

**ALISON COOPER
27 Bushby Avenue
Rustington
West Sussex
BN16 2BY**



Dear Sir

RE: OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION NO. A/23/15/OUT

The newly submitted Retail Assessment is inaccurate in many ways, although mainly noticeable in the Health Check section. However, detailed reading brings into question the accuracy of the whole document and the previous documentation which was submitted in 2015, this contained information actually gathered in the 18 months prior to that.

The Retail Assessment Statement does not consider that there has been any material change in circumstances locally since the permission was originally granted before being quashed. However, there are changes to trading conditions locally which have yet to be fully appraised.

Since January 2017, three further main retail units in the village have become empty, historically Rustington has always traded robustly, due to planned specific measures taken by the Parish Council and its stakeholders. However, I would fiercely challenge the contradictory and misleading "National Planning Policy Framework", and specifically paragraph 23 and the point which states:- "allocate appropriate edge of centre sites for main town centre uses that are well connected to the town centre where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, set policies for meeting the identified needs in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town."

I would argue that as we already have out of (or edge of) town centres including

Asda
Morrisons
Tesco
Sainsburys
Aldi
Lidl

In Addition:-

An anchor store in Rustington of Waitrose (which M&S was originally offered)
An anchor store in Littlehampton of Sainsburys

What need has been identified that cannot be fulfilled by the above stores? The only outcome possible is that market share to our existing retailers will be diminished. This will result in jobs being lost in the other stores and so no real extra jobs created.

I understand the need for competition, but this is market saturation.

If as requested A1 Permission is granted, but not so as to be specific to M&S, surely this would also result in the possibility of losing one of the existing supermarkets to occupy this new store. Therefore, a new one could not be deemed necessary.

A completely new Retail Assessment, taking account of the current market value and share, existing jobs in stores as mentioned above, needs to be undertaken, not just a token revised Statement with out of date information in it.

It would also be interesting to identify how many staff were employed initially in new stores like Asda, as I understand they are only employing 50% of the original number of staff, and recruitment is on hold until late June to assess the impact of Aldi.

The conclusion of the Health check in regard to Littlehampton Town Centre which states "the closure of Waitrose and M Local have not impacted on the Town" is beyond belief! Also to say that Littlehampton has a vital and viable Town Centre which displays no obvious signs of weakness cannot surely be believed? Any local person knows the struggle the Town has to promote a safe and attractive offering of shops in and around its centre. I believe this is why it needed a Town Centre Manager?

My other main concern is the point of accessibility, the Travel Plan and Transport Assessment are full of out of date information, specifically regarding the local bus services many of which have been cut and, as some rely heavily on old or new Section106 Agreements, cannot be relied upon to be in existence in the future. A more strategic approach to accessibility of residents and employees to the new out of town developments needs to be adopted.

Rustington saw huge increases in residential parking issues outside houses with the opening of the BMW Changers site, and there is still no bus service, as promised. These were not foreseen and anticipated problems, but ones we are forced to live with.

The new Manor Retail Park has its own parking problems, but local roads are at full capacity during the day for residential parking and this is just storing up more problems for the future.

Yours faithfully


Alison Cooper (Mrs)