

EAST LOTHIAN: Farm sheds get go ahead despite 59 objections

Plans to build two new barns on a farm in East Lothian were described as a 'Trojan Horse' by a councillor amid concern they would become part of a theme park proposed for the land.

The application for the sheds at East Fortune Farm was granted by councillors after the landowners said their lease of their current storage sheds had run out and they needed to move to the new buildings.

However the plans brought 59 letters of objection from members of the public who claimed the buildings were the first phase in a proposal to move popular family attraction East Links Family Farm from its current location near Dunbar to the site. And local councillor Jeremy Findlay said: "I believe these sheds are just a Trojan horse for what is coming and as some of the other objectors have pointed out are far too large for a farm of this size and are being done on prime agricultural land."

The application lodged by the Brand family who own East Fortune Farm was for two sheds – one 49 metres by 12 metres and 6 metres high, the other 24 metres by 12 metres and the same height.

Objectors pointed out that proposals for East Links farm to move to the same land included two similar barns in the same

spot as part of the park.

However planners said that the application was for agricultural sheds and any change of use would have to come back to the council for planning.

Planning convenor Norman Hampshire reminded councillors they could only determine the application in front of them, which was for two agricultural sheds on the land.

He said: "We can't take into consideration something which may happen in the future. This planning committee will determine any future application but it is not relevant to today's discussion."

It was announced in February that East Links operators were talking to the Brand family about moving the park to their land with its lease at West Barns due to run out in a few years.

A Pre Application Notice was lodged with the council with a future planning application expected.

The committee approved the sheds application by nine votes to one with Councillor Findlay against.

by Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter

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East Fortune Farm lies near Athelstaneford in the East Lothian countryside pic Google Maps