

AH/110064/L0002



18 October 2012

Mrs N Gandy  
Programme Officer  
Bridgend LDP Examination  
Innovation Centre  
Bridgend Science Park  
BRIDGEND  
CF31 3NA

Dear Mrs Gandy

**Bridgend Local Development Plan Examination  
Retailing Sessions**

Thank you for your letter of 15 October and your subsequent email enclosing correspondence of the same date from Sue Jones of the local planning authority concerning the procedure by which representations on convenience retailing are proposed to be addressed.

My client agrees that there is considerable merit in holding a separate session on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012 to consider the convenience goods retail issues raised in our representations.

My client does however share the view of the local planning authority that to elevate this session to a formal inquiry format is unnecessary.

A formal inquiry will introduce the need for detailed evidence within a very short timeframe and the appointment of Counsel, both of which present practical difficulties and add considerably to the costs of both parties.

My client agrees with the local planning authority that the issues in dispute here are capable of being discussed fully and constructively between Mango Planning and the local planning authority's consultants in an informal session such as to give the Inspector a reasonable basis for drawing conclusions.

For the above reasons my client would ask that the Inspector continue to deal with this matter by way of an informal hearing.

My client agrees that to assist with focusing this session on the key issues of dispute, both parties should agree areas of common ground. This is difficult at present given that it appears, rather worryingly, that CACI are not in a position to defend their study upon which the local planning authority's retail policies are founded. We understand that RPS has been appointed to review this study and this is welcomed. We would question however whether they (and, as a consequence, my client) are going to be in a position to report within the timescale set for the submission of statements to the proposed hearing of 9<sup>th</sup> November

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2012 or indeed for us to have reached any common ground position by that date. We would be grateful if you could reconsider whether this date can be moved back to allow this work to be undertaken.

Finally, the local planning authority's letter raises a number of points relating to their case to which we would also like to respond briefly. The first concerns the fact that my client has not objected to sites allocated under Policy REG5. We would note that none of these sites are proposed to be allocated for a main food store and the proposed additional allocation at the South Wales Police headquarters site would be complementary to these allocations.

The second is in respect of the reference made by the local planning authority to 'other sequentially preferable sites'. It would be helpful to understand prior to the hearing which sites are being referred to as preferable and, given that the CACI report does not present such sites, the evidential basis for concluding them to be preferable.

We hope that our comments above are of assistance. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

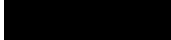
Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Arfon Hughes

**Director**

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M: 

cc. S Jehu Waterstone Estates