



Felixstowe Chamber of Trade & Commerce  
Felixstowe Chamber PO Box 168  
Felixstowe  
IP11 7AA

**BY EMAIL**

21<sup>st</sup> October 2011

Dear Mr Rowdon

**Proposals for Development at Walton Green**

Thank you for your letter of the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2011. Please accept my apology if our previous letter was interpreted as an attempt to avoid the questions you raised in your original letter – I was merely offering to meet with you and your committee to address some of the issues in person. We are still very happy to do this but in the meantime below we have addressed your questions from your letter of 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2011.

**New Homes:**

Your point on the amount of housing to be provided is noted; we feel that 200 – 250 homes plus retail and business uses provides the best mix for the site.

**New Food Store:**

Independent surveys of shopping patterns show that many local residents are driving all the way out of town to the stores around Ipswich to do their weekly shop. This results in more fuel costs, more emissions and lost business opportunities for Felixstowe. There is no better site than Walton Green for a store that offers a wider range of goods and that allows local residents to do their weekly shop in Felixstowe.

At the moment, we know people are driving to Ipswich for their main shopping, because it offers more choice. Unless Felixstowe also invests in retail, this pattern is likely to continue. If we can encourage people to shop locally they are more likely to spend money in high street businesses which will benefit the local economy.

A full retail impact assessment will of course be submitted with any planning application and we are happy to share our findings from this.

**Jobs:**

The proposed development would create jobs in a variety of industries. Flexible business units would provide opportunities for new and expanding businesses, helping to diversify the local economy from dependence on the Port. This was something that was specifically recommended for this site by the Local Strategy for Felixstowe, prepared by David Lock Associates. A foodstore would create full-time and part-time jobs. Tesco offers apprenticeships, training programmes including NVQs and Foundation Degrees, it offers management training to facilitate promotions and provides an award winning pension scheme. Tesco also offers the highest supermarket wages in the industry. A new foodstore will complement the retail offer in Felixstowe, creating opportunities for local businesses to capture spin-off trade.

**New Community Facilities:**

Our plans allow for some housing, some business space and some other community uses, but the community uses have not been decided on yet and is the reason why we are consulting the local community, for their ideas and aspects they would like to see in the proposal.

**Relocation of the Rifle Club:**

The Walton Green Partnership has been in discussion with the Rifle club for some time with a view to identifying a suitable alternative site which will provide the club with a viable long time future. Those joint discussions are on-going and we hope further information can be made available shortly.

**Landscaping Improvements:**

Our vision is to create an attractive environment within and around the site, using careful design to slow traffic speeds and prioritise pedestrian movements. The car journeys that the proposed foodstore would attract are already on the road network. Many local residents are driving from Felixstowe, Walton and the Trimleys to the large stores around Ipswich. Because the foodstore would be centrally located, more people will be able to do their shopping on foot, cycle or by bus.

At present, a lot of people commute into Felixstowe to work because they struggle to find affordable homes within the town. The provision of new homes at Walton Green would help to reduce the commuting pressures on the road network.

**Hotel:**

Our consultation so far has shown that some people would like a hotel on our site and others would not. This is still under consideration.

**Felixstowe Town:**

Felixstowe Town Centre has a good retail offer and is an attractive place to shop, especially with the new landscaping improvements along Hamilton Road. A new foodstore in Walton would not stop people visiting the shops in Felixstowe or deter visitors in visiting the town for days out by the sea. It would stock mainly food products, and would not compete directly with most of the existing businesses in Felixstowe and Walton.

As to your specific point about the gateway to the town; we would work hard to ensure that our development is visually appealing from the road as we appreciate the visual sensitivities of the area. This is something we would be happy to discuss at a more detailed stage in the plans.

We are very committed to engaging with the community during the course of this scheme and we of course recognise that the business community will have very specific concerns. We would therefore reiterate our offer to meet with your committee to discuss some of these issues in person.

Yours sincerely

Anna Sabine

On behalf of the Walton Green Partnership