

S104/1239

APPENDIX

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SAINSBURY DISTRICT COUNCIL
Review of Proposed Extension to Tesco Store, Southampton Road

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The Tesco Store has been subject of various applications for an extension of the scale currently envisaged, although based on the Applicant's latest submission the current proposals envisage a higher proportion of convenience goods sales floorspace.
- 5.2 Various supporting retail assessments have been prepared by DPP in respect of these applications, which have been the subject of extensive analysis by MVMWYG and more recently CBHP. In each case these assessments concluded that the Applicants had failed to demonstrate a convincing need for the extension and compliance with the sequential approach, in particular having regard to the ongoing proposals to redevelop the city centre Sainsbury's Store as part of The Maltings scheme.
- 5.3 The District Council has recently approved planning permission for a range of works comprising improvements and modest extensions to the store under its delegated powers. More significantly, in September 2003 the Council issued a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development for the creation of a mezzanine floor comprising circa 1,540sq. m net sales floorspace at the store.
- 5.4 National policy guidance sets out four key tests; need, sequential approach, impact and accessibility by alternative means of transport. The sites accessibility and other transport issues fall outside the scope of our review, but is an important issue which the Council needs to address.
- 5.5 The DPP need assessment employs generally up to date reliable data sources, but is based on 1999 survey data which has been further adjusted by DPP. We consider this data may be out of date, and we would need to verify the raw data and assumptions used by DPP before we could accept this analysis.
- 5.6 Notwithstanding this and other caveats, the DPP Analysis suggests that the Tesco Store, in particular, is overtrading to a significant extent, which is corroborated by evidence of congestion and overcrowding. This is confirmed by our own observations. While we have some reservations concerning the capacity figures predicted by DPP we are satisfied there is likely to be sufficient capacity to support both the Tesco extension and planned redevelopment of Sainsbury's in The Maltings.
- 3.37 The Maltings represents a sequentially preferable site which DPP conclude is suitable, viable and available for new foodstore development and which will contribute to meeting identified needs. In determining the weight which it attaches to this opportunity in determining the Tesco proposals, the Council will need to consider the sites suitability, viability and availability within a reasonable timescale, and the extent to which it will meet the identified needs of the area. However, at this stage on the evidence available we conclude there may be sequentially preferable sites which should be developed first before allowing the extension of an out of centre superstore.
- 3.38 The Tesco extension and Sainsbury's proposals are likely to have an impact on Tesco's existing city centre store, and we consider the current and future trading performance of this store requires further consideration. Equally, we would be concerned that at any prospect that the Tesco extension could undermine retailer/investor confidence in The Maltings, although in capacity terms there appears to be scope for both developments.
- 3.39 While our review of retail policy issues indicates the current proposals may be contrary to the provisions of the sequential approach, and likely to lead to some impact on the city centre and in particular its foodstore provision, the 'fallback' position secured by Tesco is an important material

consideration. In practice Tesco's ability to develop a mezzanine floor, providing a comparable level of additional floorspace which would not be subject to any controls on the range of goods sold would be likely to give rise to at least comparable impact considerations.

- 5.7 We consider the 'fallback' position secured by Tesco represents an important material consideration, to which the District Council should give some weight. In particular, the District Council will need to consider carefully the benefits which may accrue from imposing effective conditions on the range of goods sold within the store, preclusion of any subsequent development of a mezzanine floor at the existing store, and the potential to secure contributions to approve the accessibility of the store towards the provision of Park & Ride facilities on the adjoining site in accordance with the Local Plan Strategy
- 5.8 Adopting their 'fallback' position, the Applicant would be likely to achieve substantially the same increase in sales floorspace, with the consequence that the proposal would have substantially the same impact and overall effects as the extension, without the provision of