

The LARA seminars on planning and motorsport

Motorsport and the Planning Process

If planners can *hear* us, why can't they see us too?

For planners: *This is motorsport – why can't the planning process see it?*

For motorsport: *This is the planning process and how it affects motorsport*

The purpose of these seminars is to improve the understanding of motorsport facility provision – safeguarding and developing facilities in an environmental context – while recognising and enforcing against illegal and harmful activity.

Dates, times and locations: e-mail mospo@laragb.org, or www.laragb.org

Session 1: The coin has two sides

If you are a planner, your job is to balance regulation and provision – two sides of one coin. But from the perspective of the motorsport enthusiast, if that coin is tossed it will tend to land on one side about 98% of the time. There is no prize for saying which side is uppermost. This session will challenge the planning profession to examine its track record over the last 50 years – two working generations of planners. How has this lack of dialogue – interface – come about? Is it deliberate? Negligent? Justified? Appropriate? Was it ever appropriate and, if so, is it appropriate now and into the future?

Session 2: What is motorsport and recreation?

This session explains what motorsport and recreation is all about – and it may surprise you! Motorsport is not 'rich'. It is not a Michael Schumacher lifestyle, and, except at the very highest levels, people put a lot of money into it and get none back. Ordinary people take part (even the odd chartered planner) and motorsport has a heritage of 100 years – two-thirds that of the noisy, filth-belching steam trains which attract so much affection, nostalgia and positive planning provision! In motorsport, Britain has always been a world power, and this remains true in most disciplines and at most competitive levels. There is comparatively little 'built provision' in motorsport, whereas tennis and golf cannot take place without a court or course. Most motorsport uses land on a temporary basis, with the site reverting to its principal use in between – there is some undeveloped 'dedicated land' that sits in a grey area in planning terms.

Session 3: Motoring on unsealed roads ('green lanes'): is this a planning issue?

Recreational and 'sport' motoring can take place on the public highway. Is this just a highway law/management issue, or is it something that does – or should – involve the planning profession? The law here is complicated and the issues often misrepresented.

Session 4: Tackling the ‘cowboy’ element – the law, the practice and the facts.

Illegal motor use – trespass – noise – harassment – damage – traffic offences. Whose problem is it: planners or police?

Session 5: Motorsport within the planning system

What permissions does motorsport require to stage events? What does it seek and what does it get? How does permitted development fit into this? What does permitted development allow? How much ‘flexibility’ is there in permitted development rights in practice? SSSIs, SPAs, SACs, NPs, AONBs. Planning Policy Guidance: PPGs 7, 9, and 17. Environmental Impact Assessments and scoping. Sustainable development. Temporary change of use: can operational development be carried out on the back of a legitimate temporary change of use? Certificates of lawful use. Article 4 Directions. Enforcement: planners – are *you* too ready to draw your gun?

Session 6: Noise

If we were to tell you the biggest complaint about legitimate motorsport is dust, or traffic generation, or pollution, then we’d be telling a lie. The single biggest complaint is *noise*. The biggest complaint about illegal motor use is *trespass* and its associated loss of amenity – noise is a factor here too. What is the view of planners on noise in life? Motorsport is not always totally quiet. Nobody says it is ... are only quiet sports acceptable?

Session 7: The development plan process

Will the proposed changes make development plans better at seeing and facilitating transient activities and ‘noisy’ activities?

Session 8: Bringing it together:

Motorsport: what should we do with it? Ban it? Provide for it? Change it? Ignore it? Influence it?

Planning: what should we do with it? Ignore it? Change it? Seek to work with it, because it isn’t going to go away?

Session 9: Open discussion

You can e-mail questions, comments and issues to us in advance of the day, and we will try to work them into the programme.

This event is intended to assist RTPI members and other professionals with their CPD requirements. Please note – the responsibility for judging the relevance and value of events and other forms of CPD lies with the individual RTPI member.

Papers issuing will form an update of the LARA Planning *GuideNotes* (web format only).