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From: Paul Lawrence [mailto:paul.lawrence@stockport.gov.uk]

Sent: 08 July 2011 09:30

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]; Steve Burns; [REDACTED]

Subject: Hibbert Lane

Christina – Steve Burns, our Head of Planning, and myself saw Mark from Walsingham Planning last week. Mark passed us a document and we had a useful discussion.

Since that meeting we have discussed Mark's paper, a version of which I think will go to your Corporation meeting, and offer some comment below.

Can I just stress that these comments should not be taken as any kind of formal response from the Council as Local Planning Authority. They are initial, informal views designed to help you and your Corporation Members agree a way forward in what is a difficult situation. And I hope you'll take these comments in the spirit of our discussions – which is that we are trying to work with you to find a way forward for the College's much needed development ambitions.

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Basically, local and national policy says that sites for development should be in the most sustainable locations and therefore there is always a sequencing to the release of sites. Whilst we acknowledge that the Chadwick St site is less commercially attractive, we remain of the view that it is deliverable and therefore sequentially available. This undermines the Hibbert Lane site very significantly indeed.

I can go into more detail on each of these points if that would help but suspect you don't want your meeting to get bogged down in detailed planning issues. The summary is that we remain of the view that release of the Hibbert Lane site for a supermarket development would be contrary to local and national planning policy and therefore would be almost certain to be refused. Clearly, as we've discussed, this could be a very lengthy and controversial process and even more so if some kind of appeal is involved. Depending on timing it could also trigger local community discussions about new powers under the Localism Bill, which might prove very hard to manage.

I hope this is clear. Perhaps we can speak next week after your Corporation meeting? As I said previously I'm now going to struggle to make the 29th so maybe we can discuss the outcome of your meeting and next steps, including discussion with local councillors.

Best wishes