

DDRA MEETING WITH SAINSBURY'S

THURSDAY 18 JUNE 2009

The purpose of the meeting was to update Committee Members on the Planning Application timescale and to address issues raised during previous discussions. Main outcomes were :

- Actual size confirmed as 29,000+sq ft, not 26,000+ as some releases had suggested. Apology for apparent misinformation; some sources had quoted the higher figure, which included till space, others gave the lower figure, which did not.
- Planning Application expected mid-August, with consultation to begin early to mid September.
- Architects had responded to residents' design concerns with modifications to frontage and materials.
- Traffic calming measures should result in speed reduction between Forest Road and Station Approach. (Details below).
- It was suggested that there would be no deliveries between 11.00pm and 6.00am. Delivery vehicles to be GPS controlled and delivery area to have permanent manager to ensure single vehicle arrivals, with barrier lifted at appropriate time. No on-road waiting to be allowed. Visibility and engine noise to be screened by green planting and a wall.

Sainsbury's made the point that further 'fine tuning' of the application was expected before submission.

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DDRA Committee's conclusions were that :

Eventual development of the site in some form is inevitable and is desired by most residents, although many will retain the view that the store is larger than is required for local needs.

Sainsbury's had clearly worked hard on design and highways improvements so that the scheme was visually a great improvement on the original, although acceptance of the modern design is bound to be a matter of individual taste. Knowing that Sainsbury's are not interested in a smaller development we fear that if this development is successfully resisted **in its totality**, there is little prospect of any development in the near future. We cannot assume that a development in the longer term would be better than the current offering.

Although assured by Sainsbury's that the traffic estimates appear to make the development feasible we have not seen any evidence to reassure us on this and we cannot see a way of mitigating any problems which might occur. We are concerned that at times of 'traffic stress' access to the doctors' surgery could be impaired.

On traffic calming, at a meeting with council staff on site in February we were pleased by their favourable response to our suggestion that the dual carriageway be reduced to single, and this now appears as a firm proposal. The council also proposes to increase pedestrian crossings from two to three, one of which will be a controlled crossing. We believe that these measures, in addition to a number of others, will be effective in reducing speeds. A spin off from this will be the creation of additional public space between Station Road and the store.

Broadly speaking we welcomed the fact that Sainsbury's have considered the concerns raised by DDRA and individual residents and that they appear to have tried to accommodate our wishes, subject to their own commercial needs. When the full Planning Application is published we will draw the Council's attention to any areas which still concern us and ensure that these are given due consideration. Then, if planning permission is granted, we can only wait until the store is open and doing business before we can judge the full impact on local life. We made these thoughts clear at the meeting and Sainsbury's assured us that their interests would not be served by alienating potential customers.
