

Detailed Planning

The current planning applications of interest all lie in the Green Belt.

Film Studios

Bucks Council Strategic sites committee on 23rd October deferred its decision on the Film Studios application. This was following a recommendation by Marlow County Councillor, Neil Marshall, as he was concerned whether sufficient information on the traffic impact had been obtained.

There were objections from Marlow County Councillors, Carol Heap and Alex Collingwood, Little Marlow Parish Council, Cookham Parish Council, Save Marlow's Green Belt and our local MP. Marlow Town Council (MTC) were not represented. However, an unofficial press release by a MTC councillor given to the national press stated that MTC were in favour of the development. This gave rise to a MTC meeting to hear Marlow residents; whose views were unanimously against the development. MTC just took note.

The objectors clearly stated the reasons for refusal - major traffic congestion, no "very special circumstances" to overturn the Green Belt designation of the site, visual impact due the size and scale of development, pollution, environmental damage, amongst others. All of these were backed up with independent evidence. Unfortunately, each speaker was given only 3 minutes which was insufficient to cover complex issues such as traffic impact.

The applicant, DIDO's tactic was to take questions supported by "experts". The councillors were not very demanding in their questioning.

It is expected that National Highways will be issuing a further response to the applicant's proposals for traffic management. It is hard to see what mitigations can be put in place to stop at least an extra 4,000 traffic movements per day through Westhorpe roundabout which will cause major congestion.

Softcat car park

Softcat has applied to make the temporary car park on Fieldhouse Lane immediately to the east of the A404 permanent. Softcat is an important and responsible employer in Marlow. The Society commented in favour of the application, provided the lease is at most 25 years to preserve the land's Green Belt status. The planning officer has now rejected the application and issued an enforcement notice due to the Greenbelt status of the land. The appeal and enforcement notice are with the Planning Inspectorate. We understand that Softcat is preparing a new application. The Society's position remains unchanged.

Van parking in Fieldhouse Lane

Land between the Softcat car park and the Crowne Plaza Hotel is being used for van parking in breach of planning regulations. The land is in the Greenbelt. TMS raised this issue some time ago but Bucks Council still have failed to raise a planning enforcement. This is strange given the Planning officer's stance on the SoftCat car park. We are continuing to pursue this matter.