

Re: 21/01123/F

May 2021

We own and live with our family in Millbrook House which is directly adjacent to Hatch End Old Poultry Farm and will be significantly affected by the outcome of the proposed planning application.

We oppose the current planning application to redevelop the site.

We will be affected by noise, light pollution and general air pollution as a result of the increased intensification of the site. This site has traditionally supported in the region of 25 employees since it gained change of use from agricultural to a commercial site in the 1990s. The site consists mainly of large units occupied by small family businesses paying a lower than average rent. Such a situation has meant that each unit has been minimally staffed and that has suited the village and site to the present day. The original change of use specified that parking was to be at the back of the site and that a bank of trees were to be planted to the front of the site to shield the units from view along Fir Lane. These trees have been recently removed and the current application offers a line of parked cars as an alternative to a green environmentally friendly space. This will strongly urbanise the site and will be out of character with what Cherwell District Council originally intended for the site when it granted commercial use.

This application sees each building converted to a series of units and will mean several staff to a unit, vastly intensifying the site. The application is for most of the site to be class E which includes customer-facing businesses such as gyms, nurseries and retail space. These potential uses are totally at odds with our rural environment. This site could well become a destination for boutique retail outlets searching for lovely surroundings and cheaper rents as we are in an age where consumers will travel long distances in search of designer labels at discounted prices. Throw into this mix a café or tearoom and a mini Bicester Village could be the result. Can you imagine what this could do to village life? The endless stream of cars 7 days a week with overflow parking along Fir Lane. CDC would have no powers to stop this permitted use. This would be a catastrophe to both villages and must not be allowed to happen.

We fully support the assessment of the Middle Aston Parish Council with regard to the Travel Plan submitted by the developers and agree that this fails to assess the full impact of a class E change of use and indeed substantially underestimates the vehicle movements this site is likely to generate.

All the traffic from this intensified site will have to travel through both villages. The village roads are worn out and are not able to cope with any increase in traffic. There will also be a massive risk to pedestrians, school children, cyclists and horse riders who use the village roads on a daily basis. Even at the present time it is a wonder that no children have been involved in a road accident as they precariously make their way to the school entrance or cross the road to the play park. The influx of cars and delivery vehicles travelling to a re-developed Hatch End will inevitably compete for road space with parents and schoolchildren. There is a lack of pavements in Middle Aston and they are also limited in Steeple Aston with no pathway to and from Hatch End.

As a society we have become increasingly aware of the environmental impact of car movements on the health of the school children and local residents. Oxfordshire County Council is currently trialling its School Streets initiative at schools in the county, with the aim of creating "a safe, welcoming and

attractive environment where children, parents and teachers can walk, cycle, scoot or park and walk to school with less risk of air pollution and traffic congestion” while CDC is currently promoting a ‘Walk to School Week’.

If this planning application is approved we believe the Council would be acting in direct contradiction to its environmental and planning policies for our rural communities.

Robert and Eleanor Fry