

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes following which the Cabinet Member may speak in response. It shall then be moved and voted on without discussion that the deputation be thanked for attending and its subject matter noted.

(i) Deputation concerning London Road.

Ms Christina Summers (Spokesperson)

“As you will know proposals by developers, St James’s Investments, for London Road publicised in the summer of last year include a 3-storey Tesco Superstore incorporating a hundred thousand square foot of food and non-food retail space, a car park of at least 950 spaces and other retail, commercial and residential development. The developers’ own consultation never asked the community whether or not they would like a Tesco store or car park.

Another London Road, a voluntary group of local residents and stakeholders, however, continually consult with the public using hand delivered leaflets, street stalls, one line feedback and comments on Facebook and to their email address and hosted a drop-in meeting in July last year, which alone attracted 150 people in just two hours. We ask what people like and dislike about London Road and what they want and don’t want in the future. The vision that emerges is of a vibrant, diverse shopping street with interest and character, less traffic and more pedestrianisation and greenery, a thriving open market, arts and community facilities and a secure base for creative, local businesses. Many say that with its four existing supermarkets London Road does not need a fifth.

Another London Road has today, as you know, submitted a petition signed by 1,067 people. We can also report that our Facebook group has 536 members and our on-line mailing list has 270.

Most people agree that improvements to London Road are needed and it is easy to assume that the increase in shoppers coming to the area for the new store will benefit existing shops and businesses but with this all in one model shoppers are effectively encouraged to drive to the store, do all their shopping under one roof, then drive straight home again and many local traders fear this is inevitable.

Statistically, since Tesco gets £1 in every £8 of all retail sales they are able to sell almost anything they choose. Those traders on London Road selling groceries, bread, meat, books, newspapers, DVDs, consumer electronics, mobile phones, clothing and at least 18 other goods or services within 500

metres of the proposed new store will see direct competition from this retail giant.

When a supermarket opens its competitors' shops close because they cannot compete on price and there is a net job loss, as has been the case in Hove following the 2003 Tesco superstore opening. The importance of small shops to local jobs is reinforced by the council's very own high profile 'buy local' campaign which stresses how local shops and producers are a vital part of Brighton & Hove's local economy and its unique character and diversity.

St James's Investments' proposals are in direct conflict with the council's London Road Central Masterplan. Their plans would involve demolishing New England House with no clear provision for those small businesses currently occupying it. The new car park is clearly aimed to encourage more people to drive to the London Road and can only serve to worsen congestion and air quality and no amount of flow improvement can hide that. Furthermore, the council's retail study 2006 recommends that, and I quote, 'proposed development should be of a scale appropriate to the function of the town centre'.

We have got three requests please to put to the council.

Firstly, we ask Councillors to recognise that there is considerable feeling against the current St James's Investments' proposal and to acknowledge the validity of and support for an improved London Road which does not include a new supermarket or car park.

Secondly, we call on the council to accept the evidence that a new supermarket in London Road is highly likely to result in a net job loss and bring about the closure of existing small shops which the council is so keen to support. We have also asked for acknowledgement that it puts the historic open market very much at risk."

(Appendices attached at following this document).

**RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR TED KEMBLE, CABINT MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT & MAJOR PROJECTS
Provided at the meeting of the Full Council on 29 January 2009.**

"Brighton & Hove City Council has indeed written up and has consulted widely on a Supplementary Planning Document for the London Road Central area. This document will set out the council's planning policy for the area but council has been made aware by St James's Investments that they will not be submitting any proposals for the area until the Supplementary Planning Document has been published and adopted.

All proposals that come forward from whatever source for any development within the area will be assessed against the prevailing planning framework.

The draft Supplementary Planning Document is currently being finalised in response to the information received from the consultations and conducted as part of the process for preparing the document. The draft SPD will be

published for public consultation in spring 2009. Could I ask you to ensure that your organisation takes a full and active part in the consultation when it is released. I am sure you can appreciate that I can't comment on any potential planning application."

