

# 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	Peter and Jenny Bell
Address	Manor Court Cottage,North Side,Steeple Aston,Bicester,OX25 4SE
Type of Comment	Objection
Type	neighbour
Comments	<p>We have lived not far from the Hatch End site, on the corner of Paines Hill and Northside, for 25 years. We also walk past it regularly, so are aware of the volume of traffic at different times of the day. Until now, the few minor businesses active on the site have generated a level of traffic close to zero. Meanwhile, both Steeple Aston and Middle Aston have grown, with increases in population, traffic and on-street parking. The road system, however, remains unchanged - and largely unchangeable because of the geography of the area. There are many narrow stretches and pinch points which effectively make all approaches to the site unsuitable for commercial (and especially HGV) traffic. Given that most traffic to and from the site is certain to be through Steeple Aston, vehicles will not be able to avoid Fir Lane where a busy school, village hall, pre-school, playing field and church are clustered alongside a narrow roadway. For some time there has been concern in the village about the safety of children at school drop off and pick up times when there is already considerable traffic congestion. The construction of the proposed development will necessitate a level of heavy vehicle traffic that the local road network in this Conservation Area is unable to sustain. And the longer-term commercial viability of the site will depend on a level of vehicle movements from both employees and customers which is unsustainable without serious safety and amenity implications. While it is hard to argue that a largely unused and semi-derelict brown field site must be left to rot for ever, any development must be small-scale, in keeping with the character of the area and above all consistent with the requirements of road safety in an environment that has changed significantly since the site was fully utilised. Those charged with making a ruling on the current application should not only visit the site itself but also check out all the potential access routes - through Middle Aston; through Steeple Aston via Southside, Paines Hill and Fir Lane; and through Steeple Aston via Northside and Fir Lane. Anyone examining the problems associated with access will quickly conclude that the scale of the proposed development (though reduced from the previous application) is still by an order of magnitude far too large. In addition, although the number of car parking spaces has been reduced, the changes in use to allow a much wider range of businesses is likely to generate more traffic throughout the day. From our kitchen window we see the traffic congestion, the hold-ups and the near misses that occur when school buses, HGVs, farm vehicles, delivery vans and cars converge on Fir Lane twice a day as parents take their children to and from school. It seems incredible that the Highways Authority isn't aware of this. They must surely be asked to come and re-evaluate the situation in view of the strong opposition from those of us who live in the village and know the already difficult traffic conditions here. They should also be asked to explain to villagers how they can support such a devastating and dangerous proposal.</p>
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Attachments	