

Enstone Driving Centre (Mullin Museum – 18/03319/OUT) – Response from Enstone Parish Council – January 2019

General

The proposed Driving Centre development lies outside of our Parish on the boundary between Great Tew and Enstone. However, the greatest impact of this development will be on the residents of Enstone Parish, so the Council is setting out our key issues which should be addressed if this development is approved.

The Council accepts that this would be a prestigious development for Oxfordshire and builds on the strength of the local Motor Sport and Automotive industry. However the major issue the Council has is the suitability of Enstone airfield for this project, given that it will attract (by its own figures) over two hundred thousand visitors each year. The Council was split - some believe that a location in Oxfordshire with well-developed public transport links and roads infrastructure already in place, would be better suited. Others, however, are very much for the proposed Enstone Airfield development.

Transport

This remains the major concern of the Councillors and local residents. Whilst accepting the County Highways report that the roads have the capacity to cope with the additional journeys to and from the museum, all of the journeys will be on local B roads already in a poor state of repair.

It is likely that all the journeys to the museum will be by private transport as there are no local bus services which would serve the museum. The developer's proposal to run a single minibus service from local train stations at Banbury or Charlbury is unlikely to reduce this by any significant extent.

There has been a significant increase in traffic volume in recent years on local roads due to the Soho Farmhouse development and the expansion of Renault F1 Motorsport, and the volume will increase significantly when 2000 extra homes are built in Chipping Norton and following the anticipated redevelopment of Heythrop Park Resort.

In addition, recent traffic speed watch activity has shown that speeding is prevalent through our village and this problem is unlikely to improve with this development. Significant sums of money need to be spent on traffic calming measures and road and junction improvements, see attached proposal from Enstone PC. The Council notes the developer has proposed that £200k from the £1.7M S106 money generated from this project should be spent on signage improvements and traffic calming in Gagingwell, Westcott Barton and Middle Barton (Ref an email from Keiran Hedigan to Enstone PC 20/12/18). **We feel this is totally inadequate and will not have a significant effect in offsetting the additional private journeys created by travelling to the museum.**

Local housing for residents to work in the museum

One of the major benefits claimed for this development is provision of local employment opportunities and apprenticeships. The Planning statement claims "It will deliver up to 338 jobs in the local economy" and "It will create 100 jobs directly employed in the museum and park". The development proposal does not provide any details of the anticipated location of the staff or provide any opportunities for the staff to travel to work other than by private motor car. A survey from the nearby Soho Farmhouse showed that 59% of their staff lived 10 – 20 miles away, 12% over 20 miles away and only 29% within 10 miles of the hotel. Based on

this evidence, the Parish Council is of the opinion that this proposed development will add significantly to local journeys to and from work.

It would be desirable that a development such as this provide opportunities for local young people (within a 10 mile radius) to work there. However, there is no affordable housing within Enstone and the surrounding villages forcing our young people to move out to the major towns in Oxfordshire such as Banbury and Bicester.

None of S106 money has been set aside for low cost starter homes in Enstone village which the Council believes is a key priority. The developer has proposed that £1.25M is spent on affordable housing in Great Tew, although it's unclear how many homes they will provide and under what terms.

In addition to this the developer is proposing to pay £11M to the Landowner to pay for restoration of his private mansion. Whilst accepting this isn't part of the required S106 money as the 28 private lodges are deemed to be "holiday homes", we do question whether a better settlement for the local communities should be sought in this respect.

Other Issues

The Planning Statement is incorrect :

2.8 Vehicular access states one entrance between the Green lane and the Tew cross roads. In fact there is one to the chicken farm and one to the shooting school and airfield and a few years ago, a third entrance was granted planning permission. There are also two field entrances as well.

The Ecology reports by Windrush Ecology and by Melanie Dodd make no mention of the extensive wild orchids and bluebells growing on the site. It may be because the survey was conducted in Winter. It is recommended that another survey is conducted in Spring / Summer.

In summary, whilst there may be economic and employment benefits to the local economy, the council believes that this development will have an overall negative impact on traffic levels in our village and there is insufficient mitigation of these effects through the proposed provision of the S106 monies.