

Tesco: Suspend the Planning Application until the Localism Bill Becomes Law!

Written by Rich Hadley

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Tesco should suspend its planning application for an out of town megastore until the Government's Localism Bill becomes law in December, according to the LOTS campaign group. This will give the people of Ledbury an opportunity to consider properly the options for future retail development within the High Street area as well as their long term aspirations for the town

The Localism Bill is specifically designed to allow towns like Ledbury to have a say in the location and size of major retail developments – such as the Tesco proposal - leading if necessary to a local referendum where all the issues involved can be transparently and democratically debated and decided.

Spokesman for LOTS Rich Hadley said:

“Tesco's determination to press ahead with its out of town store plan runs counter to the spirit of

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the Government's impending legislation which will devolve decision-making on important planning issues to the local communities directly affected by them.

"It would be a very positive move if Tesco were now to hold off with its planning application until Ledbury people have had a chance to determine their own plans and priorities for the town, as part of the new Neighbourhood Planning Process.

"Tesco shouldn't be racing to get their plans through before the Localism Bill becomes law, with its stronger protection for market towns like Ledbury. They should now wait until all sections of the Ledbury community have had a proper chance to look at the options for development and decide what's best for the future of their town.

"We are dismayed that Tesco has restated its intention to proceed with its planning application in the face of such widespread concern about the negative impact on Ledbury of an out of town megastore. The proposal will undoubtedly damage the vibrancy and vitality of the High Street as has happened in other market towns. It will also cause many jobs to be lost in the local economy, as well as funnel more heavy traffic through the town's fragile ancient streets."