

M&S

EST. 1884

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marksandspencer.com

Councillor Susan Bence
Arun Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
West Sussex
BN17 5LF

Dear Councillor Bence

Marks and Spencer Plc – Proposed New Foodhall on Land south of New Road (A259) & East of Brook Lane, Angmering (ref. A/23/15/OUT and A/11/17/OUT).

We are writing to you in advance of your consideration of the above planning applications at the Development Control Committee meeting on Wednesday 9th May to emphasise our desire for representation within the proposed scheme.

We are joint applicants for both applications as the scheme includes an M&S Foodhall which would primarily sell our own range of food and drink products as well as a small café. Our aspirations for seeking additional representation in the District in part respond to our customers' requirements to be able to purchase M&S food and drink products at locations which are convenient for them. Nationally, this is enabling us to put new Foodhall stores in locations and catchments that are too small to support our General Merchandise (non-food) and food stores.

This will be our second Foodhall store within the District and we are aware that there is a strong demand for them from local residents who currently have to travel further afield to shop at our stores elsewhere. We recently opened a new Foodhall on Arun Retail Park in Bognor and the proposed store in Angmering will primarily serve Rustington and Littlehampton and the surrounding area and help to reduce outflow from the east of the District.

We have worked closely with both your Officers and our development partners for over four years to ensure that the scheme reflects our requirements. As we highlight within the application submission M&S has a limited capital expenditure programme nationally for our Foodhall programme and strong competition from different locations. This means that if planning permission cannot be secured for one of our proposed Foodhalls we will instead focus on proposals elsewhere in the country where we are confident there are good prospects of a deliverable scheme. Having been seeking a store in this area for some time this is the only location we have identified that meets our requirements.

We are disappointed that despite the earlier support from your Committee for the scheme as well lengthy dialogue between our development partners, the Council and their advisors (DPDS) that this time the Officer recommendation is to refuse planning permission.

We ask that you reflect on the conclusions of DPDS that “...the weight to be given to failure of the applicant to satisfy the sequential test is not overwhelming in the absence of other retail harm” and attach substantial weight to the clear employment and other economic benefits of the scheme. We consider there to be the necessary robust evidence before you to support a positive decision that will not harm the District's Centres and deliver the clear benefits the scheme offers including our first Foodhall store in the east of the District.

We hope that this will lead you to conclude that planning permission should be granted for the development including our Foodhall.

Yours sincerely



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