

Comments for Planning Application 22/06443/FULEA

Application Summary

Application Number: 22/06443/FULEA

Address: Land Adjacent South Side Marlow Road And A404 Junction Westthorpe Park Little Marlow Buckinghamshire

Proposal: Full planning permission for production space and supporting buildings for screen-based media and associated services/industries. The development of approximately 168,718 sqm GEA total floorspace comprising : sound stages, workshops , office accommodation, studio hub associated outdoor space such as backlots and unit bases; entrance structures and reception; security infrastructure, mobility hub; cafes; parking; bridge; incidental supporting buildings; associated infrastructure; public art; upgraded vehicular access onto Marlow Road; new cycle and pedestrian accesses; a new cultural/educational/recreational building; a new community building and associated landscaping, publicly accessible recreational land and ecological and environmental enhancements/habitat creation

Case Officer: Emma Crotty

Customer Details

Name: Cllr Richard Scott

Address: Fulshaw Court, Mill Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire SL7 1QB

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The above application affects two main parishes in the immediate vicinity of this application, as neighbours to the development. Marlow is the most significant settlement adjacent to this application and has a population approximately ten times greater than Little Marlow and a population density per square kilometre that is approximately thirty times greater. The statutory position of ward boundaries designates the position of consultee as a parish to Little Marlow. Marlow is not a statutory consultee and has therefore not received a statutory consultation request. Importantly we wish to add our own position as the closest and most dense settlement to the site , inevitably our residents will also be impacted as the closest Town.

In exercising its public service role, Marlow Town Council recognizes that it has a clear duty in representation of its 14,767 residents (Marlow Population [2021] Census). We have actively been encouraged and lobbied by our residents to form a view on the above application, including both positive and negative aspects, and have encouraged residents to make representations on the application via the BCC planning portal which we see are substantial. Notably, on the planning portal, there are approximately 3,600 representations posted, 2400 in support of this application and 1,200 against .

Marlow Town Council members have followed in detail the elements of the application as it

evolved and careful note of statutory consultee inputs and resident input to make an informed and fact driven representation. Councillors have attended representations at public consultations and soundings to inform themselves of the detail which were extensive. On balance, there is very positive support for the application currently, regardless of residents' exact locations in the county and this support is reflected in the representations made so far, with a near 2:1 ratio in favour, which aligns with the messaging coming from our Marlow residents.

Marlow Town Council has therefore informally consulted its entire membership group of Councillors at a members' only meeting (not an official Council meeting) through a democratic extensive debate and discussion on the 24th of August 2023 - (see meeting note below *)

By majority vote, we have decided to fully support this application and not raise any objections to the proposed development. We recognize that our local Planning Authority (Bucks Council) will determine the lawfulness of the application's outcome, and its strategic planning group will convene to review the application at a point determined by them. The observations in coming to this decision and noted below.

(Note: Members agreed that the transport element of this application is complex, and statutory consultee comments and reporting have not yet been finalized . Such complexities can only be determined by data and analysis conducted by experts regarding highways operations .

In coming to our decision to fully support this application the following points and observations from the application were noted :

The site has historically been gravel pits that have ceased to operate over time and have been used for land backfill, waste disposal, and have been poorly remediated and landfilled. The development seeks to reclaim and regenerate a large area of very low-quality contaminated landfill that is mostly inaccessible to the public, other than a basic footpath dissecting its area from its public intersection from the Volvo footbridge to Little Marlow.

Historical attempts to establish the site as a country park have been in discussion since the late 70,s and as such a long term a legacy of waste dumps, waste processing and unlicensed activities have continued over the years. It is apparent that commitments could offer a future joined-up solution that will allow the implementation of a well-managed adjunct to the Spade Oak area by creating enhanced access to those areas in the future .

It is noted the applicant intends to use roughly 50 acres of a 150-acre overall site and enhance legitimized public access in the future with a commitment to 9 acres of open public space and a culture and skills academy. A provision is proposed for a further 15 acres of wildlife-protected land on bordering areas of the site .

It is noted in recent new document submissions a 20% Biodiversity Net Gain in both on-site and nearby areas through a recent acquired addition to the applicant's site, achieving twice the national BNG standard, increasing even further public access and a potential enlargement of the country park and SANG area. This has the potential to double (excluding water areas) the land area delivery of any future country park implementation.

The socio-economic benefits identify a training shortage in the Bucks economic report. There is significant support by Bucks' New university and Buckinghamshire College Group. Skills and training will be supported for a 10-year period. Compatibility with Bucks' local skills report, SIP

(local skills improvement program), and support from educational institutions, including both senior schools, the British Film Commission, Great Marlow, and SWBGS, along with a commitment to work with all local institutions.

Provision of a community hall for residents and a skills academy for industry. £750 million inward investment to Bucks, £338 million per annum GVA (gross value added) economic activity, and a minimum of 300 traineeships per annum in the first 5 years, as well as the creation of up to 4,180 new jobs. As part of this 780-2,415 jobs will be created through a variety of skill sets .

It is noted that a sustainable travel strategy and investment has been a challenge in the area for the last few decades .The opportunity appears it can be accelerated through new public bus and hopper services, walking, and cycling provisions. Specifically, a new public bus that is proposed between High Wycombe and Maidenhead and a new East/West hopper bus service between Bourne End and Marlow. It is also noted that active travel commitment includes financial incentives for walking/cycling to studios, with government support for creative industries.

We have noted the Economic growth and regeneration planning application response dated the 23rd of July 2022 in the application on behalf of the Bucks Council Directorate for planning, growth, and sustainability Bucks. This response puts forward an overwhelming argument detailing the support for the diversity and prosperity of the local economy overall, encouraging business, employment, and skills for Bucks, as well as the vibrancy benefits for local town and village centres.

*(Note: Eleven members attended this meeting on Wednesday, August 24th, out of 12 possible members. One member declared a conflict of interest with their role as a member of Bucks Strategic Sites Committee and did not attend the meeting. Eight members voted in full support of the application, one member voted against support, and two members supported but did not wish to vote. Councillor Natalia Mityaeva asked for the submission to show that she does not support the application. Councillor Carol heap asked for the submission to show that she is neutral on the application

The final vote was therefore declared at 8 to 3 in favour and carried.

06/09/2023