

Planning Issues

Outline planning permission for an abattoir at Rouncil Lane was granted in the mid 1970's by Warwickshire County Council. (At that time, applications which were departures from the Development Plan were dealt with by the County Planning Authority). This was a departure by reason of it being inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

The permission was not conditioned in respect of hours of operation or traffic movements

Warwick District Council subsequently approved the Reserved Matters for a building screened by the existing belt of trees/hedge along Rouncil Lane.

Traffic issues were not considered to be serious at the time of the original application considered by the County Council since, at that time, animals from Bannerhill Farm (which was owned by Snelsons) were transported to their abattoir in Warwick Road, Kenilworth in the town centre. It was argued that the location of an abattoir on the farm itself and the cessation of slaughtering operations in the town centre would be beneficial to the town and would have the effect of reducing traffic movements to and from the farm and the town centre abattoir. The main concern at that time was held to be the visual impact on the Green Belt and conflict with Green Belt policy. The securing of the cessation of slaughtering operations in the town centre premises by means of a Section 52 Agreement was seen as amounting to very special circumstances which justified the moving of the abattoir from the town, where it was close to houses and caused traffic problems via the very narrow entrance to the site, to a more remote location away from properties where the building would be well screened from public view.

During the early 1990's, an application was received for significant extensions to the abattoir. The case made by the applicants was that these were required to meet EU directives relating to slaughtering operations and the proposals were supported by Environmental Health. At that time, there continued to be limited public concern about the operation of the abattoir. Part of these permissions was implemented in a modified form, but the full scheme was not actually carried out.

During the late 1990's, new owners applied for large scale extensions to the abattoir which were recommended for refusal on grounds of undesirable intensification of use and additional harm to the Green Belt. The owners, Farmfresh Foods, withdrew the application and subsequently pursued only a smaller extension for which permission was eventually refused and dismissed on appeal.

The actual throughput or hours of operation of the abattoir is not subject to planning control.

Recent issues of concern relate to containers on the site which are used as part of a fleece cleaning operation. This is likely to be the subject of an enforcement report to Planning Committee in the near future.