

Comment for planning application 23/00173/OUT

Application Number	<input type="text" value="23/00173/OUT"/>
Location	<input type="text" value="Land South Of Green Lane Chesterton"/>
Proposal	<input type="text" value="Outline planning application for up to 147 homes, public open space, flexible recreational playing field area and sports pitches with associated car parking, alongside landscaping, ecological enhancements, SuDs, green/blue and hard infrastructure, with vehicular and pedestrian/cycle accesses, and all associated works (all matters reserved except for means of access)"/>
Case Officer	<input type="text" value="Andrew Thompson"/>
Organisation Name	<input type="text" value="David and Hazel Jones"/>
Address	<input type="text" value="Gagle Brook House, Bicester Road, Chesterton, Bicester, OX26 1UF"/>
Type of Comment	<input type="text" value="Objection"/>
Type	<input type="text" value="neighbour"/>
Comments	<p>We have two properties in Chesterton Parish: our house and garden beside the Gagle Brook and a little over 4 acres in Little Chesterton. Our Little Chesterton property straddles the lane and also includes that part of the lane. We bought this land in 2007, because of a unique set of features there and have been working it up as a conservation area, partly based on previous experience of such an exercise in the USA (1989-2004).</p> <p>This 4 acres is immediately to the south of the 'Western' of the two Wates' sites and will be the most affected by house building by Wates.</p> <p>We are aware that the house owners in Little Chesterton have been seriously alarmed by the approval, on appeal, of two monstrous buildings for Great Lakes, the Bicester Sports Association and associated facilities so close to their homes. They feel they were greatly let down by Oxfordshire County Council, when objections were withdrawn very late in the appeal process.</p> <p>The map in the Chesterton Parish Profile documents (associated with the proposals for inclusion in the update of the District local plan) shows that the hamlet could be surrounded by houses, a factory, warehouses and shops - with no buffer. As far as we can tell, the 4 acres we own would be all that is left of 'open' land for wildlife and biodiversity other than the gardens and paddocks in the hamlet.</p> <p>1) The mammals and other wildlife in the immediate area. We have argued that the Bicester Sports Association developments will have a severe effect on the wildlife we have been recording since 2012. Therefore, any further change of use of the land around the hamlet will be catastrophic.</p> <p>We have been monitoring the wildlife, particularly the mammals and birds using Bushnell camera traps. Six of the species recorded regularly have statutory protection.</p> <p>A) Badgers: Protected in the UK under the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992, and the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. There is one sett in use and another in abeyance on our land. Badgers currently forage on the Wates' land. There are a couple of currently unused badger setts on the BSA land and one on the Wates land. These are used intermittently. Badgers move back to old setts when their external parasites reach a certain level in their current sett. A clan will use four or five setts over the years, and so a reduction in the number of setts works against the behaviour patterns of these animals.</p> <p>B) Barn owls: Classified in the UK as Green under the Birds of Conservation Concern 4: the Red List for Birds (2015). Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. We have video sequences of barn owls using the nest box we have in a horse barn (we do not have horses). These birds forage over the land between the A41, the M40 and Chesterton village.</p> <p>C) Muntjac: Invasive, non-native species. Protected in the UK under the Deer Act 1991.</p> <p>D) Otters: Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority</p>

Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. European Protected Species under Annex IV of the European habitats Directive. Listed as Near Threatened on the global IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. These animals have been recorded during the past five years using the stream that flows through our land.

E) Polecats: Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. Their occurrence on our land is similar to that of the otters.

When we had our identification of the polecats confirmed by Graham Scholey of the Environment Agency, Thames Area (he also chairs the UK Otter Biodiversity Action Plan Steering Group), he commented 'Not very often caught on camera traps so that's a good record.'

F) Roedeer: Common. Protected in the UK under the Deer Act 1991. Twins were recorded in 2020 and another pair since then.

Additionally, we have recorded Stoats, Foxes, Grass Snakes, Frogs, Toads and the usual small mammals of grass and woodland. During surveys, other people have caught newts in the pond.

The reduction in the foraging area of all these mammals by the Wates' development and the covering over of the streams below the hamlet (the Siemens development) will lead to their local disappearance and thence a totally unacceptable reduction in biodiversity.

2) Storm water drainage in Little Chesterton and Wendlebury.

A) The whole of the 'Western' area of the Wates proposal is in the catchment area of the stream that flows through our land. This stream joins another originating near Simms Farm on the other side of the M40 before flowing under the A41 and on to Wendlebury. The problems of regular flooding of that village have led to the Environment Agency taking over the monitoring and maintenance of the stream there.

The Wates proposal, to use 'our' stream to take both storm and ground water from the 'Western' part of the site, could well increase these problems.

In the 'Western' area the Wates' plan proposes to cut a swale to join a drainage ditch on the SE boundary of the land. This swale will be fed by storm drains from the whole of the rest of the 'Western area, with 6 basins acting as retention ponds. The drainage ditch leads down to a small pool on our land. This pool is currently fed by two springs from, we understand, field drains in the field above.

Since the building of the Alchester Park estate there has been a very large increase in storm/goundwater reaching this pool. This is surprising because the Alchester Park is situated on the other side of the drainage ditch used by Alchester Park from the 'Western' Wates' field (this ditch will mentioned again in the paragraph on Wendlebury (in section B)). This appears to have aggravated an existing problem with the drainage on the Wates's side of the lane. We have regular flooding on our land with major overflowing onto the lane. We predict that the planned storm water drainage system for the Wates' development will add immeasurably to this problem, in spite of the basins.

We have reported a blocked pipe under the lane repeatedly for several years, but there has been no work done to repair it*. As stated above, increase in flooding follows from the building of the houses of Alchester Park. In the planning documents for that development there is the statement: 'Surface water runoff being limited to Greenfield run off' (**The jnpgroup Flood Assessment Risk for that site). Because of the blockage, the drainage ditch on the east side of the lane overflows more frequently, flooding the lane and our land on the opposite side of the lane.

In our objections to the planning applications by Great Lakes and the Bicester Sports Association and then our comments to the Planning Inspectors, we noted the increase in the frequency and intensity of flooding in Little Chesterton. Although we have yet to see whether there will be a large increase in water flow in the stream in our land following completion of the GL and BSA buildings, the deliberate planning of the swale and the use of the ditch at the SE margin of the Wates' site is a of major concern.

There is another situation that is far from clear to us. Near the SW margin of the 'Western' area is another swale planned. This one drains into Basin 6

B) Wendlebury has also experienced an increase in storm water from Chesterton because an existing ditch is, by design, being used take surface water away from Alchester Park (**The jnpgroup Hydrology and Hydrogeological Assessment for that site). The flow is along the boundary of the areas of land labelled in the map in the Chesterton Parish Profile documents as LPR-A-118 and LPR-A-046, then on the LPR-A-225 land margin to LPR-A-046, following the curve and on through LPR-A-046 to pass under the lane from Little Chesterton into LPR-A-173 before flowing under the A41 and into Wendlebury.

C) The stream that flows through our land in Little Chesterton is the only storm water drain from the Great Lakes site, the Bicester Golf Course and the land of the Bicester Sports Association. We have already argued that the proposed mitigation for two of these sites is grossly inadequate because of climate change. After it leaves our land (where it is in a

relatively deep channel), this stream regularly floods the lane of Little Chesterton. A little further south, it joins another stream which starts near Simms Farm and flows under the M40 to pass through Wendlebury. The lower reaches of this stream (on the Little Chesterton side of the M40) and the lowest regions of the stream that flows through Little Chesterton are within the planned Siemens development. Thus, some major works would be needed to prevent increased surface water run-off to Wendlebury.

It may not be possible because, in the published results of a project to determine how to reduce flooding in Wendlebury (January 2019), the Environment Agency 'demonstrated that there was no scheme for Wendlebury that is viable according to the current cost-benefit rules that we have to work within'.

This strongly suggests that there should be no further building contemplated upstream of Wendlebury until the effects of the Great Lakes and Bicester Sports Association 'developments' have been observed and monitored for at least ten years.

* Oxford County Council told us that it is not their problem, so have Thames Water and the Environment Agency.

** We note that these are the same consultant engineers as employed by Wates for this application.

Hazel C. Jones, BSc, MSc, PhD & David. A. Jones MA, DPhil, CBIol, FLS, FRSB.

Received Date

13/03/2023 22:04:17

Attachments