

Good Evening....

You have before you an application by Sainsbury's and the Clifton family to request an extension to the previously approved trading hours for the development on 15 High Street Knaphill.

The Planning Department is in receipt of over 360 letters of objection to this submission which gives you some idea of the concern that Knaphill residents have about the application and the impact it will likely have on the local small retailers.

The local independent shop traders are desperately trying to keep their trading numbers up in defiance of the present economic climate. Knaphill has seen many traders close and the residents do not wish to see any more shut down but the arrival of another Sainsbury's store will impact them quite severely and to approve the extra trading hours is likely to rip the heart out of a small and nurtured village community.

I was recently told that when the application was submitted to have the new library sited on where the existing Budgens store, one reason given for approval for that application was that as the Co-Op was now established Knaphill was unable to sustain two small supermarkets.

I wonder what has changed????

However,

There is almost certainly to be a future application for permission to trade in alcohol which will cause further disruption to the local community during these later trading hours. I have no confidence that customers will abide by the signage barring cars from being parked outside the store. And I also challenge the expectation that customers will park on the opposite side of the High Street, these shop fronts are privately owned and may only be used by the public visiting these shops. We won't even consider the public car park at the rear of the Co-op!!! In fact I do believe that as the nature of this shop is to attract the 'convenient' shopper, there is every chance that the pedestrian area outside the store will be used by customers on the justification that they are 'just popping in', it happens constantly when inadequate parking is supplied. Pedestrians will most likely have to make a detour if/when the pavement is obstructed.

That customers of this store parking outside will affect the bus stop, pedestrian crossing and public toilet block all sited within a few yards of each other goes without saying. How will passengers board their buses when the space to do so has a car parked there? There is talk that the pedestrians crossing may have to be moved. This is unacceptable; the crossing was sited at that point in the High Street after much assessment and technical detailing. To re-site it to suit this store's delivery vehicles is unbelievable.

It has to be questioned on the need for the extension to trading when there is a very adequate Sainsbury's store providing later trading hours within a mile of the High Street; it may need considering as to whether a monopoly situation has occurred here.

I do not accept the comparisons given on page 7 to justify the later trading, the stores used to make this case all have adequate car parking outside their stores so that argument I feel is invalid and this is not highlighted but it should be, also those stores do not have any other local grocery stores offering the same produce.

What is another serious cause for concern is that now that S.C.C. has altered their previous recommendation that the access route to the rear of the development was highly suitable to one that states that customers be banned from using the rear space in order to allow delivery lorries adequate space to turn generates the following questions.

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- a) is the previous approval of the application legitimate in light of the Highways report that had been submitted has now been amended?
- b) If this new assessment in the report, had it been available at that time, result in approval being given as there most certainly was a case for the access being questioned, but all debate was closed down by the first Highways report giving it approval!!
- c) I do believe that if S.C.C had done a proper assessment at the time the residents of Knaphill would not be in this unpalatable position.

I would be interested to know what data was used to determine that traffic flow would not be affected by the trading hours of this store. A request to an S.C.C officer was made on 28th May for this information and as of yet this request has still not been responded to.

I will end by saying that the residents of Knaphill are desperately trying to foster and nurture a village community and this store and its request to extend its trading hours has ridden a coach and horses through that aspiration.

Thank you