

STAMFORD CHAMBER of TRADE and COMMERCE

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www.stamfordchamber.co.uk

19 March 2008

Dear Member of SKDC's Development Control Committee

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE 25th March 2008
SO6/1151/69 Wm Morrison Supermarkets plc
SO7/1127/69,78 Stamford Property Co Ltd

We write to object to the above two applications, and to set out the main reasons why you should vote either to defer or to refuse these applications.

MORRISON APPLICATION

In brief, our case opposite the Morrison application is that:

- (a.) the Morrison proposal for a new retail park on the old Blackstone site is a threat to business in the Town Centre, and would undermine the vitality and viability of the historic core of our Town.
- (b.) the Morrison proposal will encroach on the Protection Corridor for the Ryhall Road Link, making impossible the Ryhall Road Link, a possible 2nd Town Bridge, and an eventual Ring Road.

Morrison: Stamford Town Centre Issues

In your Officer comments on the threat to Stamford Town Centre (to be found in the middle of Page 24), they recognise "**Potential impact upon Stamford town centre is a particularly sensitive issue.....due to the fact that the proposal is for a non-bulky comparison goods retail park and that Stamford town centre's shopping function is underpinned by non-bulky comparison goods retail outlets**".

As a sop to ensuring "**that the vitality and viability of the Stamford Town Centre will not be affected in accordance with PPS6**", your Officers are now suggesting limiting by condition the proportion of retail floor space for the sale and display of non-bulky comparison goods to 2200 square metres. However your Officers have no proper justification for such an arbitrary approach, which does not derive from any coherent assessment of need (as already made clear to your Officers in our report to them from MT Town Planning). Your Officers do not indicate to which units the restriction will apply and what goods the restricted units will be permitted to retail.

The analysis of the Morrison Retail Assessment prepared by Peacock & Smith has been undertaken by the Council's Officers and not by its specialist consultants White Young Green (WYG) who prepared the South Kesteven Retail Needs Studies of 2001, 2004 and 2006.

Stamford: The Finest Stone Town in England

The analysis of your Officers cannot be relied upon as providing an authoritative aid to correct decision making in relation to the impact which the Morrison development proposal will have upon the trading future of the town centre of Stamford. It is quite clear that your Officers have failed to grapple with the serious concerns raised by MT Town Planning that the proposal does not satisfy national retail policies in PPS6. Your Officer's work is deficient in its consideration of the key tests of need, scale the sequential test, impact, and accessibility. At the very least the Peacock & Smith Assessment and the work carried out by our Chamber's consultant MT Town Planning should be referred to WYG for validation prior to any determination of the application.

Morrison: Ryhall Road Link Issues

Your Officer comments on the Ryhall Road Link issues are to be found from the bottom of Page 24 onwards of their Report.

1. Your Officers wrongfully assert that **"the proposal does include the commencement of the Ryhall Road link..."**.
2. Your Officers wrongfully assert that **"the protected corridor is not designed to prevent any development in the area but to ensure that the link road is designed into any development proposals. This application clearly demonstrates that the link road is accommodated"**.
3. Your Officers wrongfully assert that **"... It is not considered to be premature to the emerging LDF"**.

In response to these three wrongful assertions we enclose for your consideration a set of six plans, of which 5 are highly relevant to the Morrison application:

- * SKDC 1995 Local Plan Protection Corridor for Ryhall Road Link - Policy T1.
- * Protection Corridor over-layed in red onto Morrison application drawing P-37. Morrison were (or should have been) aware of the existence of this Protection Corridor before they purchased the site.
- * Ryhall Road Link Conceptual Scheme - General.
This illustrates the concept of linking future development on the eastern side of Stamford with appropriate developer funded access to SKDC's Welland Quarter Opportunity Area, Stamford 250 housing, and Gwash Valley Business Park. This concept also provides for a possible future 2nd Town Bridge to the South, and a possible Northern Relief Road to the North. Thus the concept provides for a much needed future Stamford Ring Road.
- * Concept for Stamford 2nd Town Bridge.
This illustrates the only possible route from the Ryhall Road Link to a future 2nd Town Bridge across both the River Welland and the Stamford-Peterborough railway line. Such a bridge would provide an alternative route for traffic currently queuing to use the Stamford Town Bridge. It would relieve traffic problems in our Town, in particular on Wharf Road, and St Mary's Hill, St Mary's Street St John's Street and Red Lion Square.
- * Ryhall Road Link Conceptual Scheme - Detail
This illustrates an appropriately sized roundabout on the A16 Uffington Road, sized to deal with future traffic flows along the Ryhall Road Link component of a future Stamford Ring Road, and the future A16 traffic. Such a roundabout enables the southern part of the Ryhall Road Link, which is also illustrated.

* Ryhall Road Link Conceptual Scheme - Detail (continued)

Not shown on these plan views is the steep limestone cutting in which this part of the Ryhall Road Link will run; this cutting restricts the scope for any re-alignment of the road. If your Officers had required Morrison to submit vertical elevation drawings these points would have been readily apparent. Your Officers seem not to have considered vertical elevations, and seem to have assumed that all the ground in that locality is flat.

In our drawing the Ryhall Road Link and the roundabout have been designed to modern highway standards. It can be seen from this drawing that the use by Morrison of any land within the Protection Corridor is precluded, as all this land is essential for the construction of the Ryhall Road Link and roundabout.

STAMFORD PROPERTY COMPANY LTD APPLICATION

Stamford Property: Ryhall Road Link Issues

Our case against the Stamford Property Company Ltd application is as set out in the Officer Report on Page 36 and 37. We ask that you consider 4 of the enclosed plans which are relevant to the Stamford Property proposals:

- * SKDC 1995 Local Plan Protection Corridor for Ryhall Road Link - Policy T1.
- * Protection Corridor over-layed in red onto Stamford Property application drawing XL1008/100 A.
Stamford Property were (or should have been) aware of the existence of this Protection Corridor before they purchased the site.
- * Ryhall Road Link Conceptual Scheme - General.
This illustrates the concept of linking future development on the eastern side of Stamford with appropriate developer funded access to SKDC's Welland Quarter Opportunity Area, Stamford 250 housing, and Gwash Valley Business Park. This concept also provides for a possible future 2nd Town Bridge to the South, and a possible Northern Relief Road to the North. Thus the concept provides for a much needed Stamford Ring Road.
- * Ryhall Road Link Conceptual Scheme - Detail
Please note that this illustrates the width of the Ryhall Road Link, which is shown designed to modern standards. It can be seen that this precludes the use by Stamford Property Co Ltd of any land within the Protection Corridor.

GENERAL

You have been made aware by our Chamber of the wrongful performance of their duties by SKDC planning officers in the non-saving of Protection Corridor for the Ryhall Road Link. This matter is currently the subject of Judicial Review. Your Council has not disputed that these events occurred apparently in secret behind closed doors, with Officers acting alone, without pre-notifying or consulting with elected members, or the highways authority, or statutory consultees, or normal consultees or the general public.

These actions by your Officers were also contrary to your Council's own Constitution which does not give them delegated powers to vary the 1995 Local Plan.

On these issues your Council appears to be in denial. This non-performance by your Council of its duties will result in serious consequences.

GENERAL (continued)

Our Chamber does not see any particular need for these applications to be determined in a rushed and controversial manner. Decisions which will have huge consequences for the future of our country's first Conservation Town should not be taken lightly, and in the absence of full information and competent advice, neither of which has been supplied by your Officers.

At the Development Control Committee when these applications were last considered, you were formally advised by a representative of our Chamber that if you were minded to grant approval to these applications, then this would be contrary to all your own Councils statutory plans, and those of the Lincolnshire County Council. It was pointed out to you that it is your duty and responsibility to take wise decisions. Officers may propose, but elected members dispose.

In all these circumstances, we request that you vote on both the Morrison and the Stamford Property applications as follows:

- a. to defer both for a site visit to gain a clear understanding of the topography, and to allow your own consultants WYG to validate the claimed retail case.

or

- b. to refuse these two applications, for the following reasons
 - * the Morrison proposal for a new retail park on the old Blackstone site is a contrary to national retail policy and a threat to business in the Town Centre, and would undermine the vitality and viability of the historic core of our Town.
 - * the Morrison proposal will encroach on the Protection Corridor for the Ryhall Road Link, making impossible the Ryhall Road Link, a possible 2nd Town Bridge, and an eventual Ring Road.
 - * the Stamford Property proposal will encroach on the Protection Corridor for the Ryhall Road Link, making impossible the Ryhall Road Link, a possible 2nd Town Bridge, and an eventual Ring Road.

We request that you as an elected member of the SKDC Development Control Committee consider carefully these our objections and representations.

Yours sincerely

TIM LEE

**President
Stamford Chamber of Trade and Commerce**