

DEPUTATION FOUR – REPRESENTATIVES AND SMALL BUSINESS IN
FARNLEY AND WORTLEY

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Could you please make your speech to Council, which should not be longer than five minutes. Could you start by introducing yourself and then Members of your delegation. Thank you.

MS J NANDRA: Thank you, my Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors. I am Jessica Nandra of 8, Blackpool Terrace. This is Joanne St Lawrence and this is Terry Riley from Star Butchers. We are the local residents and shopkeepers of Farnley and Wortley that are opposing the supermarket development at Stonebridge Lane, Leeds 12.

At the planning meeting on August 18th 2011, members of the Planning Panel expressed concerns on the following points. Firstly, the half million pound inducement given by developers for Armley Ward in contravention of current regulations. Secondly, the overwhelming amount of local opposition to development, which included the local Councillors. Thirdly, the levels of pollution, noise and disruption to residents in the heavily populated residential area. Fourthly, in the original outline plan the refurbishment of the mill buildings was prime consideration. In the current plan the supermarket area has been separated and the mill buildings are left derelict, with no plan for future development.

Even while the planning decision was being discussed, developers and Tesco were already in talks with the Planning Department regarding the building of a much larger store, using the development of the mill buildings as an inducement to facilitate acceptance of these new plans. This was confirmed by the representative of Tesco and the developers.

The residents do not feel these concerns were sufficiently addressed and the plans were passed with only three votes after the Chairman informed the Panel that they could not vote against the proposal. We feel that the decision should have been suspended until the concerns of the members of the Panel and the residents have been fully assessed on the points above and on the following grounds.

(a). The long walk through derelict buildings to reach the store entrance for Stonebridge Lane or Silver Royd Hill will preclude walking, making the store almost all car traffic. The local roads of Silver Royd Hill, Stonebridge Lane and Whincover Driver are very steep, narrow roads with dangerous bends and blind corners. They area already heavily used as short cuts and further increases in traffic will threaten the safety of resident. In the short distance of the ring road between the junction with the inner ring road at Bramley and the M621 turnoff at Gelderd Road, there are seven roundabouts, five sets of traffic lights and four pedestrian crossings, every one of them a bottleneck which causes increased difficulties for residents. We cannot find any Executive Board that the extra traffic of delivery lorries, service vehicles, customers to the site has properly been evaluated on the local roads.

(b). Although restricted hours have been placed on deliveries, the noise emissions from 24-hour refrigeration, air condition units, will have to be assessed. No mention has been made of the car park. Houses adjoining the car park are only 30 to 40 feet away, with gardens directly adjacent. We consider the continual banging of car doors, boots, rattling trolleys, revving engines, flashing headlights will be intolerable for these local residents. At the very least we consider that the store opening hours should be restricted and in line with delivery hours that are 8.00 am till 8.00 pm to give residents some time for a normal family life.

(c). If there is a new proposal from Tesco regarding a larger store, residents do not want any inducements or cash payments to be permitted. Any future developments should be considered only in regard to the requirements of the local community with their health and wellbeing considered.

There are also questions of the local shops which are so essential for the Bawn and Butterbowl estates. The very steep nature of the hills that surround the site means that no-one will be able to walk to the supermarket site and those without cars would be totally without facilities if local shops, which are more easily accessible, were to close. This would particularly affect the many elderly people in the area.

We are also undertaking a comparison in prices between local shops and supermarkets and, surprisingly, in the essential things like bread and milk we are finding local shops are much cheaper. In the interests of fair trade and customer choice, we feel the Council should be making a concerted effort to promote local shops rather than another supermarket.

THE LORD MAYOR: Jessica, could you go to your final sentence, please?

MS J NANDRA: OK. This store will impact the local area, leading to the closure of local shops and resulting in more job losses. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move the matter be moved to the Executive Board for consideration.

COUNCILLOR LOBLEY: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All those in favour? (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

Jessica, thank you for attending and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the considerations which your comments will receive and that will happen at a later date. Thank you again for coming and good afternoon.

MS J NANDRA: Good afternoon, thank you. (*Applause*)