

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	Roger Corke
Address	The Cottage, Church Lane, Hornton, Banbury, OX15 6BY
Type of Comment	Objection
Type	neighbour

Comments

Dear Mr Smith I am reading, with increasing concern, the latest statement submitted by the applicant's agent, Phil Plant, which asserts that "Wroxton Motocross Track promotes healthy and safe communities." Certainly, S8 para91 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that [local] planning policies and decisions should aim to "achieve healthy, inclusive and safe communities". But that is precisely what this sports facility will NOT do - at least not for local communities, such as Hornton, Alkerton, Shenington, Wroxton Heath and Wroxton, that are either within earshot of the noise it creates or suffer from traffic generated by hundreds of vehicles trundling through them to the track. It is also true, as the Framework points out, that the provision of "high quality open spaces" is "important for the health and well-being of communities". But the applicants have not created a "high quality open space". Instead, they have desecrated, without a shred of planning permission or licence, a beautiful part of the north Ironstone Downs in order to produce a giant motorsport facility that damages the health and well-being of local communities and the countryside. And the applicants' final conclusions beggar belief: "It is acknowledged widely that people who engage in sporting activities benefit physically and mentally", they say. What about the mental distress the many hundreds of people living locally suffer every time noise reverberates round our beautiful valley during a motocross meeting? That is clear from their hundreds of objections: many people living locally leave home on the days that racing happens because they can't sit in their gardens comfortably or walk anywhere near their homes in peace. The stress and anxiety of having this track scale up on our doorsteps in recent years has been enormous. Many of us have lived here for decades or even generations and have never encountered such a threat to our community and environment before. We feel cheated and concerned that our future family well-being, way of life and environment will be blighted for ever. Mr Plant continues: "Motocross racing is regarded as being instrumental in helping to achieve gender equality". Female motocross racing does take place around the country - and, under the rules, women generally race bikes that are 125cc or 250cc because they are not physically big enough to ride a 450cc. It is the increased prevalence of bigger four-stroke machines at Wroxton, which create louder noise that goes so much farther, that has created much of the appalling noise that emanates from the track today. The one assertion in the entire document that comes closest to reality is this: "the motocross track is likely to fulfil demand for the facility from a wider area than just the local community". But this is a gross under-statement and not entirely accurate. We know that - because most of the meetings are now not run for the benefit of local enthusiasts; instead the track is rented out to big clubs and major event-holders, with people travelling many miles from outside the area across the UK, and riders attracted from all over Europe. A casual glance at the fixture lists proposed for this year and over recent years since 2016/17 will confirm this: the majority of the racing at Wroxton is run for the benefit of regional clubs from places such as Coventry, Cheltenham, Portsmouth, the Severn Valley and so on. And even the meetings run by Banbury Motocross Club are open to paying riders from other clubs too. But don't take my word for it: take a look at the addresses of the handful of people who have written to the Council in support of this application. They all live away from the area. In contrast, the hundreds of objections to it are almost all from people who live in the area and, in most cases, within earshot. As Cherwell District Council's own Recreation & Leisure Officer says: "We would like to see further evidence which demonstrates that the provision meets local needs. There is a lack of supporting evidence as to whether the proposed increased usage of the site addresses existing deficiencies in provision." This track is doing nothing in "meeting the wider community benefit". Scaled up

even further, as they propose, the harms inflicted would be even worse. The main people receiving the benefit from it are the applicants and their bank managers. The statement finally asserts that "the Wroxton Motocross track achieves many of the objectives of the Council's Green Spaces Strategy". In reality, this application achieves none of them. Yours sincerely Roger Corke

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Attachments