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SAINSBURYS SUPERMARKETS LTD

ERECTION OF EXTENSION AND IMPROVEMENTS TO STORE TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL RETAIL SALES FLOORSPACE AND THE RELOCATION OF THE CUSTOMER RESTAURANT TO THE PROPOSED MEZZANINE FLOOR AT SAINSBURY'S SUPERMARKET, HANKRIDGE FARM RETAIL PARK, HERON GATE, BATHPOOL

325677/125250

FULL

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks 3 extensions to the existing Sainsbury store at Hankridge Farm. The extensions are required to enable an improvement in the quality and range of the existing non-retail food offer; qualitative improvements to the existing store allow for the provision of innovative and modern product displays and relieve congestion within the retail and back up areas of the store.

The extensions comprise:- a two storey and single storey extension to the north west of the store 11.9 m wide x 85 m long. The two storey element would be at the front of the store and provide a first floor restaurant with glazing facing the car park. The two storey element be located to the side of the existing store with an additional projection to the rear to provide "back up" areas for the store. The second extension is a single storey extension to the east of the rear elevation of the store where additional back up facilities would be provided and an area of second floor to be inserted at the rear to provide for improved staff facilities (offices canteen etc.). This single storey element would measure 15 m x 25 m. Finally a third smaller single storey extension measuring 18.5 m x 8.1 m is proposed at the (southwest) front of the store. The design of all of the single storey extensions is the same as the existing store. The two storey element would be built in keeping with the existing store although the roof design would be different to ensure that the overall height of the store (excluding the tower feature) is not exceeded. In total the proposal will result in 798 sq m of additional retail floor space and 454 sq m of non-sales floor space. Access and parking will remain unaltered.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY views awaited. COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST no objection. COUNTY PLANNING OFFICER the following planning guidance should be taken into account: Planning Policy Statement 6, Regional Planning Guidance 10 and the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review (1991-2011). This guidance supports new development within Town Centres, in accordance with a sequential approach, to protect and enhance the viability and vitality of town centres. Taunton Deane Borough Council will need to consider the need for the development; that is an appropriate scale for the need; that there are no more central sites for the development; that there are no unacceptable impacts on the town centres and that the locations are accessible. HIGHWAY AGENCY no

objection. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY no comment. WESSEX WATER Foul Drainage:- there is sufficient capacity to serve this site; these proposals seek to build over the existing sewer and have not been approved with Wessex Water. Indeed we would refuse permission for the proposal to build over/near the sewer (rear back up extension) and the proposal would need to be amended accordingly. Surface Water:- storm water should be discharged into the existing system with additional attenuation if required. Water supply; existing links should continue to be used.

PARISH COUNCIL no comments received.

TAUNTON DEANE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE we are concerned about the size of the extension and how this might impact on town centre retailers. We consider that the size of this extension will have a detrimental impact on the goal of Project Taunton to put trade back into the town centre and may indeed keep shoppers out of the town centre altogether. Finally we are concerned that this might set a precedent for similar extensions at the retail park in order to develop their retail activity.

POLICY CONTEXT

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policies STR1 - Sustainable development, STR6 - Development in Towns, Policy 20 - The Retail Framework, Policy 49 - Transport Requirements of New Development.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1 - General requirements, EC10 - Accessibility of New Development - Major Travel Generators, EC12 - Major Retail Developments and Other Key Town Centre Uses, EC13 - Restrictions on unit size and Range of Goods to be sold, EC14 - Modernisation of floorspace.

ASSESSMENT

Sainsburys supermarket is an existing out of town retail store located on the Hankridge farm Retail Park. The applicant has supplied an assessment of the need for the extension; a retail impact assessment; sequential test and traffic assessment (including a green travel plan) in support of the proposed extensions. In summary: -

(1) the supporting information illustrates that the extensions are needed for three main reasons:- to enable an improvement in the quality and range of the existing non-retail food offer; qualitative improvements to the existing store allow for the provision of innovative and modern product displays and relieve congestion within the retail and back up areas of the store

(2) the supporting information identifies Taunton Town Centre as having high levels of vitality and viability as identified in the Taunton Deane Retail Study and the Taunton Town Centre vitality and viability study (2006) and that the proposed extensions will have limited impact on that viability.

(3) It looks at the availability of alternative sites for the enlarged Sainsburys Store in a sequential manner looking first at in town centre and then edge of town centre locations and concludes that there are no suitable sites available. I consider that this has included all of the possible sites including the expansion of the existing town

centre site and that there are no other sites currently available that could provide for the identified needs at Hankridge. In addition the supporting information identifies that the current store serves the Halcon ward recognised as a deprived area and would offer employment to residents of the immediate locality in preference to employees from further a field and that Sainsbury's offer flexible working conditions to fulfil the needs of the local community in that area.

(4) The Traffic Assessment concludes that the proposals will result in a minimal increase in the number of shoppers (2%), that the site is well served by bus services, cycle links and footways, from the local area and that it proposed a travel plan to encourage its staff to use sustainable methods of transport for work based journeys. It concludes that the road junctions have sufficient capacity to cater for the increase in demand and that car parking on site is in accordance with current standards.

I am still awaiting the County Highway Authority's views on the proposal and will attach an amendment dealing with this issue on the update sheet.

The existing planning permission contains no restrictions on the range of goods that can be sold from the site and therefore the only control the Local Planning Authority can have on the goods sold is the size of the premises. In theory the site could change to a comparison goods store (up to 6750sqm including 2231 sq m of non retail floor space at present) that might have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. As part of this proposal Sainsbury's would agree to a condition that limits the amount of comparison goods (excluding health and beauty products) sold from the whole premises to 30% of the range of goods sold from the store and I would propose a condition that limits the total retail floor space to 5869sqm as proposed. If agreed this would restrict the comparison goods to a maximum of 1760 sq m .

Planning policy and Government advice requires additional retail floor space to be provided on a sequential site selection process. This has been undertaken and no alternative suitable and available 4 ha sites identified. Taking account of the Taunton Chamber of Commerce's comments I consider that the impact on the Town Centre has been assessed and is considered to be acceptable. In addition I recognise the advantages from the proposal if the total amount of comparison goods sold from the site can be limited. In this case I consider that the current proposal will result in a reduction of an impact on the Taunton Town Centre vitality and viability.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials, maximum 30% total retail floor space to comparison goods, total retail floor space 5869 sq m, no subdivision of superstore into smaller units, planning permission required for any future increases in floor space within the supermarket.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposed advantages in the ability to restrict the total floor space of comparison goods sales is balanced against the out of town location and is considered to result in a reduction of the potential impact on the vitality and viability of Taunton Town Centre and is considered to be in accordance

with Government Advice contained in Planning Policy Statement 6 and Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies EC12, EC13 and EC14.

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

CONTACT OFFICER: 356467 MRS J MOORE

NOTES: