illegally used for more days than this as is well known to locals and CDC as evidenced in emails, meetings and public comments in this application and in the LDC.

The following paragraphs refer to the Application Form on the portal.

5. Description of the Proposal – "PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF LAND FROM AGRICULTURE TO MIXED USE OF AGRICULTURE AND AS A MOTOCROSS TRACK WITH CAMPING SITE AND LANDSCAPING SCHEME"

The description clearly states that the land is currently agricultural which is patently not true. Please see any of the applicants own supporting documents which have pictures show the extent and use of the track.

6. Existing Use – "MIXED USE OF AGRICULTURE AND AS A MOTOCROSS TRACK"

Here the track is described as mixed use. This I'm afraid is also not true as the land in question supports no vegetation suitable for grazing as the application states elsewhere.

7. Materials – Does the proposed development require any materials to be used externally? This is answered NO.

Again this is not true as there are already structures on the site: marshalling huts, lavatory area, wooden and plastic fencing, waste burning skips and on event days bunting, flags and additional metal fencing.

9. Vehicle Parking – It is stated that there are currently 260 spaces on site and the proposal is for this to stay the same.

Not true. On the weekend of 21-23rd August 2020 there were 311 vehicles parked in the camping area of which 58 were in the recently annexed area of field. In addition to this, in wet weather, most have a large gazebo-like structure to act as a temporary workshop/protection for the bikes.

Furthermore, the applicants own report by The Hurlestone Partnership (Transport Statement) states on page 13 that currently there are 250 to 300 vehicles and 600-800 people on site and that at national events this rises to 400-600 vehicles and 1,300-1,500 people!

10. Trees and Hedges – the questions asked here are answered YES and so a full tree survey may be required at CDC discretion. I am unable to find the survey. Have CDC agreed that this is not required?

11. Assessment of Flood Risk – The existing watercourse and pond/lake referred to have been significantly altered by the site owner/operator without requisite authority or permission. I understand that these have already been inspected on-site by members of CDC and their enforcement and environmental teams and I'm sure you will be in possession of reports of their findings.

12. Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – the applicant suggests that there will be no impact.

Not true. The applicants own survey by Chris Seabridge & Assoc. (Ecological Survey) – note that there are several redacted portions of the report on the portal – states that the site is suitable for a wide range of flora and fauna many of them Protected or Species of Principle Concern. It also warns of the risk of water run-off into the watercourse causing erosion and transfer of pollutants into the water. The many pictures in this report show this happen NOW!

The Ecological survey recommends that a new hedgerow is created around the perimeter of the site and details how this should be planted; 30cm apart in two staggered rows. The applicants Landscaping Scheme has scaled this back up to a half of the recommendation at 45cm-60cm spacing.

It is perverse to conclude that there has not already been a significant impact to the environment and the further development and use of the site will make the situation irreversible.

13-14-15 Theses questions refer to waste management and the only waste referred to by the applicant is emptying of portable toilets.

Incomplete and Inadequate – It is clear that the planned increase in frequency and size of “local” and national events that the scale of sanitation facilities will need to be significantly improved. I will leave to your own imagination how and where the 400 people who currently attend meetings and camp for two nights manage their toilet needs! If 1,500 people are allowed to attend, then festival scale facilities will be required. With Covid likely to be a permanent feature of all our lives it must be incumbent on any event organiser and local authority to ensure that hygiene standards are enforced and adequate facilities provided.

There is no mention of how the site currently or plan to deal with any other forms of waste and it is obvious that on a campsite with over 300 vehicles and more than twice as many people they generate a lot of it. What we do know is that there are two skips buried on one part of the site (see picture sheet) which are used to burn a variety of things.

Where is this in the environmental report?
Where is the cohesive waste and recycling plan?
Where is the care?

20. Industrial or Commercial Processes and Machinery – it is stated that no industrial activities take place.
Not true – There are already several large mechanical earth moving machines on site being used to develop and reshape the landscape. There are two water bowsers on the site used to take water abstracted from the watercourse to spray on the track to reduce dust. This water will of course end up back in the stream with all the pollutants from a race track.

21. Hazardous Substances – It is stated that there are none stored on site.
How can this be true when there are some 300 motorcycles being used for two days?
Where is all the fuel stored?
Surely not on the campsite adjacent to people living and sleeping?

22. Site Visit - Can the site be seen from a public road, public footpath, bridleway or other public land?
Applicant says: NO! Not true
The audacity is just laughable. Has the applicant's agent actually been to the site or looked at the OS Map?
There is public footpath adjacent to the site and as you approach the site on the road the track is clearly visible! It is also visible from the A422.

If something as fundamentally obvious as this is not declared honestly it calls in to question, in my opinion, the validity of so many other statements and claims.

I urge you, please, to reject this planning application and place enforcement orders on the owner to return the land to its former state.



Yours sincerely,

Pete Lemon

How Cherwell District Council spends its portion of council tax funds

2021/22 budget: £22.4m

Our budget sets out what we plan to spend in 2021/2022 to deliver our four strategic priorities:

Leading on environmental sustainability

- Deliver on our commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030
- Promote the Green Economy
- Increase recycling across the district
- Protect our natural environment and our built heritage
- Work with partners to improve air quality in the district
- Reduce environmental crime.

