

**MARTIN
ROBESON**
*P L A N N I N G
P R A C T I C E*

*Town Planning Consultants
Development Advocacy*

**STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

**PROPOSED TESCO FOODSTORE, THE
BRETT WORKS, HADLEIGH, SUFFOLK**

JANUARY 2008

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APPENDICES

- 1. Copy of the ¼ page newspaper advert / flyer promoting the exhibition.**
 - 2. Article from the Suffolk Free Press advertising the public exhibition.**
 - 3. Information leaflet**
 - 4. A3 version of the Public Exhibition Information Boards.**
 - 5. Press clipping of an article in the Suffolk Free Press reporting on the Public Exhibition.**
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Tesco is committed to effective community consultation regarding their development proposals across the country. The company has applied the knowledge and experience gained in the past to its development proposals in Hadleigh.
- 1.2 This Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application submitted to Babergh District Council by Tesco Stores Limited for the erection of a class A1 retail unit comprising 3055sqm GEA, a second class A1/A3 Retail Unit of 142sqm GEA, associated access, servicing, landscaping, relocation of part of the Bridge Street car park and allotments and limited removal of trees and hedgerow. The subject site consists of the Brett Works and adjoining land, Hadleigh, Suffolk.
- 1.3 Previous applications for a similar development but with different vehicle access proposals were submitted in 1998 and in 2003. The application made in 2003 is still pending decision and will be withdrawn upon submission of this application.
- 1.4 This Statement of Community Engagement sets out a programme of consultation and the outcomes of it. This is considered to be the first step in the overall consultation process associated with the planning application. As such, the document will be continually updated to include the feedback from the District Council's own consultation process where it is made available. The result will be a complete Statement that documents statutory and public opinion throughout the application process which can then be used by officers and members, alongside other supporting material to determine the application.
- 1.5 The following section briefly outlines the policy background associated with the need to undertake pre application consultation and the preparation of this Statement. Section three then outlines in detail the programme of consultation agreed with officers. Section four, details the comments made through the consultation process and how the applicant has responded to them.
- 1.6 Concurrently to obtaining public opinion with respect to the proposals prior to the application being submitted, Tesco has also sought the views of District Council officers

and other statutory consultees that are be consulted as part of the application process. Section five of this document identifies the bodies consulted as part of the pre-application process and includes a summary of the feedback received, along with Tesco's response to it.

2. POLICY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Babergh District Council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement in December 2006. The aim of the document is to ensure that all sections of the community are given full opportunity to contribute to the planning process at an early stage. This includes the production of the Local Development Framework and planning applications. The document sets out in detail how this is to occur.
- 2.2 Specifically Section 12 addresses the Council's expectations in terms of pre-application community consultation to be undertaken by applicants prior to submission of a planning application. Paragraph 12.4 states:
- "The Council encourages applicants to discuss their proposals with planning officers before submission, and qualified members of staff are available for this purpose. Appointments should be sought for such discussions. Applicant are also encouraged to discuss their proposals with neighbours."*
- 2.3 As part of the pre-application discussion officers will advise as to the extent of pre application consultation they would expect the applicant to undertake.
- 2.4 In light of the Council's adopted SCI and Tesco's awareness of the need to consult the community, a programme of pre-application consultation was discussed and agreed with planning officers at Babergh District Council at a meeting in November 2006. Both the elements of the pre-application consultation and the groups who ought to be contacted were discussed and agreed. Details of the programme and groups contacted is described in detail below.

3. PROGRAMME OF PRE-APPLICATION COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

3.1 The Brett works and adjoining land is allocated within the recently adopted Babergh Local Plan Alteration No. 2 (2006) for the purpose of a foodstore development. The principle of such a development was therefore decided through the Local Plan process. The Local Plan process itself can be considered to have been the first part of the consultation exercise associated with the development of a supermarket on this site. The programme of community consultation agreed with officers sought to focus on the issues that remain to be resolved in order that a foodstore can be developed on this site. These have been identified as; the design of the store, transport and access and how the development can be accommodated within the surrounding environment which consists of the Hadleigh Conservation Area and the Brett River.

3.2 The community consultation programme agreed consisted of two stages. These are discussed in detail below.

Stage One – Information Briefings

3.3 The first stage of the agreed programme was a series of three briefings, one on each of the topics identified above. These were held as closed sessions to which local stakeholders, agreed with the District Council, were invited to attend. Those invited included:

- Hadleigh Town Council;
- Hadleigh Society;
- Suffolk Preservation Society;
- The Hadleigh Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

3.4 The three sessions, each addressing one of the topics identified above, were allocated two and a half hour slots on 30th November 2006 and the 1st December 2006.

3.5 The groups invited to the topic sessions responded by providing the names of who would be in attendance as representatives of each group. In total, approximately 20

representatives of the groups were present at each of the sessions. A separate meeting took place with representatives of the Chamber of Trade and Commerce. Those present at the topic sessions were therefore representatives of Hadleigh Town Council, Hadleigh Society and the Suffolk Preservation Society.

- 3.6 The meetings were attended by representatives of Tesco Stores Limited including Ed Heppenstall the Development Executive responsible for new store development in East Anglia, Louise Ford, the Planning Executive and Michael Kissman, the Corporate Affairs manager for this region, Tim Gittins the public affairs advisor, Jonathan Adams of Lyons Sleeman & Hoare, architects, Len Almond and Brian Plumb of Boreham Consulting Engineers, transportation consultants and highway engineers, Alex Novell of Novell Tullett, landscape architects and Martin Robeson and Robert Posselt of Martin Robeson Planning Practice.
- 3.7 The attendees at each of the sessions were generally the same and as such an introduction to the process was provided at the first session. This explained the purpose of the public consultation exercise and how the sessions were to be run. Attendees were informed that feedback from the sessions along with the public exhibition would be reported back to the District Council as part of a Statement of Community Engagement. This document would describe the programme of community consultation, feedback from it and the applicants response to the comments made. Following the introduction, each of the topics were introduced by the relevant consultant responsible for that particular element of the proposals.
- 3.8 For the purpose of stage two (the public exhibition) and the topic sessions, two scale models were produced. One focussing on the Brett Works site and a second taking in the wider area including Bridge Street, High Street and other adjoining properties. In addition, a computer generated 'drive thru' was produced to demonstrate what would be seen when approaching the proposed development along the new access road. Along side the scale and computer generated models a number of information boards had been produced. The proposals were explained through use of the scale models, the 'drive thru' and the information boards.

- 3.9 Those present were invited to ask questions during the presentation of the material and proposals. Time was set aside afterwards for this purpose.
- 3.10 The design session ran from 11:00am until 1:00pm on the 30th November 2006. The session relating to the environment, including flooding, ran from 2:00pm until 4:00pm on the same day. The final session, relating to transport and access matters, was held at 9:30am until 11:30am on the 1st December 2006.

Stage Two – Publication Exhibition

- 3.11 The second stage of the agreed consultation programme was a public exhibition. This was held over two days in the Hadleigh Guildhall. The exhibition was open from 12:00pm until 6:00pm on Friday 1st December 2006 and from 10:00am until 2:00pm on Saturday 2nd December 2006.
- 3.12 The public exhibition was widely advertised within the following local papers and news letters:
- The Hadleigh Community News;
 - The Thursday 23rd November Edition of the Suffolk Free Press (see Appendix 1 for a copy of the ¼ page advert and Appendix 2 for a copy of a relevant article detailing the public exhibition);
 - The Wednesday 22nd November Edition of the East Anglian Daily Times (see Appendix 1 for a copy of the ¼ page advert).
- 3.13 Approximately 9,000 leaflets were dropped into the letterboxes of Hadleigh area residents on the 30th November 2006 (see Appendix 3 for A3 version of the Information Leaflet). The leaflet contained a reply paid feedback form asking people for their opinions on the proposals. This could either be dropped off in a 'ballot-style box' at the public exhibition or returned by post. 2,000 flyers advertising the exhibition were also distributed (Appendix 1).
- 3.14 As with the topic meetings the following members of the Tesco team were present to help to explain the various aspects of the proposals and answer any questions as

appropriate; Ed Heppenstall the Development Executive responsible for new store development in the region, Louise Ford, the Planning Executive for the region and Michael Kissman, the Corporate Affairs manager for the region, Tim Gittins the public affairs advisor, Jonathan Adams of Lyons Sleeman & Hoare, architects, Len Almond of Boreham Consulting Engineers, transportation consultants and highway engineers, Alex Novell of Novell Tullett, landscape architects, Martin Robeson and Robert Posselt of Martin Robeson Planning Practice. A large number of the information leaflets were available for those in attendance to pick up and take away with them. Attendees had the opportunity of filling in the feedback form and returning it via the 'ballot-style box' at the public exhibition or alternatively taking it away and returning it by reply paid post.

3.15 The information and display panels used for the public exhibition and accompanying leaflet gave information associated with the development including why it is appropriate to develop a foodstore in Hadleigh, how the layout of the site and design of the building has been approached, how the improved junction arrangements at Bridge Street will accommodate the vehicles attracted to the site and the approach to protecting the riverside environment and flood risks associated with the site. An A3 version of the information boards is contained at Appendix 4.

3.16 Briefly each of the 4 boards contained the following information:

Board 1 – Tesco: Our plans for a new store at Brett Works

- A brief history associated with the promotion of a supermarket on the Brett Works and adjoining land and the subsequent allocation of the site within the Babergh Local Plan Alteration No.2.
- Description of where people are travelling to undertake their main food shop as determined through the results of a recent household survey produced to inform an addendum to the previously submitted Retail Assessment.
- Some of the benefits that a Tesco proposal on the site would bring to Hadleigh including retaining more expenditure locally, generation of jobs, linked shopping trips and environmental enhancement to the area.

Board Two – Designed for Hadleigh

- Site layout including the replacement car parking and allotments lost as a result of the alignment of the access road.
- Design approach including visual material illustrating a number of view points of the site and building itself.
- Information relating to the proposed siting compared with the footprint of the existing buildings.

Board Three - Ensuring excellent access for all

- Description of vehicle and service access.
- Identification of walk in catchment.
- Identification of the roads on which vehicles will travel to visit the store.
- Identification of cycle routes.
- Description of bus services, stops and routes.
- Description of pedestrian links and how these are to be improved.

Board 4 – Conserving the Local Environment

- Explanation of how the environment of the site will be improved through new planting and the creation and enhancement of existing fen and water meadow habitat
- Description of flood mitigation measures and explanation of the extent to which the site is prone to flooding.

3.17 As described above, the exhibition took place at in the Guild Hall at the Hadleigh Town Council buildings. The photos below illustrate the material that was available for members of the public and other interested parties to consider and then ask questions.

