

Comment for planning application 21/00517/F

Application Number	21/00517/F
Location	Land Used For Motorcross Stratford Road A422 Wroxton OX15 6HX
Proposal	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)
Case Officer	George Smith
Organisation Name	Jonathan Cantlay
Address	Angel Cottage, West End, Hornton, Banbury, OX15 6DA
Type of Comment	Objection
Type	neighbour

Comments

Dear Senior Planning Officer Smith, I write in order to air my own feelings of concern and in turn, my considered objection to planning application 21/00517/F. In doing so, I offer my full backing to both the Parish Council in addition to our Environmental Planning and Legal Advisor to further detail the case against this proposal. My wife & I have had the pleasure to reside in the village of Hornton for 4 years this coming October. Following a careful search, we chose Hornton for its peace, tranquility and subsequently as the perfect place to raise our very young family. A further factor driving our efforts to make a carefully considered choice in terms of location relates to my profession; the nature of my job necessitates vital periods of alertness at very varied hours of both day and night. The ability to sleep/rest prior to a duty is of crucial importance and as such, has always had an influence on our choice of places to live around the country. Despite what we considered to have been fairly extensive research prior to moving in, we were admittedly completely unaware of the existence of this motocross track in its original form let alone the way it has evolved, without permission, into what (pre-Covid) was in active use at the location in question. Home for us is less than 3/4 of a mile to the North of the track with nothing but agricultural land creating separation. You will therefore not be surprised to learn of our shock and concern on hearing the noise generated by the first event held following our arrival in the village. This was followed by a feeling of dismay once we discovered the nature of audible intrusion and that it was indeed not a one off, quite the contrary in fact; over the months and years that followed, the frequency of events clearly increased. The quiet and peaceful enjoyment of our property, its outside spaces in particular, is without doubt impacted whenever an event is held at the Wroxton Motocross track. Within my own industry the problem of noise and its impact is taken extremely seriously with numerous mitigation techniques already in place and others actively evolving. Measures such as active noise monitoring, precise navigational routes avoiding noise sensitive areas, handling/operational techniques designed to both maximise efficiency whilst minimising noise footprints; most of which are employed at all times despite the potential resultant increase in workload with the only permitted exception being on grounds of safety. Further consideration is paid to local inhabitants though the restriction of certain operations at prescribed times and days of the week with the tightest of restrictions in place at weekends. I accept that the majority of what I describe does not translate into the context of the motocross circuit, nevertheless, the common principle remains - an endeavour must surely be made to minimise the impact such activities have on others and certainly not to actively seek to increase without prior acknowledgment of the concern that already exists. It could in fact be argued that the "Noise Impact Statement" not only fails to acknowledge but actively seeks to dismiss the concerns documented, raised and evidenced by village residents. I must seek to dispute a statement made within the aforementioned report which appears to dismiss the impact of meteorological and atmospheric conditions: "These levels wouldn't be particularly affected by different weather conditions, strong winds would not cause an increase in levels at receptors in the direction of the wind, but would actually benefit those in the opposite direction to the wind." Firsthand experience confirms that an unfavourable wind direction certainly does increase the perceived levels of noise within the village and this is not the exception but instead the norm given the prevailing wind. I am particularly saddened by the fact that the owners of the site have chosen to seemingly misinform its clearly loyal and dedicated members/users that objectors wish to see all activities cease - I do not believe this to be the case at all. Regrettably for the users of the track it is the actions of the owners/organisers themselves that has potentially put the future of events held in greatest jeopardy; something only highlighted by the 'retrospective'

nature of this application following the fact that activities have been knowingly intensified and expanded without permission whilst in turn exceeding the basic 28 (14+14) days under 'Permitted Development Rights'. This has in effect been 'allowed' through the slow or overall lack of enforcement action by Cherwell District Council. Aside from the direct impact on local residents, there is also a real concern for local wildlife and the surrounding environment. One specific example identified whilst on a recent family walk would be the debris/litter observed still to be in-situ despite the periods of lockdown resulting in minimal track activity. Most notably an abundance of one particular item directly associated with track activities in the form of helmet visor tear-off strips found liberally distributed in downwind track perimeter locations both on and close to grazing land as well as lining the tributary to the Sor Brook (see attached). Despite the numerous arguments against this proposal, I do understand the place that this track holds in the hearts of the motocross community. My own passions for a potentially noisy pastime kept me focussed from an extremely young age; something which ultimately became my vocation and a profession I am extremely proud of despite the severe impact Covid-19 has had on it. I can see that Motocross attracts youngsters and older generations alike whilst encouraging discipline, confidence and skills that would otherwise be inaccessible. This sport potentially does and could certainly be further harnessed to inspire youngsters in terms of the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Maths) subjects that undoubtedly go hand in hand with participation in such events. I am sure that as with other facets of the automotive industry, motorsport such as Formula E (albeit on 4 wheels) and to an extent aviation, so too will motocross embrace the necessarily environmentally considerate age in which we live through the adoption of quieter and more environmentally friendly technologies. For now, all that is sought is formal recognition of the impact the current associated activities can and do have on the inhabitants and in turn, to responsibly manage and mitigate without activity seeking to exacerbate. Yours sincerely, Jonathan Cantlay

Received Date

10/04/2021 23:56:24

Attachments

The following files have been uploaded:

- IMG_3103.pdf
- IMG_3115.pdf
- IMG_3116.pdf
- IMG_3113.pdf