

# Comment for planning application 21/03164/OBL

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| <b>Application Number</b> | <input type="text" value="21/03164/OBL"/>   |
| <b>Location</b>           | <input type="text" value="Land Approx 1 Mile From J9 East Of M40 Part Of M40 Through Chesterton Parish Chesterton"/>                          |
| <b>Proposal</b>           | <input type="text" value="Discharge of golfing obligations associated with the Second Schedule to the Great Wolf Resort s106 (19/02550/F)."/> |
| <b>Case Officer</b>       | <input type="text" value="Andy Bateson"/>   |
| <b>Organisation Name</b>  | <input type="text" value="Dean Clayton"/>   |
| <b>Address</b>            | <input type="text" value="22 St Peters Crescent,Bicester,OX26 4XA"/>  |
| <b>Type of Comment</b>    | <input type="text" value="Objection"/>  |
| <b>Type</b>               | <input type="text" value="neighbour"/>  |
| <b>Comments</b>           | <input 11="" 15="" 21\""="" 9="" comments="" dc="" front="" type="text" value="See attached document, \"/>                                    |
| <b>Received Date</b>      | <input type="text" value="15/11/2021 08:43:37"/>  |
| <b>Attachments</b>        | The following files have been uploaded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Front 9 comments DC 15 11 21.pdf</li></ul>                    |

D Clayton  
22 St Peter's Crescent  
Bicester  
OX26 4XA

The Planning office  
Cherwell District Council,  
Bodicote House,  
Bodicote,  
Banbury, OX15 4AA  
15<sup>th</sup> November 2021

## Planning Application - 21/03164/OBL

Dear Sir/Madam

### Discharge of golfing obligations associated with the Second Schedule to the Great Wolf Resort s106 (19/02550/F).

I wish to make the following comments on the above application, reference the discharge of Golfing obligations. There are several aspects of the project scope and design that need some clarification and there are some safety issues that I want to bring to your attention. I trust you will find my observations helpful.

The italics below are extracts from the "Project Scope" with my comments following.

#### Temporary Golf on the Back 9 Holes only

There is no mention in the documents that Great Wolf have any obligation to allow golfers to play on the back 9 holes, while the new front 9 holes are under construction and made ready for play.

Also, while I understand Great Wolf cannot begin construction works on the back 9 holes, could any further archaeology trenches or investigation works be halted until the front 9 holes are reconstructed and fully playable? Any archaeology exploratory works could potentially ruin the golfing experience on the back 9 holes.

Can the permission to play the back 9 be formalised, so there is no period when all golfing ceases on the back 9, before the front 9 holes are ready to play?

#### Project scope Aug 21

*1.2.1. Putting surfaces Each new/reconstructed green will be built to a comprehensive modern profile, comprising of:*

- Subsoil shaped as per design drawings;*
- Subsoil drainage installed at 5m spacing, with suitable positive outfalls;*
- Gravel layer (100mm depth);*
- Rootzone layer (250mm depth);*
- Re-grassed with cores harvested from the existing back-nine greens*

I'm not sure why all the Greens need to be rebuilt as I understand that the above specification was followed back in the early 2000s when the course was rebuilt. The present greens drain well, are the best in the area and the most playable throughout winter,

How can the turf from the back 9 greens be “harvested”, when golfers will still be playing the back 9 from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021?

I am concerned that the Golf Course designer has not appreciated the nature of the soil conditions. There is generally barely 300mm of top soil overlaying the stony Cornbrash, which can be described as a fractured shelly limestone with the appearance of rubble rather sub soil.

*In “1.2.2. Green surrounds” The subsoil shaping will be covered with native topsoil previously stacked aside, with regrassing completed with approved imported turf*

The Golf Course designer describes stacking sub soil, there is no sub soil; only stones and he has made no mention of de-stoning the top soil. Simply turfing over the stony subsoils cosmetically may look good, but having stones close to the surface will be a danger to golfers taking shots.

Will there be an independent Golf designer supervising the works to make sure that the green surrounds have adequate de-stoned top-soil?

### **Golf course works programme**

You will see that the golf course programme needs to be revised considering the delays to starting. It is also allowing little time between completing the construction works and being ready for play. The decision when the course is ready to play should be made by an Independent Golf designer/Agronomist as Swan Golf Design represent Great Wolf whose priorities are elsewhere.

Is Cherwell District Council taking independent advice on when the new course can be considered playable?

*1.4. Bunker Construction/Reconstruction Thirty-six bunkers are required to accompany the newly designed golf holes, and to create different playing options when playing from the front-nine and back-nine tees. Of the thirty-six bunkers twelve will be existing bunkers reconstructed in-situ, and the remaining twenty-four will be newly constructed. Twelve existing bunkers will be removed.*

The programme will not allow enough time for the bunker surrounds to be playable as there is no irrigation for establishment and the time of year this work is done, will be critical.

### **Lake Construction**

1.5. Lake Construction Two new lakes will be constructed adjacent to the existing hotel/spa.

*Topsoil and subsoil excavated from the new lakes will be stockpiled for use elsewhere on the course. The design of the lakes will include the construction of a safety ledge just below the waterline, with lining (geotextile and MDPE) included to maintain a consistent water level. All lake margins will be reinstated to grass.*

### **Water table**

The Water table fluctuates throughout the year and it is not unusual to see the water bearing Cornbrash which overlays clay, completely drained down to 3-4m below ground level in the summer.

If the Golf course designer is lining the new lakes with geotextile and MDPE they will need to keep the lake topped up with water, to avoid the liner lifting when the water table is high.

An abstraction licence will be required from the Environment Agency, as you can only have one unregistered abstraction well on your property and that already exists at the swim lake and elsewhere.

I am glad to see a safety ledge included in the new lakes proposal, but what of the existing lake between new 6 and 7<sup>th</sup> fairways (or present 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> holes)? I am concerned about the vertical drop into the deep water and the lack of escape routes if a child was to fall in.

What proposals are being put in place to make the banks safe on this existing lake?

### **2.1.1. Driving Range tee**

The range tee will be rebuilt to accommodate twelve players at any one time. There is no mention of the laser tracking for each bay of the driving range in the project scope.

Item 96a of the Inspector's decision, "Appeal Decision 3259189" states there is to be "the provision of a driving range with a minimum of 12 mats/bays with laser tracking."

I am also puzzled why the driving range is considered safe, when the previous driving range, which was further back, was closed because swimmers in the adjoining lake and athletes using the assault course were in danger of being hit by stray golf balls.

### **Junior Development programme.**

There is nothing about Scholarships from Great Wolf, only offers of free golf membership. The juniors must pay for their own lessons!

There is a need to increase participation in the sport by young people, particularly from backgrounds where they have less opportunity. Existing Section 106 funds from other development schemes could be invested in sustainable engagement programmes to encourage and support children and young people into golf and to increase accessibility to the sport. Scholarships should include teaching and 106 funds should be found to genuinely make this possible.

### **Walking from the new 1<sup>st</sup> green to the 2<sup>nd</sup> tee.**

I am concerned that golfers will be vulnerable to being hit by thinned golf balls from golfers approaching the new 4<sup>th</sup> Green. Will there be a protective fence built?

### **New 5<sup>th</sup> and furthest back new 9<sup>th</sup> Tee and new 8<sup>th</sup> Green**

There is a very serious risk that golfers putting or approaching the new 8<sup>th</sup> green, will not be safe from those driving off the new 5<sup>th</sup> tees and the new 9<sup>th</sup> back tee (present 4<sup>th</sup> Green). In the event of someone on the 8<sup>th</sup> green being hit by an errant golf ball, who would be responsible if someone is seriously hurt and the case ends up in litigation? Is it the golfer

who is being rushed to finish 9 holes in 2 hours, BGHC management, the golf course designer or CDC for approving this section 106?

I have two other points to make on the new 8<sup>th</sup> Green and new back 9<sup>th</sup> tee positions.

The new 8<sup>th</sup> green is far too close to the water for the average golfer to be a fun hole. It will be a long iron or wood shot into the green and especially when the fairway is baked hard in the summer many approach shots will end up in the water.

The new back tee position on the new 9<sup>th</sup> will be difficult for many seniors and others, as it is too far to drive over the water.

I trust you will be able to address the above points I have raised before the Section 106 golfing obligations are discharged.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Dean Clayton