

Comment for planning application 21/01224/OUT

Application Number	21/01224/OUT
Location	Land at former RAF Bicester Bicester Oxfordshire OX26 5HA
Proposal	Outline planning application for Automotive Experience Quarter comprising Commercial, Business and Services uses (Class E), Light Industrial (Class B2), Local Community and Learning Uses (Class F) and vehicle circuits (Sui Generis) with all matters reserved aside from that of access).
Case Officer	Rebekah Morgan
Organisation Name	
Name	Bob Roberts
Address	Rose Cottage,51 West End,Launton,Bicester,OX26 5DG
Type of Comment	Comment
Type	neighbour
Comments	<p>Bicester Motion Experience Quarter Outline planning. I see two main issues, Noise and Traffic. The Noise Assessment report is comprehensive and broadly speaking seems to suggest that the ambient noise level at the moment is such that operation of "normal" vehicles on the airfield would not lead to a significant increase. My own experience on car park duty at the vaccination centre supports this view; the ring road is indeed very noisy. The issue comes with the use of unsilenced vehicles at events such as Flywheel. These activities will be managed under the Bicester Motion Noise Management Plan - which is as yet undefined. Most motor sport venues, and in this context Bicester Motion is a motor sport venue, have a severe limit on noise days. In some cases that limit is 6 days in a calendar year. Given that the airfield now has houses on two sides such a restriction would be appropriate even if the cars were running singly not racing in groups. This is not the situation we see elsewhere when urban growth has swallowed up motor sport venues leading to conflict but rather a site already half surrounded by urban development which is seeking to change its use. As an example the long established circuit at Goodwood is restricted to five noisy days a year, which are days when unsilenced cars can use the track. On all other days there are noise restrictions and any cars which exceed the specified volume are stopped. These restrictions come at two levels; the lower is close to normal road cars, the other a little higher but still less than some road cars. The noise is monitored by the local authority based on microphones around the circuit so it's not some subjective judgement. It may seem harsh to judge this application by the standards applied to race circuits. The report includes the sentence "Clearly, lower noise output from all participating vehicles results in lower environmental impact, however a single non-compliant vehicle has a disproportionate environmental impact both in the sound level at receptors and disturbance due to the audible prominence of that vehicle. " In the context of this application that suggests that even a single unsilenced car is capable of causing significant impact. In short the noise report says there will be a noise problem but it will be managed by an as yet unpublished Management Plan. In the absence of such a plan it's difficult to make a detailed response but surely it's time to state some restrictions such as a maximum number of "unsilenced" days. Traffic access to the Bicester Motion site is already a problem which current roadworks may do a little to alleviate. The bigger problem is with large events, even the regular Scrambles which are relatively small cause problems. The upcoming Retro CarFest will in all likelihood be the largest event held at Bicester Motion with tens of thousands of spectators. Whilst this issue is not directly related to this planning application the development of the Experience Quarter is an opportunity to make a proper large volume entrance to the site rather than the poor ad hoc arrangements that exist at the moment.</p>
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Attachments	