

MILNGAVIE TESCO REDEVELOPMENT REPORT

In December 2008, Tesco in Milngavie started consulting its customers on new plans for an expanded store within the existing site. In July 2009, Tesco submitted an outline planning application seeking consent for the development from East Dunbartonshire Council.

The proposed development consists of a new two-floor store on the existing car park and a two-storey car park on the site of the present shop — with a bridge joining the two buildings.

It is of primary importance that the views of local people are taken into consideration when decisions are made. As the planning board has yet to consider this application, residents and businesses in the area are in an ideal position to influence the proposals before detailed plans are drawn up.

In order to improve public engagement in this process, in September and October 2009 I sent out a survey to the 5500 households in Milngavie to gauge public opinion on the proposed development. I have so far received 920 completed surveys; a response rate of 17%.

Participants were asked fifteen questions regarding different aspects of the development of Tesco in Milngavie, based on the outline planning application submitted.

Proposed Building: Clear concerns about size and height

More than half of respondents (56%) are not in favour of the proposed size of the new store, which (9397m² - more than double the existing size). A further 21% are in favour but have reservations, and only 13% are unreservedly in favour of the size.

Two thirds (66%) of people said the proposed height of the new building, 7m above Woodburn Way, is too high. It is very clear from the additional comments section of the survey that respondents believe the expansion of Tesco will dominate the village and detract from its peaceful setting. On building materials, there was a mixed response: 54% of respondents prefer them to current materials and 35% do not.

Transport and Parking: Allocate some of the new parking for commuters

There is deep concern about the potential increased levels of traffic and the already existing difficulty of parking in Milngavie. A clear majority of respondents (67%) drive to the village for shopping, and note that parking provision is not currently good, giving it an average score of 2.5/5. There are also significant concerns about the capacity of local roads to deal with the additional traffic that would be expected.

Therefore a high importance (3.5/5) was placed on Tesco allocating a significant proportion of the new car park to commuters and local residents, helping to ease congestion at Milngavie station.

Pedestrian Access: Access to store needed from Woodburn Way

High importance (3.6/5) was also placed on having a pedestrian entrance to the store on Woodburn Way, to better link the store to the village.

Key Issues: Impact on Village Shops, Environmental & Continuity of Store

If the new development were to go ahead, the most important issues for residents would be the effect on other shops, the environmental impact of the new store, and parking provision.

The range of independent shops in Milngavie is one of its great assets, and people are very concerned about a negative impact from a huge Tesco right next door. People can remember how the village suffered when Tesco was built initially, and how it took the arrival of Marks and Spencer to reinvigorate the footfall in the precinct.

The range of goods offered by the new store came bottom of the list of priorities.

Another issue which needs to be addressed is the ability of the current store to operate throughout any development. Not only would a temporary closure causes difficulty for less mobile residents, especially the elderly, but for the long-term health of the village it would be unhelpful for people to get out of the habit of shopping in Milngavie.

Conclusions

Local people are very concerned about the development plans of Tesco in Milngavie. The majority of the survey respondents shop at Tesco on a weekly basis and hold very strong opinions on the potential impact of the expansion. This survey highlights several key areas that should be addressed by Tesco and East Dunbartonshire Council to ensure that any development is in keeping with the wishes of local residents:

- **Size and height of store:** this should be revised downwards, as the current plans would dominate Milngavie and threaten the unique atmosphere and style of the village.
- **Continuity:** plans should be developed that enable trading to continue through any development, to assist elderly residents and maintain the habit of shopping in Milngavie.
- **Traffic & parking:** the car park expansion should be used to benefit the community by having a section useable by commuters. Junction and roads improvements should be made to accommodate the extra traffic.
- **Integration with the village:** pedestrian access should be available at street level on Woodburn Way, so that Tesco shoppers to use the village and vice versa.
- **Full consultation:** if Tesco wish to continue with this application, they must be prepared to engage in meaningful consultation at each stage of the process, rather than seeing consultation as a one-off event.

Appendix: Survey Results

Awareness of Tesco consultation on expansion

- 69% of people were aware of the Tesco consultation
- 26% of people were not aware of the Tesco consultation
- 5% did not answer

Importance of store continuing to operate throughout development

- On a scale from 1 to 5 where 5 is very important, the average rating from respondents was 3.5.

Frequency of Tesco visits

- 45% visit 2-3 times a week
- 18% visit 4-6 times a week
- 18% visit once a week
- 8% visit less than once a week
- 6% visit every day
- 5% hardly ever visit

Priority issues for a new store

On a scale from 1 to 6 where 1 is very important, the following issues received average scores of:

- Range of new goods it can provide 4.7
- Preserving local building style 3.6
- Access to the town centre 3.2
- Parking provision: 3.0
- Environmental impact of new store 2.9
- Effect on other shops: 2.3

Pedestrian entrance to Woodburn Way

- On a scale from 1 to 5 where 5 is very important, the importance of having a pedestrian entrance received an average score of 3.6

Height of proposed building - approx. 7m above Woodburn Way

- 66% think it is too high
- 19% do not think it is too high
- 13% are unsure
- 2% did not answer

Size of proposed building - 9397m²

- 56% are not in favour
- 21% are in favour with reservations
- 13% are in favour absolutely
- 7% are unsure
- 3% did not answer

Building Materials - timber coloured render, composite timber panels and large panels of glass

- 54% prefer these to current materials
- 35% do not prefer these to current materials
- 11% did not answer

Frequency of village precinct visits for shopping

- 43% visit 2-3 times a week
- 22% visit 4-6 times a week
- 16% visit every day
- 14% visit once a week
- 4% visit less than once a week
- 1% visit hardly ever

Priority village shopping items

- 81% shop for groceries
- 65% shop for gifts
- 53% shop for clothes
- 53% shop for books
- 25% shop for takeaways
- 24% shop for ready meals
- 17% shop for home furnishings
- 5% shop for music and DVDs

Transport to Milngavie village when shopping

- 67% drive
- 57% walk
- 4% get the bus
- 3% get a taxi
- 2% cycle

Milngavie car park facilities

- On a scale from 1 to 5 where 5 is very good, Milngavie car parking facilities scored an average of 2.5.

Time spent in car park/shopping

- 34% stay between 31 mins-1hr
- 30% stay over an hour
- 15% stay between 16-30mins
- 3% stay 15mins or less
- 18% did not answer

Importance of Tesco allocating significant proportion of new car park to commuters and local residents

- On a scale from 1 to 5 where 5 is very important, the average mark was 3.5.

Additional Comments

The vast majority of additional comments reflected deep concern over the proposed expansion of Tesco and the belief that the redevelopment is completely unnecessary and inappropriate for Milngavie as it threatens local business and the atmosphere and style of the village.

Other significant concerns are the increased level of traffic resulting from the expansion and the difficulty that people will have shopping if the store closes down throughout the development, particularly elderly people who are less able to shop elsewhere. Many people also said that if more parking space is created, a significant proportion should be disabled parking and it should be closely monitored to ensure it is not used by drivers without blue passes.

A selection of the comments appears below.

“Not happy about the visual aspect on the village; very unhappy about increased traffic it will generate.”

“Tesco have not publicised these proposals well enough.”

“Store would be an unnecessary eyesore.”

““Tesco town” at port Glasgow shows how little Tesco value complementary architecture.”

“With new housing coming to Milngavie parking spaces will be even scarcer.”

“Store is too large for Milngavie - the current store size is fine. Parking for Milngavie must be improved.”

“New store will destroy Milngavie as a pleasant place to live in.”

“Increase in size seems disproportionate and unnecessary for the area.”

“New store would be an environmental disaster and out of proportion to present village centre stores.”

“VERY concerned about traffic congestion on Woodburn Way and adjoining roads. Much larger store than is required.”

“If I want to buy TVs and fridges I will go to a store that deals with these items not a grocery store. The same as I do not go to Curry’s to buy potatoes. There is no need for such a large store.”

"If we must have this development, improved access from village level is necessary. I see the elderly (and not so elderly) people struggling up the hill through the underpass every day. I sincerely hope East Dunbartonshire Council does not give approval and not just rubberstamp "Big Money" as usual."

"If Tesco as you say will close for up to one year I and, I assume, a lot of other people, especially the elderly, will find shopping very difficult. I walk down to the shop in the precinct then do a big shop at Tesco and get a taxi home. If I have to go to ASDA (Bearsden) the cost of the taxis will more than double and on a pension cannot be afforded."

"Already boycotting Tesco. No No No, absolutely horrified by Tesco's expansion plans on every level. Totally against the project - current store is more than adequate."

"Supermarkets adversely affect small shops and that impacts on customer choice. They have too much power already and that adversely affects farmers."

"Ghastly idea altogether. Think it will have a terrible effect on the village in every way."

"The proposed store will dominate the town and remove the open aspect with views of trees etc. - create a canyon. Whilst Milngavie is certainly short of commuter parking it is not Tesco's job to fill the need. Provision of 'feeder' bus services and a rail halt/parking at Allander is needed."

"The look of this proposed new building and its height will be at complete odds with the village atmosphere. The existing building fits in to the village - the "office block" new design is faceless and inappropriate."

"Quite simply this proposal is just far too big for this area and dominates the old Mill. It will also exacerbate the ongoing problem in the area of litter (plastic bars) and shopping trolleys. Most end up in the river. What is this doing for the environment? The store should never have been built beside the Allander in the first place - very bad planning."

"Enlarging the supermarket at all will continue to depress the quality and viability of local shops."

"Increased height would ruin our view of the village. I am strongly against this development. It will ruin the village. Please fight it."

"I think the proposed new larger store will kill off the precinct - I work in the village, so I am very worried."

"There is absolutely no need for a larger store. What we have is adequate. Their new store will ruin the village atmosphere of Milngavie. The environment has to come before Tesco's profits."

Jo Swinson MP

Tesco in Milngavie Survey



Thank you for filling in this survey. Your answers will help me represent the views of the community and take action for local people.

Tesco have submitted a planning application for an expanded store on the current site in Milngavie. You can find out more details about the application on: www.joswinson.org.uk/pages/tesco.html

Were you aware of a Tesco consultation on expanding their current store?

- Yes
- No

The development may mean Tesco closes for over a year. How important do you feel it is that the store continues to operate throughout the development?

Please mark on the scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important.

Not at all important Very important

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

How often do you visit the current Tesco store?

- Daily
- 4-6 times a week
- 2-3 times a week
- Once a week
- Less than once a week
- Hardly ever

Please rank the following issues in order of importance for a new store?

Please rank from 1 to 6, where 1 is the most important.

- Parking provision
- Effect on other shops
- Access to the town centre
- Environmental impact of new store
- Range of new goods it can provide
- Preserving local building style

The proposed entrance to the building would be located on the opposite side of the building to Woodburn Way - looking onto the Allander River.

A walkway will lead from the 'back' of the store on Woodburn Way. How important do you feel it is to have a pedestrian entrance to the store on Woodburn Way?

Please mark on the scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important.

Not at all important Very important

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

The proposed store would be on the site of the current car park, sitting up against Woodburn Way. The store would sit on top of a car park level.

The height of the proposed building would rise approx. 7m above Woodburn Way. Do you think this is too high?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

The existing store takes up 4752 m². The new store is proposed to be 9397 m². Are you in favour of the proposed size of the new store?

- Yes, absolutely
- Yes, with reservations
- No
- Unsure

The proposed building will be constructed with timber coloured render, composite timber panels, and large panels of glass. Do you feel these materials are better than the current materials?

- Yes
- No

MILNGAVIE VILLAGE

How often do you visit the the village precinct for shopping?

- Daily
- 4-6 times a week
- 2-3 times a week
- Once a week
- Less than once a week
- Hardly ever

What do you shop for in the village?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Groceries | <input type="checkbox"/> Home furnishings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> Music & DVDs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gifts | <input type="checkbox"/> Books |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Takeaways | <input type="checkbox"/> Ready Meals |

PARKING

How do you normally get to Milngavie village when shopping?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk | <input type="checkbox"/> Cycle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car | <input type="checkbox"/> Bus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi | |

If you drive, where do you normally park?

How would you rate Milngavie car-parking facilities?

Please mark on the scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very bad and 5 is very good.

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Very bad | | | | | Very good |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | |

How long do you normally stay?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0-15 mins | <input type="checkbox"/> 16-30 mins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 31 mins-hour | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 hour+ |

How important do you feel it is that Tesco allocate a significant proportion of the new car park to commuters and local residents wishing to park-and ride to Glasgow?

Please mark on the scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important.

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Not at all important | | | | | Very important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | |

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Thank you for filling in this survey

Return to: Jo Swinson MP, Freepost NATN 627, Milngavie, G62 6BR