

***TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT, 1990***

**CALLED IN PLANNING INQUIRY – APPLICATION BY  
SAINSBURYS SUPERMARKETS LTD**

**Site at McMullens Brewery Site, Hartham Lane, Hertford, SG14 5QA**

**Commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009**

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY REFERENCE:  
3/08/1528/FP**

**PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE:  
APP/J1915/V/09/2101286**

**SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE OF  
ROB JEPSON, BEng, CEng, MIHT**

**ON BEHALF OF HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
AS THE LOCAL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY**

County Hall  
Pegs Lane  
Hertford  
SG13 8DN

Sept2009

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 My name is Robert Alan Jepson. I am the Area Highways Development Control Manager in the Environment Department of Hertfordshire County Council. I am responsible for dealing with the transportation implications of development proposals in the East Herts and Broxbourne areas.
- 1.2 My evidence sets out the views of HCC as Highway Authority on the adequacy of the proposed access arrangements and the impact of the proposed Development on the operation of the local road network.
- 1.3 HCC recommended refusal of planning permission for a number of highway related issues including adverse impact on safety, congestion, and inadequate proposals to mitigate the impact of the Development.

## **2 Development Impact**

- 2.1 Peak hour congestion currently occurs at the Old Cross junction during the AM, PM and Saturday periods. Increased traffic volumes attracted by the proposed Development through the Old Cross junction will increase congestion, traffic queues and generate peak hour spreading leading to longer periods of the junction operating over capacity.
- 2.2 It is clear that the impact of this Development is significant and adverse whether you consider the scenario promoted by SSL using average trip rates reduced by 15% or the scenario suggested by HCC using average trip rates.
- 2.3 The implications of increased queuing and peak hour spreading at the Old Cross junction include:
  - a. Increased delay, journey time and general disruption across the general highway network.
  - b. Impact on the reliability of bus services causing disruption and a downward trend in reliability and hence patronage of bus services.

- c. Increased risk of accidents.
- d. Increased rat running through residential areas.

2.4 The impact of this Development on the highway network is contrary to policy in PPG13, East of England Plan, East Herts Local Plan and the LTP.

### **3 Methodology Used to Assess Development Impact**

3.1 The whole methodology of the TA in assessing the proposed Development is overly optimistic leading to an analysis with unrealistically low traffic predictions. The combination of analysing the Development's impact with high pass by/diverted trip distribution percentages, lower trip attraction rates and excluding future growth gives an unrealistic underestimate of the impact of the Development. Whilst some of these combinations may occur periodically, for all three reduced circumstances to occur on a regular basis is unrealistic.

3.2 In addition to the general modelling scenarios, SSL has also provided outputs optimising the TRANSYT model. The use of optimised TRANSYT model results is not acceptable and is considered to be an inappropriate use of the modelling process, which has produced unrealistic results. Optimisation of the signals has been applied to reduce queues at the Old Cross Junction. Added to the issues raised in paragraph 3.1 above, this analysis adds more optimism to SSL's assessment of the proposed Development.

### **4 Accessibility**

4.1 It is noticeable that no provisions are suggested for the extension of bus services or upgrade of nearby bus stops. If the Development is permitted these measures are required to be included to try to encourage modal shift away from the car.

4.2 The bus station is over 400m from the entrance to the store and other nearby bus stops are also a considerable distance from the entrance (over 290m) for those carrying any heavy amounts of shopping. The site is has limited accessibility by

public transport contrary to policy in PPG13, East of England Plan, East Herts Local Plan and the LTP.

- 4.3 The proposed Development will cause significant problems for pedestrians wishing to cross the Hartham Lane junction and Old Cross due to longer wait times and a need to focus on an increase in a multitude of vehicle manoeuvres.
- 4.4 The impact on pedestrians around the area and the increase in pedestrian wait times would be material and adverse and would be contrary to policy in PPG13 and the East of England Plan and East Herts Local Plan policy TR1.
- 4.5 The draft Travel Plan is not acceptable and as submitted is contrary to policy in PPG13, East Herts Local Plan policy TR4 and DfT good practice guidelines.

## **5 Safety Implications**

- 5.1 The proposed intensification of use of this area by articulated vehicles and the resulting implications on safety would be material and adverse. Even though SSL proposes to limit deliveries between 7pm to 7am, Hertford has a busy evening economy with numerous pedestrians visiting restaurants and public houses during the evening.
- 5.2 Pedestrian counts indicate that this is a popular route for pedestrians who will be put at risk by the introduction of use of large articulated vehicles no matter what time of day.
- 5.3 In addition to pedestrian safety, vehicle collisions will also be a specific issue even if deliveries are made to avoid the peak periods. The constrained highway network around this area is not appropriate for articulated vehicle use.

## **6 Alternative Site Uses**

- 6.1 Even though this application should be considered on its own merits, basic options in relation to alternative site uses have been explored in the TA. There are significant differences in trip rates and flow profiles for various development types

which could be considered in more detail. The flow profile of a supermarket is significantly higher than alternative uses and lasts throughout the day (high rates continue from 10am to 7pm).

- 6.2 If this site was developed for an alternative use such as residential, B1, small scale retail (or a mixed development comprising such elements), the highway safety concerns in relation to articulated heavy goods vehicles would be unlikely to arise and the impact of additional congestion around the Old Cross junction would be reduced.

## **7 S106 Provisions**

- 7.1 Whilst there are a number of positive suggestions and enhancements that would be delivered through a s106 planning obligation (e.g. improved cycle links and bus station facilities) concerns still remain over the impact on the highway network and the adverse impact on the pedestrian/cycle environment, on bus services and bus stop operation.

## **8 Conclusion**

- 8.1 The Inspector is respectfully requested to recommend to the Secretary of State that the application is refused planning permission.
- 8.2 However, I would request that if the Secretary of State is minded to grant planning permission, the s106 provisions requested by HCC are required to mitigate the impact of the Development.