

Comment for planning application 21/01123/F

Application Number	21/01123/F
Location	Hatch End Old Poultry Farm Steeple Aston Road Middle Aston Bicester OX25 5QL
Proposal	Demolition of existing buildings. Construction of replacement business units and associated external works. (Re-submission of 20/01127/F)
Case Officer	James Kirkham
Organisation	
Name	Maurice & Marie O'Connor
Address	Fir Lane Cottage, Fir Lane, Steeple Aston, Bicester, OX25 4SF
Type of Comment	Objection
Type	neighbour
Comments	<p>Subject Planning Application - 21/01123/F Dear Mr Kirkham, We are writing to object to the Planning Application - 21/01123/F, the redevelopment of Hatch End Chicken Sheds. The proposal seeks to replace existing storage, warehousing and office buildings to provide 25 business units comprising Class E(g) and B8 totalling 2,215 m2 (GIA), with 79 car parking spaces and 24 cycling spaces. The developers have listened to some of the objections previously raised to their withdrawn application. The reduction in the number of business units from 30 to 25 and the redesign of those units to become single story units, is welcomed. However, this reduced size cannot overcome the existing road and unchangeable road infrastructure limitations, considering the many pinch points in Steeple Aston on Southside, Paines Hill and North Side as well as the very narrow Fir Lane road. The revised application does not address the real and more serious concerns around the safety of children arriving to the pre-school and primary school every day located on Fir Lane. Our daughter attended and now our two grandsons attend the schools on Fir Lane. We know at first hand the safety concerns parents have at drop and pick up times. The increased heavy construction traffic, with their poor sightlines, during the construction phase and the significantly increased office traffic once the development is complete, do nothing to allay these concerns. The new application comes under Class E(g) and B8 whereas the previous application was under classifications B1, B2 and B8 (light industrial, storage and distribution units). The new classification introduced by the Government in September 2020 combines Classes B1 and B2 with Class A developments. This new application, therefore, adds the possibility of shops, cafes, retail, gyms and healthcare facilities, to the planned light industrial/offices in the application. If planning permission were to be granted the developer could then go down the Class A route, this would significantly alter the traffic profile in the village throughout the day. We wonder if the OCC Traffic Department have considered this in their assessment. The application states "OCC concluded that the increase in trip generation present in the TS as part of the application (LAP ref. 20/01127/F) was considered unlikely to cause significant adverse traffic or road safety on the surrounding transport network.". This is a reckless and very dangerous overview of the road infrastructure in and around Steeple Aston. We would go so far as to say it could be construed as a reckless and negligent assessment. By the developers own estimates, it can be calculated that the new buildings will have the capacity to accommodate a workforce of over 1,800 people (the developers estimate only 1.8% of the workforce will cycle to work and have provided 34 cycling spaces in their revised plan, this equates to a total 1,888 people working at the development!). The road infrastructure in and around Steeple Aston and the road leading to Middle Aston, Fir Lane, where the proposed development is to be located, has not changed in size or condition since the last withdrawn application. Nor is there any possibility to widen the roads in Steeple Aston to accommodate construction traffic or the significant subsequent increase in vehicle movements through the village as a result of the proposed development. We wonder if the OCC Traffic Department have visited Steeple Aston and observed Fir Lane, South Side or North Side between 7:30am and 9:30 am, and 2:30pm and 3:30 pm. If they did, they would see the traffic chaos outside the pre-school and primary school. They would see the school bus dropping off and picking up pupils and the severe difficulty cars have with passing parked cars waiting to pick up children or trying to pass one another or the school bus. If they OCC Traffic Department did come to the village at any time during the day, they would notice that cars, vans and trucks travelling in opposite directions on Paines Hill, i.e., approaching from the bottom of the hill and the from top of the hill from North Side, cannot see one another until they are significantly up or down the hill, where they meet. At which point they encounter a significant pinch point outside Paines Hill House. Substantial and regular damage can be seen to the kerbside wall of the house opposite Paines Hill House as</p>

vehicles endeavour to pass each other. If they did visit the village, they would notice that two S4 busses travelling in opposite directions along South Side have significant difficulty passing one another and frequently must mount the kerb just to get by at any time of the day. That is the situation at present! The way we all live today, post Covid, means that we are shopping much more online. A consequence of this has been the significant increase in delivery vans in the village. Has the OCC taken this into account? On the map used in the developers' application (Figure 3.1 Site Location and Local Amenities) all roads appear straight, wide and flat. The houses appear tiny. This map gives a distorted view of the road infrastructure in Steeple Aston and fails to properly indicate the steep gradients approaching Steeple Aston from Lower Heyford and on Paines Hill. The Transport Statement includes a projection that 18.6% of people coming to the proposed development will arrive by sustainable transportation. If by this the applicant means public transport, then a quick review of bus and train timetables shows that Steeple Aston is a very poorly served rural village at all times of the day. As to the assertion that 8.3% people coming to the development are expected to arrive on foot, we can only say this: from the north via Middle Aston there is no footpath, no public lighting and roads are even narrower than in Steeple Aston. With the expected increase in traffic that the development will undoubtedly bring, no one in their right mind would choose to walk from Middle Aston to Hatch End. When walking to the new development from Lower Heyford Railway station or the bus stop in Steeple Aston, the walk is long and up hill and the pavement ends at the primary school on Fir Lane as does the public lighting. The proposed development will also blur the boundaries between Steeple Aston and Middle Aston, something the Planners are seeking to avoid. No account has been taken of the toll that 18 months of heavy construction traffic will have on all the wonderful listed buildings in the village, particularly those located on the route of the construction and subsequent traffic. Neither has the disruption that will occur to services (christenings, marriages and funerals) at the ancient parish church of Saints Peter and Paul being considered both during and after the construction phase. Nor the effect of the heavy construction traffic on the fabric of the church. Comparing other out of town/urban office and light industrial developments does not hold up and is biased and should be discounted by the Planners. This is a rural area accessed by small roads and single-track roads. The proposed development is between two residential small villages unlike the comparator sites. No account has been taken of the disruption to wildlife or to light pollution. In conclusion, paramount to any consideration of the proposed development has to be the traffic implications and the safety of our children attending the two village schools. This is a wholly unsatisfactory resubmission and we strongly object to it. Maurice & Marie O'Connor

Received Date

28/04/2021 20:35:47

Attachments