

Ack

PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

RA/SD.

27 OCT 2010

RECEIVED

Sent: 26 October 2010 15:29
To: Planning
Subject: Welwyn Hatfield Council Online Planning - Comment

Application Number: N6/2010/2055/MA - *FORMER SHREDDED WHEAT FACTORY*

Name: [REDACTED]

Address: 14, Guessens Road, Welwyn Garden City Comment Type: Object

Comment: Proposed Tesco Development. Planning Application No: N6/2010/2055/MA I am writing in order to oppose the plan submitted by Tesco's to build a supermarket on the East side of the railway on the old Nabisco site.

I object strongly to the proposal for the following reasons:

1. The whole concept is wrong. The Garden City was planned round the idea of one compact town centre and a ring of neighbourhood shopping centres. Welwyn Garden City still attracts visitors from all over the world and we have a duty to safeguard our heritage.

The Tesco plan goes against the Garden City concept in seeking to establish a new retail centre on the East side of the railway, divorced from the town centre. Because of this separation I believe it would do irreparable harm to the town centre and, in addition, to the neighbourhood shops nearby – on Peartree Lane, at Woodhall and on Bridge Road East.

2. There is no need for another supermarket near the town centre, but not part of it. We already have Waitrose, which has been recently enlarged, and Sainsbury's, which is in process of enlargement. There is another supermarket, Morrison's, in Panshanger. Another competitor is likely to damage the trade of these existing stores, which does not help the town.

The parlous state of Hatfield town centre illustrates what damage can be done by shopping developments on the periphery.

There is, in particular, no need for another large Tesco's, with 2 that I know of close by - at the Roebuck in Stevenage and the one on the roundabout in Hatfield. There may well be others. The Stevenage one is certainly easily reached by bus from WGC town centre, so having a car is not a necessity. Welwyn village people also have a Tesco Express in the High Street.

3. Tesco has not produced a plan for the Broadwater Road development which in any way reflects the ethos of the town, with its high architectural standards. Such plans as we have seen appear out of keeping with the Garden City centre, which is, I believe, one of the largest urban conservation areas in the country.

4. Tesco's commitment to anything but a large superstore seems questionable. There seems to be no evidence that the plans for the whole site shown to the public well over a year ago, which included amenities such as a swimming pool in order to attract support, would ever come to fruition. They appear to be “sweeteners” with no substance behind them. If once the food store was built, the remainder of the site could stay undeveloped and it could involve the Council in a long legal wrangle with the main battle already lost. The houses being proposed seem to be unattractive and not in keeping with the Garden City. Detailed plans for the whole site and a commitment to the whole development are needed at this stage as the site is so important. A large supermarket was not part of the council's plan for the Broadwater site, a fact well known to Tesco, before their current plan was conceived and submitted on the 24th September 2010. I therefore urge the Council to ensure that the proposals put before the Planning Control Committee are rejected. There is no evidence to suggest that an additional large supermarket will have anything other than a detrimental effect on the town's existing retailers, large and small.