

Tesco Proposal

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Thursday, 15 September 2011 12:03 - Last Updated Thursday, 03 November 2011 13:58

I have it on good authority that Sainsbury's have been working on their proposals involving the Galebreaker property for two years and have only had to go public before their scheme is finalised in principle, subject to planning permission, because of Tesco's application to build a new store opposite. I reckon that Tesco got wind of the Sainsbury's plans and decided to muscle in with a view to scuppering them, by offering the owner of Ledbury Welding silly money (rumoured to be in the region of £6M) for a factory/warehouse that with industrial use is in my opinion probably only worth in the region of £2M to £3M: enough for the owner to relocate and build a new factory/warehouse to its desired spec, without Tesco's help.

If that's the case then there are three possibilities: either Tesco are not seriously expecting to be granted planning permission, or if they succeed then they'd jump for joy because that would surely mean Herefordshire Council refusing Sainsbury's on the basis that one supermarket out of town is enough. The third possibility, and that in my opinion is not good for Ledbury, is that the Co-Op would not survive if Tesco were to succeed and Ledbury would end up with Tesco, as owner also of One Stop/ sub-Post Office in The Homend, having the monopoly on the sale of fresh produce and groceries in Ledbury. If the Tesco application were refused but Sainsbury's scheme is approved then it's unlikely the Co-op would be affected and Ledbury would have three supermarkets in and out of town to choose from, each serving a particular segment of the grocery and non-food market, also another petrol filling station. In my view, that would do wonders for Ledbury.