

24 MAR 2015

Planning Strategy, Fareham Borough Council, Civic Offices, Civic Way, Fareham, PO16 7AZ

To Mr David Hogger

I wish to submit my thoughts on the following main modifications to the Fareham Draft Plan presently being considered by you.

Modification  
DMM18 Page 80 Paragraph  
5.163

Submission

I do believe the GVA report referred to within the amendment must be considered out of date. Retail shopping including food retail sites has to adopt new practices simply to stand still. I would suggest the high streets have moved on and changed significantly since the report was published.

I question the need for a food store of the size the council is proposing for the Portchester District Centre. I would suggest the evidence within the GVA Retail report 2012 is no longer current or serves the local need within the present local food retail sector. A new food store of 800-900sq.m net is not going to bring the necessary competitiveness local residents are presently demanding which is why the overwhelming view of residents is in favour of the proposed Lidl development.

Lidl have submitted a planning application to FBC for a food store on a previous retail site at the entrance to the Castle Trading Estate at Portchester with the decision I understand to be made in March 2015.

The planning application from Lidl is for:

Proposed Development

Provision of a new neighbourhood food store (1,063m<sup>2</sup> sales area, 1,506m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area)

A limited range of product lines which encourages customers to shop with retailers at the Portchester District Centre.

Provision of up to 40 new jobs for local residents.

Clawing back effect on leakage of expenditure to other shopping centre outside of Portchester.

The scale of the proposed store is more in tune to meet the shopping habits of the local community and I would suggest more able to bringing about real competitiveness to the local retail food sector, rather than a smaller store the council wishes to see on the Portchester District Centre.

The new Lidl store is supported by the local community for a number of reasons with the major issue being the local food retail sector is dominantly serviced by one retail chain.

Local District Centres have to adapt and change if they are to survive and many are moving to a mix of retail, leisure or units focusing on Community activities. I therefore question the Council's approach for a small food retail unit on the Portchester precinct car park (south) at the Portchester District Centre which will be unable to meet the real needs of the local community who are looking to service their food purchases in Portchester only to find to achieve competitive pricing they have to travel outside Portchester.

It should also be noted a large shop within the precinct shopping centre remained empty for three years before The Portchester Community Association took it over and transformed the double unit into a Community HUB that amidst its many activities and a mass of information for the general public has also free internet access.

Modification  
DMM19 Page 80 Paragraph  
5.164 and Policy Map (Portchester District Centre)

Submission

Is the expansion of the Portchester District Centre really viable when looked at in today's current shopping habits?

Regards

