

Darren Nicholson

From: Pat Staples [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 October 2010 18:20
To: planning
Subject: Sainsbury application at Abbey Mill Bishops Waltham

Dear Sirs

I have already sent one email objecting to this application but now I have read the Retail Assessment commissioned by WCC from Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners I wish to add to my previous comments.

I think the loss of "one or two" independent retailers from the High Street, as well as the loss perhaps of one of the Co-ops, which the Lichfield Assessment expects, is too high a price to pay for an extra Sainsbury shopping opportunity in the area.

These "one or two businesses" are real people, who have maybe traded all their lives in Bishops Waltham, and maybe are carrying on a family business that has been here for several generations. They are part of the history and culture of Bishops Waltham.

Small businesses trade on a knife edge - a drop of 10% of their turnover would be the end of them, and their personal financial loss, would be a greater loss to the community because it would mean that the ownership of the town would be gone. Sainsbury could not, would not even want to compensate for that.

For example, the Post Office needs the sale of stationary and telephone top up cards to survive, so it will not survive Sainsbury selling these items too.

It is short sighted of those who say we need lower priced shops in Bishops Waltham, or that if traders cannot compete on price with Sainsbury they deserve to go. Anyone who wants to shop at an impersonal supermarket, not for the pleasure of shopping, but for the lowest common denominator of price and quality, they can do so already at Hedge End or Fareham.

But if they prefer personal service, a pleasant conversation while they wait in a short queue, goods specially selected and prepared for them, the assurance of local produce with truly low food miles, a short walk from home or a small central Bishops Waltham carpark, the social intercourse en route in the town, instead of the alternative of trekking your trolley miles accross a huge car park packed with cars and unhappy people, or as in the proposed Abbey Mill Sainsbury, a descent into an underground car park with glaring lighting and the difficulty of parking up against stone pillars, and this after waiting in a long queue at an impersonal checkout, with the stress of unpacking and packing your goods into the trolley as fast as you can, then at present they can still find it in Bishops Waltham.

I defy anyone to say they actually enjoy the Sainsbury shopping experience; its just a necessary chore, to be got over and done with and away from, back home as soon as possible.

The idea that anyone would make a linked shopping trip into Bishops Waltham High Street after taking all their shopping down into the underground car park, is a joke.

The people who think a Sainsbury will be good for Bishops Waltham have either not understood what they will lose, or they have been taken in by the Campaign being conducted by the PR company of Gerald Knight which even by providing sae's for potential supporters has only reined in 250 or so letters of support, against the 2000+ Objectors who paid for their own postage.

Once the independent traders have closed, the retail premises in Bishops Waltham will be taken up by service industries, charity shops, chains, and tourist businesses, all well and good whilst they are part of a true retailing mix, but on their own, they will not constitute a real town any more. There will be no markets, no fairs, no retailing/social events organised by traders; Sainsbury will not provide them.

I remain unconvinced that the new surgery at this site will be as good as people expect it will be. Great play is made of the provision of car parking at the new surgery, but it will be underground, and as far to walk to the surgey as it is at present to walk from Lower Lane carpark to the existing surgery. And people who at present

are able to walk from their homes in Bishops Waltham to Lower Lane surgery, will find it a long walk to Abbey Mill.

I have already in my previous Objection cited the increase in commercial and domestic traffic on Bishops Waltham's roads that Sainsbury will bring, the paucity and ugliness of the actual design of the proposed Sainsbury building, the incongruity of a supermarket situated next to our Palace Ruins, and the damage to the Environment and the two Ponds that it will undoubtedly do.

I hope The Planning and Development Committee will do the right thing by Bishops Waltham.

Pat Staples
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