

LATE SHEET

10.00 AM MEETING

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 20 JULY 2011

SCHEDULE B

Item 7 (Page 15-214) – CB/10/04238/FULL – Tesco Stores Ltd, Vimy Road, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard.

Additional Consultation/Publicity Responses

National Market Traders Federation: Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard Branch – Objection.

- Dating back to 909AD, market has never faced such testing times – changes in trading laws and regulations have contributed to decline and proposal is seen as major blow to market's long term survival.
- High Street, which is hub of town, could diminish as shoppers will be taken away from centre; whole community feel could be lost and never return, for example, Asda's arrival in Dunstable has crippled once thriving market – where there were 150+ stalls, there is now just handful, where there was healthy, vibrant town, there is now legacy of empty, derelict shops.
- Leighton-Linslade is still full of good shops, although it is not as busy as it once was; it still has much to offer and with careful, sympathetic planning could become better still.
- Tesco proposal will not deliver optimistic future for town; it goes against Town Council's Big Plan and Government's plans for town centre regeneration.
- Plan to develop Land South of High Street could lead to major high street names coming to town; increased footfall would be major bonus to town; this sort of forward planning keeps everything central thus giving High Street much needed boost, whereas Tesco plan would leave town 'high and dry'.
- Proposal could lead to traffic problems which could have knock on effect elsewhere.
- With loss of Homebase, public would go to other towns for their DIY goods; if public has to go out of town to find goods/services, they tend to stay away for good – shopping habit can therefore have damaging effect on all of High Street.

Letters of objection have been received from residents of following addresses

Appenine Way – 36 Bideford Green – 252, 362 Brookside Walk – 13 Byford Way – 6 Camberton Road – 58, 67 Church Road – 11 Coniston Road – 30 Grange Close – 3, 62 Hartwell Grove – 5 Highfield Road – 44 Hockliffe Street – 38 King Street – 32 Kiteleys Green – 15 Ledburn Grove – 1 Leopold Road – 1 Manor Court – 8 Maree Close - 5	Mowbray Drive – 29 New Road – 27, 29 Nicholson Drive – 51 Old Chapel Mews – 7 Orchard Drive – 5 Princes Court – 10 Redwood Glade – 30 Rock Lane – 13 St Andrews Street – 5 Southcourt Avenue – 50 Southcourt Road – 8, 13 Stanbridge Road – 132 Station Road – 3 Stoke Road – 65, Woodlands Taylors Ride – 2a Vandyke Road – 116 Weston Avenue – 75
Little Orchard, Billington 14 Brownlow Lane, Cheddington 15 Birds Hill, Heath and Reach Mansheve, Reach Green, Heath and Reach 11 Leighton Road, Heath and Reach 2 Spinney Court, Heath and Reach Holly Grange, Hollingdon 90 Castle Hill Road, Totternhoe 23 Leighton Road, Wing	

Petition against proposed extension to Tesco store

Petition (organised by I Love Leighton Buzzard and South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth) signed by **1,893** local residents, shoppers, traders and visitors to town objecting to proposals on grounds that:

- It risks harming or stopping development of land South of High Street for bigger range of shops, especially clothing shops such as Marks and Spencers.
- It risks many small independent shops in town centre and market closing down, as has happened in other towns with large Tesco stores and thus losing unique market town feel of Leighton-Linslade.
- There will be big increase in traffic with possibly traffic lights on West Street – this could choke town through increased congestion.
- Tesco is on wrong side of town – most of population is on other side of town centre and new housing growth will be in east of town.

Petition in favour of proposed extension to Tesco store

Petition (organised by Tesco) takes form of identical letter signed by **89** individual supporters. Letter states that:

- Would like to pledge support for extension which would improve range of goods that will be available and will make store more customer friendly.
- Support also creation of more jobs for local people, more investment in Leighton Buzzard and better links for pedestrians from store to town centre.
- Strongly urge Council to approve extension plans which will save people having to travel out of town for better choice in shopping

Postcards

Under banner – *NO TESCO EXPANSION* – postcards (submission of which has been organised by I Love Leighton Buzzard and South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth) incorporate following objections to proposed development.

- Shoppers want shopping choice in Leighton Buzzard, not bigger Tesco. Request Central Bedfordshire Council not to approve expansion of Tesco, but to pro-actively lobby for and encourage wider range of shops in Leighton Buzzard town centre.
- 94% of people surveyed by I Love Leighton Buzzard want wider range and choice of shops. Shoppers want variety of shops in town.
- Tesco has openly stated that it will only sell lower range of clothing, if it expands. Shoppers want more choice of better quality clothes shops.
- People in Leighton Buzzard should not need to travel 14 miles to Milton Keynes to have choice of shops for clothes, footwear etc. Shoppers want to shop locally.

Postcards have been received from residents of following addresses.

Albany Road – 13, 19, 25, 34	Laburnum Court – 36
Appenine Way – 46	Lammas Walk - 4
Aquila Road – 12	Laurel Mews – 6
Ascot Drive – 27	Leedon Furlong – 9
Ashwell Street – 41, 46	Lime Grove – 21
Badgers Brook – 17	Lindler Court – 39
Barleycorn Close – 2	Linwood Grove – 54
Bideford Green – 107, 148, 245, 410, 420	Magnon Court – 19
Billington Road – 7	Manor Court – 8
Bramble Close – 6	Market Square – 25
Bridge Meadow, Leighton Road - 6	Marley Fields – 107, 145
Brook Street – 26	Meadow Way – 139, 141, 151, 175
Brooklands Avenue – The Orchards	Melfort Drive – 55
Brooklands Drive – 32, 114	Mentmore Gardens – 7
	Middle Green – 10

<p> Brookside Walk – 26 Broomhills Road – 8 Bushell Close – 24 Byford Path – 6 Byford Way – 11 Camberton Road – 45 Capshill Avenue – 20, 24 Carlton Grove – 10 Centauri Close – 2 Cetus Crescent – 40 Chelsea Green – 29 Chiltern Gardens – 14 Church Avenue – 17 Church Road – 17 Church Street – 14, 53, 78 Clarence Road – 124 Columba Drive – 32 Coniston Road – 39a Copper Beech Way – 2, Shepherds Maze Corbet Ride – 41, 64 Cormorant Way – 81, 97 Cotefield Drive – 107 Crossway – 6 Danes Way – 31, 52, 57, 75 Derwent Road – 60, 66, 92 Dimmock Close – 5 Dove Tree Road – 12 Draper Way – 12 Dudley Street – 31, 43, 52 Esmonde Way – 25 Finch Crescent – 34 Garden Leys – 14, 16, 26 George Street – 8, 41, 57 Gibson Drive – 69 Grange Close – 69 Grasmere Way – 16, 46, 280 Greenhill – 11 Grove Road – 3 Grovebury Road – 15 Harcourt Close – 8, 23 Harrow Road – 27, 113, 117, 137 Hartwell Crescent – 24 Hartwell Grove – 2 Heath Court – 31 Highcroft – 7 Highfield Road – 44 Himley Green – 29, 56, 94 Hinton Close – 15 Hockliffe Road – 29, 30, 135 Hockliffe Street – 3, 38, 68 Hydrus Drive – 2 Johnson Drive – 11 </p>	<p> Middleton Way – 48 Milebush – 2a, 9 Miles Avenue – 27 Millstream Way – 6 Monarch Way – 31, 36, 67 Moorhouse Path – 2 Mowbray Drive – 46 Nebular Court – 5 Nelson Road – 13, 86 Old Road – 19 Orchard Drive – 42 Orion Way – 1 Park Mews – 6 Pennivale Close – 31 Phoenix Close – 7 Plantation Road – 51, 92, Woodlands Plover Road – 18 Princes Court – 3, 6 Regent Street – 70 Riverside – 2 Rock Lane – 16, Dormas Roosevelt Avenue – 51 Rosebery Avenue – 4, 47, 48 Rothschild Road – 10 Roundel Drive – 19, 22, 72 Russell Way – 11, 80 St Andrews Street – 15 St Georges Court – 8 St Leonards Close – 30 St Marys Way – 33 Sandy Lane – Sussex Lodge Saxons Close – 13 Shenley Hill Road – 22 South Street – 15, 20, 25, 47, 96 Springfield Road – Springside Hall Stanbridge Road – 125, 132, 138, 174, 176 Stanbridge Road Terrace – 8 Steppingstone Place – 18 Stoke Road – 29, 37 Taylors Ride – 35 The Chilterns – 19, Hollyoaks Cottage The Gables – 13 The Maltings – 42 The Martins Drive – 15 Tudor Court – 9, 26 Vandyke Road – 40, 59, 164 Vicarage Gardens – 1 Victoria Terrace – 5 Vimy Road – 24 Waterdell – 87 Waterloo Road – 7 Wentworth Drive – 11 </p>
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Jupiter Drive – 8, 24, 53, 57, 59	Westside – 7
Ketsrel Way – 39	Willow Bank Walk – 3, 77
King Street – 9, 22	Windsor Avenue – 42
Kingfisher Drive – 4	Wing Road – 93
Kiteleys Green – 33	Woodman Close – 15, 34, 41
Knaves Hill – 72, 95, 135, 147	York Court - 8

<p> Billington – 16 Hillview Lane Bragenham – Ludley Cottage Cheddington – 101 Church Hill, Beechwood Mentmore Road Dunstable – 107 Beecroft Way, 17 Bowland Crescent, 79 Mayfield Road East Bridgeford, Notts – 25 Kneeton Road Eaton Bray – 45 Church Lane, 32 High Street, 6 Lords Mead, 7 Summerleys, 20 The Nurseries, 22 The Orchards Edlesborough – 3 Chiltern Avenue Eggington – Lyna Lodge High Street, Selrose Gawcott, Bucks – Leyland Farm, Preston Road Glasgow – 64 Riddrie Knowes Great Brickhill – 1 Holts Green, 17 Stoke Lane Heath and Reach – 6 Abbey Walk, 15 Birds Hill, 8 Lanes End, 11 Leighton Road, 43 Linslade Road, 22 Thomas Street, 20 Woburn Road Hockliffe – 37 Manor Avenue, St Elmo Watling Street Hollington – Holly Grange Ledburn – 2 Manor Farm Lane Lichfield, Staffs – 52 St Michael Road London – 26 Cavendish Road, 50 Summerlee Avenue East Finchley Luton – 8 Rannock Close Sundon Park Mentmore – School House, The Coach House, The Old Fox 9 The Green Milton Keynes – 1 Beaufort Drive Willen, 15 Chawton Crescent Great Holm, 27 Lammas Beanhill, 17 Stoke Lane Northall – The Cottage Leighton Road Nottingham – 1 Park Mews Mapperley Park Pitstone – 179 Vardley Avenue Romford – 9 George Close Slapton – 19 Horton Road, 35 Horton Road, 40 Mill Road, 3 Rectory House Soulbury – Stapleford Cottage Annexe Stanbridge – 30 Peddars Lane Stewkley – 7 Fishweir, 9 Orkney Close Tebworth – Rowan House Tilsworth – 30 Stanbridge Road Tring – 25 Pirton Road Wing – 32 Chetserfield Crescent, 39 Moorlands Road, 4 New Zealand Drive, 26 Stewkley Road Wingrave – Tudor Barn </p>
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Additional comments set out on postcards include:

- Please halt expansion of this dreadful company that has ruined high streets of so many towns, making them clones of each other – need diversity, not conformity.

- Leighton-Linslade is small market town – should be kept that way; it is so important to retain market town identity.
- Tesco is too big already, absolutely no need for expansion; there is enough choice of supermarkets.
- Proposal will harm local shops, local businesses will suffer – concerned about street market dwindling, shops closing, Tesco taking over.
- Large supermarket does not need to take all trade to kill town centre – taking extra 10% could kill off half of shops.
- Do not want another ghost town – needs central shopping area, not empty one; look at Dunstable, enough said.
- More competition, not less – restricting choice for people through encouraging monopolistic practices is unhealthy.
- Local small businesses are unable to compete with Tesco prices; if small businesses are not supported, town will lose them altogether.
- Tesco is not interested in town's community, only profits.
- Need to keep Homebase – will lose only outlet for decorating supplies.
- Tesco's location between Leighton Buzzard and Linslade causes constant almost gridlock; increased traffic to already congested roads; increased noise to local residents on 24-hour basis.
- Not convinced proposal will add jobs – consider it will only put pressure on jobs in High Street; if Tesco expands, only local people should be offered new jobs – certainly no foreign recruitment.
- Tesco do not use local suppliers.
- Contrary to PPS4 (*Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth*).

Leighton Buzzard Observer poll

Local newspaper, Leighton Buzzard Observer (LBO), has submitted final results of poll of its readers' opinions on proposed development.

Total number of votes submitted via LBO website and on forms printed in newspaper:
1,108

Votes in favour of proposal: 188 – **17%**

Votes against proposal: 913 – **82%**

Undecided: 7 – **1%**

These figures may be broken down as follows.

LBO website vote

Votes in favour of proposal: 153 – **24%**

Votes against proposal: 466 – **75%**

Undecided: 7 – **1%**

LBO printed forms

Votes in favour of proposal: 35 – **7%**

Votes against proposal: 447 – **93%**

Additional comments:

Tesco's fall-back position

It should be noted that Tesco does not need to construct the proposed store extension in order to sell comparison goods from the Vimy Road site. The company owns the Homebase store and the land on which it stands and could, therefore, use the Homebase store for retailing when it becomes vacant. The purpose of the current application is to enable Tesco to provide an enhanced range of both convenience and comparison goods all under the one roof.

A condition imposed on the original 1990 permission for the Homebase store restricts the range of goods that can be sold from the unit to the following.

Paint, Woodcare, Decorating accessories, Wall coverings, DIY tools, Timber, Building products, Insulation and double glazing, Electrical, Plumbing and heating, Car care, DIY hardware, Shelving and storage, Home security, Kitchens, Bathrooms, Wall tiles, Flooring, Dining and occasional furniture, Bedrooms, Garden furniture, Garden chemicals and fertilisers, Horticultural livestock, Outdoor buildings such as conservatories, Garden tools, Home textiles and furnishings, Lighting, Housewares, Confectionery, Books and magazines, Pantry.

In 1998, permission was granted to vary the subject condition to allow the occupiers of the Homebase unit to sell Building, Plumbing and Decorating materials and Power tools related to DIY activities, Garden centre products and sundries, Flat pack furniture, Floor coverings, Soft furnishings.

The principal omission from these lists of goods is clothing. To sell clothing in the re-branded Homebase unit, would require a further variation of the subject condition. It may be difficult to resist such a proposal, given that shoppers expect to be able to purchase a range of clothing from the larger supermarkets such as Tesco, Sainsbury and Asda.

It is important to note also that the sales area of the Homebase store is **3,821m²**. The existing and proposed comparison net sales area in the Tesco store would be **1,480m²**. Accordingly, the demolition of the Homebase store and the erection of the proposed extension to the Tesco store would result in a net loss of comparison sales area at the Vimy Road site of **2,341m²**.

Section 106 Agreement

Since the Main Agenda report was completed further details of the proposed Section 106 Agreement are available for consideration.

The public realm enhancement beside the Leighton Road frontage is likely to cost in the region of £200,000.

Aside from the new zebra crossing proposed for Leighton Road, the sustainable transport initiatives within the vicinity of the site should include improvements to the pedestrian environment along the southern side of Leighton Road. Here there are 8 service roads and the proposed works would involve raising the footway to afford pedestrians obvious priority at these junctions. In addition, the possibility of widening to 3m the existing link between the canal towpath and the car park should be investigated. This would involve British Waterways land.

A financial contribution of £10,000 would be made towards the installation of Real Time Passenger Information signage near the store entrance.

A financial contribution of £125,000 would be made towards the provision of a part-time or full-time Town Centre Manager.

A financial contribution of £75,000 would be made towards improvements to the appearance of shopfronts and pedestrian links within the town centre.

A financial contribution of £35,000 would be made towards public art.

The question of how to secure the provision of the proposed canalside café/restaurant is under consideration. The new building is likely to be occupied on a franchise basis; it would not be a Tesco business. If Tesco was required to construct the building to 'shell and core' and then failed to find an occupier, it could remain vacant for some time. If it then attracted vandalism, it would become an eyesore, thereby detracting from the public realm enhancement and the appearance of the canalside.

Appendices

Copies of the following documents are appended to the Late Sheet:

- The appeal decision dated March 2003 in respect of planning application reference SB/TP/2000/0401.
- Letter dated 15th July 2011 from Charlie Hopkins, Planning and Environmental Consultant (on behalf of South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth).
- Comments dated 15th July 2011 from Colin Ashby (on behalf of I Love Leighton Buzzard).