

Dear Mr Smith, Cherwell Planning Officers and Councillors

Wroxton Motocross Track: planning application 21/00517/F

I wish to object, in the strongest possible terms, to this application. It's the biggest planning issue we have ever faced in this beautiful, protected area of the North Oxfordshire Ironstone Downs.

This was once a field scramble track, donated by a farmer, for use by local kids and families. In the hands of his daughter, it has been scaled up, in recent years, to become a massive commercial enterprise, just short of being classed as an international 'Grand Prix' motocross venue. It is hired out to top clubs, events and riders from across the UK and beyond. The local Banbury MX Club are now the minority user.

All of this has taken place without planning permission, far exceeding the '14/28 Day Permitted Use Rule' for agricultural land use and contravening or ignoring a host of regulations and licences. One assumes that the operators have got away with this for so long that they feel they are invincible – as suggested by their sub-standard and flawed application, littered with factual errors and contradictions. Elsewhere, they repeatedly denigrate fair planning rules as unnecessary 'bureaucracy' (eg. see screen grab on page 3).

There are four fundamental planning policies, stated clearly by Cherwell District Council (CDC), that the unauthorised current Wroxton Motocross Track – and the proposed even larger and more frequently used track – clearly contravene. I list them below. Combined, they indicate that it is the indisputable duty of CDC officers and Planning Committee Councillors to Refuse this application: it is contrary to the very life blood of the Cherwell Local Plan and undermines CDC's urgent and stated environmental sustainability pledges. (See extract, right, from the March 2021 CDC Council Tax mailing.)



1. Statutory noise nuisance - harm to residential amenity:

Hundreds of people, living within around two miles of the track, suffer from the intolerable noise nuisance it creates, sometimes both inside and outside their homes. There is a huge body of evidence, made public, to this effect. It is worse depending on the scale of the event and the wind direction.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 provides for the enforced control of "statutory noise nuisances". Much judicial debate on what constitutes such noise is summarised by motorsport's own



governing body as "noise that is sufficiently loud, intrusive, repetitive, and frequent, as to unreasonably diminish people's enjoyment of their property." Ref: *Land Access & Recreation Association (LARA) Document 2019.11.01 Motor Sport Events in the Countryside. Good Practice Guidance 9/4.3-4.10.*

As LARA say: "Nobody is entitled to total peace and quiet in their lives, and will have to put up with some degree of nuisance – that is the nature of life – but it is a question of fact and degree

as to when a nuisance becomes excessive, and therefore actionable". Quite so: villagers tolerated the track noise when it was a much smaller scramble track with much smaller events, held less often, and the bikes' two-stroke engine noise carried less far. Since around 2015, these two-stroke bikes have been largely replaced by four-stroke bikes, mainly coming from afar, which are known to be noisier at a distance. The hugely-enhanced new track terrain – with its re-engineered triple jump and other dare-devil circuit features – is designed for these more sophisticated bikes and competitors.

2. A blot on the landscape:

This enormous track is an unjustified and unsustainable form of development in a rural location – contrary to the provision and aims of Policies SLE1, SLE4 and ESD1 of the Local Plan. MLA394 DRAFT OBJECTION STATEMENT MJL_sjc 6/6 DRAFT 23/03/2021. The development appears as an alien feature within this beautiful rolling pasture and woodland area of the Ironstone Downs.



Quite simply, it is completely out of scale and character with its setting.

The wrong development in the wrong place. Just like the proposed fuel depot, two fields away, which Cherwell Planning Committee refused, so soundly, at the end of 2020.

3. Visual impact in rural location:

The existing (and proposed) track and campsite causes a major detrimental visual impact on the rural character and appearance of the locality, including adverse disturbance to wildlife habitats and species and harm to the adjacent rights of way amenity and open rural landscape of the area – therefore contrary to Policies ESD13 and ESD15.

I feel particularly angry about the ecology and wildlife habitats harmed by the desecration of the land. Only if you stand next to those jumps and circuit contours, and walk the adjoining footpath, do you fully appreciate the vast scale of the earthworks and the Sor Brook watercourse tampering.

4. Traffic congestion and danger:

This application will continue to create adverse traffic congestion on a Friday and at weekends, with hundreds of vans and motorhome vehicles using the narrow local lane network and the dangerously inadequate crossroads junction on and off the A422.

Local village traffic has been endangered many times and/or blocked in the queue to get in and out of the field track site (see picture, right). Homes en route to the track



(especially in Drayton, Wroxton and Wroxton Heath) are plagued by extra, heavy traffic past their doors. The proposals, therefore, are contrary to Saved Polices TR10 and C31 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 and ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031.


Having lived in Hornton since 1993, I and many others genuinely believe this track, if allowed to continue, could blight life in this area for ever. Hornton Parish Council are preparing a detailed analysis of this planning application to prove the damage that has been done and the threat now posed and I am wholly supportive of this effort.

What a great shame that something that started with good intent has been corrupted to this extent – for considerable commercial gain. I, along with hundreds of others, hope that Cherwell Planning officers, on behalf of the community, have invited this application in order that, at last, the rules can be applied and enforced by themselves and members of the Planning Committee.

Yours sincerely

C A Brayshay

10 February at 13:30 · 🌐








Dirt Hub
10 February at 13:12 · 🌐

Jump on board with X-Cast Media's Josh Bassett for a first lap spin around [Wroxton Motocross Track](#).

The facility in Banbury is considered by many, one of the best racing circuits in the UK. As many of you may be aware, Wroxton (like many other tracks up and down the UK) has been facing difficult times recently. Let's hope we don't lose another track to bureaucracy in a country that has such a deeply rooted motorsports heritage!

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