

Family theme park operators appeal to Scottish Ministers

The operators of a family theme park have appealed to Scottish Ministers after councillors rejected their plans to move to a new location six miles away.

East Lothian councillors refused to grant planning permission for the new theme park at East Fortune after it received hundreds of objections.

The applicants, who run East Link Family Park, in West Barns, had described the move as a 'relocation' of their popular attraction.

However councillors were told the owner of the land where the original park is based had indicated he would find a new operator meaning it would be a second similar facility.

It was also claimed that the plans for the farm land at East Fortune would lose crops which were equivalent to one million pints of beer.

The applicants for the East Fortune theme park have lodged an appeal with Scottish Ministers.

A meeting of East Lothian Council's planning committee earlier this year heard that there were more than 550 representations on the plans with 465 objecting to them.

Council planning officers recommended the application for refusal after estimating the majority of visitors would have

to travel to it by car with a lack of public transport and roadside paths sparking fears about safety.

And councillors added an additional reason over the loss of prime agricultural land.

At the meeting in June Councillor Donna Collins, a farmer herself, outlined the impact of losing potential crops to the food chain.

She said: "The loss of 14.5 hectares of prime agricultural land which could produce 145 tonnes of wheat is equivalent to 246,000 loaves of bread and one million pints of beer."

The applicants had argued that the new park was farm diversification and a lower 40mph speed limit could be introduced at the entrances to the site to counter claims access was unsafe.