

Air pollution stops Sainsbury's store expansion in Sheffield

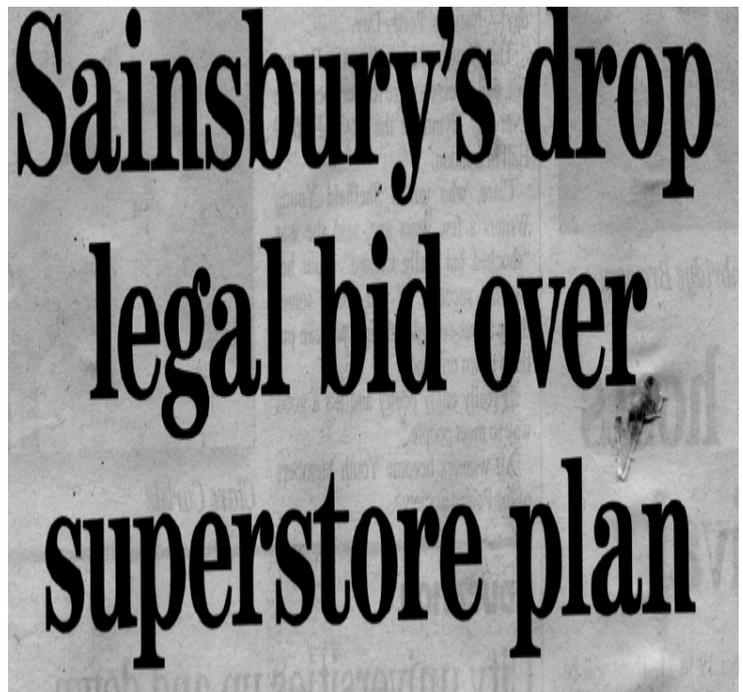
A large Sainsburys superstore in Sheffield applied for planning permission to extend the store. At the Planning board meeting the councillors voted against a planning officer recommendation to accept because of traffic and air quality concerns. The Councillors were convinced that there was an air quality problem because Carter Knowle and Millhouses Community Group working with a local project East End Quality of Life Initiative had been monitoring air pollution in the area using diffusion tubes. This revealed that levels of nitrogen dioxide were higher than the European limit value and would have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of local people.

Sainsburys appealed

The Planning inspector rejected Sainsburys appeal because of concerns about air quality and health along with the way the company did its air quality assessment.

Sainsburys go to High Court.

Days before its appeal is due to be heard Sainsburys withdrew their appeal.



Air Pollution is a Public Health Crisis

Air pollution adversely affects human health, and has recently been estimated to account for up to 29000 premature deaths per year. Poor air quality has short and long term health impacts, particularly for respiratory and cardiovascular health, including increased hospital admissions.

Overall the adverse effects of elevated air pollution are such that it has a bigger impact on life expectancy than road traffic accidents and passive smoking⁸.

The impact on life expectancy and health is unequal, with more effects on the young, the old and those with pre-existing heart and lung conditions. Individuals who are particularly sensitive and exposed to the most elevated levels of pollution, have an estimated reduction in life expectancy as high as nine years.

Community Air Quality Monitoring can help you defeat Supermarket Planning Applications.

In Sheffield local community groups in most parts of the city carry out community air quality monitoring of Nitrogen Dioxide (see www.sheffieldeastend.org.uk) using diffusion tubes. These tubes are sited where people think there might be an air pollution problem they are changed every month. The exposed tubes and a simple log sheet are sent to a laboratory and the results sent back to the groups. It costs about £8.00 per tube per month. The photograph shows Maurice Littlewood of Handsworth Forum changing a diffusion tube. East End Quality of Life Initiative co-ordinates this work in partnership with the City Council.



CKMCG Carter Knowle & Millhouses Community Group
Email: tedandchris@btinternet.com
Phone 07969873775



East End Quality of Life Initiative
Email: neil@sheffielddct.co.uk
phone 0114 2859911
www.sheffieldeastend.org.uk

Sainsbury's drop legal bid over superstore plan

COMMUNITY representatives this week welcomed a decision by supermarket chain Sainsbury's to pull out of legal efforts to secure approval for a big extension to their store in Millhouses.

The company decided against the unusual step of taking its case to the High Court after seeing its proposals rejected first by the council, then by a Government planning inspector. It said yesterday (Wednesday) it was opting instead to "invest a significant sum of money in improving the current store".

Sainsbury's scheme involved increasing the size of the Archer Road premises by 40% to offer a bigger range of products.

The application prompted strong community protests, largely on the grounds of a predicted rise in air pollution arising from the extra traffic. It was argued that nitrogen dioxide emissions were already "at or above" national guidelines in parts of the area.

Campaigners won the support of councillors before winning the argument after a three-day appeal hearing. Carter Knowle and Millhouses

By PETER KAY

Community Group feared it would have "Sheffield's biggest hypermarket" on its doorstep.

Its chair, Ted Gunby, said yesterday that Sainsbury's decision is "good news for the neighbourhood.

"The pollution is actually getting worse, not better as Sainsbury's said it would. With around half the traffic on Archer Road going to and from the store, the last thing we needed was a massive extension.

"We are hugely grateful to those councillors on the planning board who were brave enough to do the right thing. Also to the planning inspector."

Councillors overruled the advice of their officers in voting to reject the Millhouses application. Officers had concluded there would be no major problems if a two-storey extension was built.

The council is now talking to community groups about ways of tackling air pollution, much of it from traffic.

Neil Parry, of East End Quality of Life Initiative, said that the Sainsbury's case was significant "in help-

ing the council see that there were many parts of Sheffield where air pollution is a problem and that planning could have a strong role in dealing with the issue".

He added: "Air pollution is a public health crisis. This is a significant victory for the health and well being of local communities in Sheffield and elsewhere. It means that developers have to think hard about the air quality issues raised by developments."

A Sainsbury's spokesperson said: "We can confirm that we have decided to withdraw the appeal against the inspector's decision to refuse planning permission for our proposed extension to the Archer Road store.

"Although our legal advice suggested that we had a strong case, we have instead decided to invest a significant sum of money in improving the current store.

"The store has been serving the local community for around 25 years and our changes are aimed at modernising and updating the store for our customers.

"Other external improvements will be made to the car park and the landscaping around the site."

What an Air Quality Consultant said

A major supermarket chain had an appeal refused largely on air quality grounds recently. The appeal shows the increasing importance placed on air quality issues as the UK struggles to meet European air quality limit values and local authorities begin to take the matter more seriously.

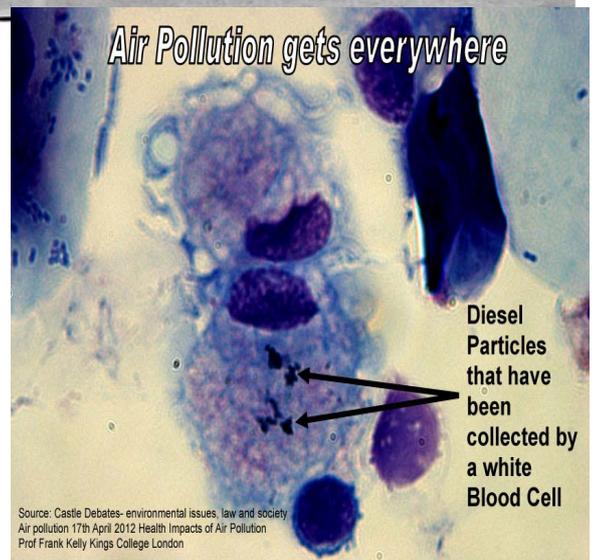
Michael Bull Director Ove Arup and Partners Ltd

The Planning Inspectorate has halted Sainsbury's plans to expand a supermarket in Sheffield after dismissing the firm's air quality impact assessment. It is the first major retail development to be refused for this reason.

<http://theehp.com/2011/09/27/environmental-protection-air-quality-concerns-halt-supermarket-expansion/>

What the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee say about air quality.

"It is a national scandal that thousands of people are still dying from air pollution in the UK in 2011 –and the government is taking no responsibility for this. It is often the poorest people in our cities who live near the busiest roads and breath in diesel fumes, dangerous chemicals and bits of tyre every day. Despite a coalition pledge to meet European standards on air pollution the Government appears to be lobbying behind the scenes to water these rules down." (Joan Walley MP introducing the Environmental Audit Committee Report, November 2011)



Source: Castle Debates- environmental issues, law and society
Air pollution 17th April 2012 Health Impacts of Air Pollution
Prof Frank Kelly Kings College London