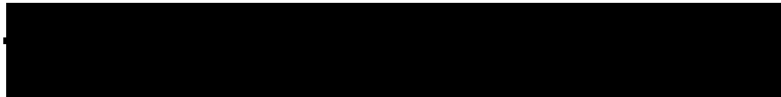


RA



Sent: 02 November 2010 18:28
To: Planning
Subject: Welwyn Hatfield Council Online Planning - Comment

PLANNING
DEPARTMENT
- 3 NOV 2010
RECEIVED

Application Number: N6/2010/2055/MA

Name: [Redacted]
Address: 34 Digswell Road
Welwyn Garden City
AL8 7PA

Comment Type: Object

Comment: I object to the current proposal for redevelopment of this important site because the introduction of a further major food retail unit into this already well-served central area will (if successful commercially) inevitably undermine jobs and services at the existing Waitrose/Sainsbury/M&S supermarkets - thereby generating new economic problems for the town centre that must be set against any supposed benefit from the new store. With Tesco increasing monopolistic power (given its existing megastore just a mile away within the borough) consumers will doubtless also suffer a steady diminution of choice.

The architectural and landscaping of the overall proposals also seem sadly at odds with the Garden City setting and with the aspirations for the regeneration of this site which the Council was avowing when I decided to move into the borough some 4/5 years ago. In particular the vital need to provide a fitting pedestrian gateway into the town centre over the railway is ignored. Commitment to the non-retail elements of the scheme is suspiciously vague and already showing signs of being watered down (eg a minor leisure pool replacing the originally proclaimed 50m swim centre.) I trust that more inspiring and convincing proposals may evolve from the extended planning and design work that I feel is certainly needed before any approvals are given on such a key, strategic development. Action is certainly needed - but for the sake of the next generation of this fine Garden City's residents and visitors it must be the right one.