

**Don't let Sainsbury's rip the heart out of it.**



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# The **WHAG** Campaign Pack

Everything you need to know  
about the campaign to stop  
Sainsbury's ruining our  
neighbourhood for ever

*"It would simply be the saddest day to see  
this happen....."* (local resident, from the WHAG petition site)

# Overwhelming response at first public meeting

Susan Kramer, MP for Richmond Park, speaking at the meeting.



'We have to work together against Sainsbury's'



Tory candidate Zac Goldsmith calls for a consumer boycott...and a referendum



200 people packed the meeting; over 200 had to be turned away

# What are the issues?

- Environment
- Traffic and safety
- Community Impact
- A History of Errors
- Not wanted, Not Needed and Not Democratic

Irate residents protest  
against new Sainsbury's

# The Environment....Why is White Hart Lane so special?



Barnes and Mortlake Green Conservation area

*'Remember, this retail unit is 40 metres from the River Thames. Why would you do it?'*



# Traffic and Safety

'The Council will only permit new development where it can be demonstrated that the transport infrastructure can accommodate it...without creating congestion and hazards on the road network' (Richmond Council)



Site of the Sainsbury's development

'I am aware that the area is often very congested, a condition exacerbated by the level crossing on White Hart Lane...Parking in residential streets is in short supply and on-site parking for shoppers is generally absent' (Inspector's report)



# Community Impact

Traders and small shopkeepers in White Hart Lane have been in business for one, two, even three decades-they are an integral part of the community.



'We have everything we need in Barnes and one of the reasons I live here is due to the community spirit and small local shops where everyone knows you by name. A Sainsbury's will close down local businesses and make this village a very different place to live'.

'..I can see that a national supermarket occupying the whole of the retail space would be seen as a brash incomer. Three independent retailers....would be much preferred' (Government Inspector's report)

'I've lived in Barnes for four years now and moved here as I loved the village atmosphere...we do not need supermarkets coming in and ruining this village. There are supermarkets aplenty within easy distance...we do not need them on our doorstep!'

# A History of Errors



Richmond upon Thames Planning Committee 21 September 2006-

'Had the appeal not been lodged the applications WOULD HAVE BEEN REFUSED for the following reasons:

..the size of vehicles visiting the proposed retail site could not be effectively controlled or enforced....would be hazardous to road safety...would adversely affect the free flow of traffic and access for emergency vehicles'

... [failure] to demonstrate that the proposal would not cause harm to the viability and vitality of the existing shopping centres'



# Unanswered questions ...

There were gross inaccuracies in the Inspector's report-independent analysis has found that even a 1% drop in trade would wipe out these neighbourhood shops and others like them on White Hart Lane.



Research by the National Retail Planning Forum shows that every £50,000 spent in small local shops creates a job, while every £250,000 spent in a supermarket creates only one job.

So why did the Inspector conclude that this development would be good for the community?

Why did he give the go ahead to a development in an area he admits is '*often very congested, a condition exacerbated by the level crossing on White Hart Lane...Parking in residential streets is in short supply and on-site parking for shoppers is generally absent*'.

The supermarket has no parking and inadequate delivery facilities. So why would anyone back an enterprise that sells itself on 'drive time' demographics? (Take a look at the Developer's literature).

We will be using the Freedom of Information Act to follow up some of these questions.



# Sainsbury's Says.....

'When planning new stores, our policy is to contribute to the regeneration of urban areas wherever possible....'



'With every new scheme we undertake, we do a full public consultation.....'

Well, you haven't asked us, but here are some of the hundreds of responses so far-

*'It's an absolute disgrace to go ahead with this plan for White Hart Lane. I don't know a single local person who wants this scheme. Not ONE'*

*'The number of empty shop spaces along Barnes High Street tells us that local traders are going through a terrible time. The wonderful independent shops of White Hart Lane will suffer doubly so with the arrival of this pointless supermarket.'*

*'I am frankly appalled that the opinions of local people are being so wilfully ignored on this matter'*

*'Disgraceful! Completely incompatible with the much-loved character of White Hart Lane.'*

*'This development is not needed and nor is it wanted. Listen to locals.....'*

*'It seems absurd that one needs permission to pollard a tree in order to ensure the character of this conservation area is not damaged-and yet a crass supermarket frontage in an area of small individual shops is not considered damaging'*

*'A ridiculous place for this sort of retail outlet'*

# Not Wanted, not Needed and not Democratic

The proposed design of the main building....would appear incoherent, confused and overcomplicated.... this would have a detrimental effect on the street-scene appearance, the appearance and character of the Mortlake and Barnes Green Conservation areas.... (Richmond upon Thames Planning Department)



'There is no need whatsoever for any kind of supermarket in the area and I am amazed no local authorities wish to acknowledge the serious practical problems it would cause.'

Sir Tim Rice, local resident

# What You Can Do to Stop Sainsbury's...

You are one of hundreds of active supporters of WHAG and the numbers are growing all the time. Whether you have 5 minutes, 5 hours or 5 days to give, every contribution helps.

The WHAG website ([www.savetheheartofwhitehartlane.co.uk](http://www.savetheheartofwhitehartlane.co.uk)) will give you up-to-the minute news on events and developments. It also tells you who to write to, where to send it and suggests key points.

Don't worry if you're not on the internet-your local shops will have newsletters giving all the latest information and contact details.

Don't forget to follow the story as it develops in the local press and the Evening Standard.

## COMING SOON

The WHAG promise: No thanks, I won't be shopping at Sainsbury's...and I'm returning my last till receipt.

A street fair in White Hart Lane (like the Christmas Fair) only bigger and better with proceeds, as usual, going to The Friends of Barnes Hospital.

## Merchandise!

The WHAG-Bag: a durable carrier for shopping at your favourite local shops and spreading the message across London.

The WHAG-Flag: fly the flag for WHAG (available in various sizes for domestic and commercial use). This item will let you get the message across in style....'Don't let Sainsbury's rip the heart out of it'.

And finally.....

## THE REFERENDUM ISSUE

### ***Definition :***

***referendum (plural referendums or FORMAL referenda)***

***noun [C]***

***(FORMAL plebiscite)***

***a vote in which all the people in a country or an area are asked to give their opinion about or decide an important political or social question:***

At the recent public meeting organised by the WHAG and attended by local residents, one of the biggest cheers of the evening was raised by Zac Goldsmith's suggestion that the issue should be put to a referendum of local people.

This would not have any legal status and could not, of course, overturn the verdict of the Appeal Inspector, but a majority **NO** vote would send a significant message to Sainsburys and the developers, Oakmill.

Goldsmith accordingly sent an e-mail to the Council formally requesting that they put their weight behind this and organise the said referendum.

The Council replied: "It would not have any legal basis and could not, of course, overturn the verdict of the Appeal Inspector, therefore the Council could not sanction such a step."

They went on to suggest that all local people could do was to monitor the store when it was built to ensure it kept within the terms and conditions of the Planning Approval.

Perhaps the Council has lost touch with its constituents. However, we believe that residents of Barnes and Mortlake are simply not prepared to see their cherished neighbourhood spoiled for ever. So, the Referendum *is* going ahead and will be overseen and organised by the Electoral Reform Society.

It will be ward-wide and backed by the WHAG, who will mount a full scale campaign asking all residents to vote **NO**.

This kind of action is almost certainly the first of its kind in the UK and will attract nationwide publicity.

At a time when communities all over Britain are beginning to fight back against the undemocratic, bullying tactics of the major supermarket chains, it will be interesting to see how Sainsburys choose to react.

# Let the public decide on new superstores says Goldsmith

**PATRICK SAWER**

ZAC GOLDSMITH has called for residents to be able to reject new superstores.

The environmental campaigner and would-be MP says plans for supermarkets are frequently pushed through against the wishes of local people.

In what would be a victory for small shops campaigners, he wants such proposals to be subject to a referendum.

"All too often, superstores can have a negative impact on local communities, pushing small shops into bankruptcy and homogenising our high streets," said the Tory parliamentary candidate for Richmond Park.

Mr Goldsmith, son of the late Sir James Goldsmith, founder of the short-lived Referendum Party, wants to test the referendum idea in Barnes, where Sainsbury's wants to build a superstore in White Hart Lane, barely one and a half miles from its existing supermarket in North Sheen.

He said: "There is no justification for a new superstore in Barnes and, more importantly, there is no demand for one. If this development is allowed to happen against the wishes of residents, it will make a mockery of local democracy."

Mr Goldsmith said it was not too late to stop the development and that under existing, little-used legislation campaigners against the store could collect enough signatures to force Richmond council to hold a referendum. But it would be in the council's interest to take the initiative.

He said that if the vote went in favour of Sainsbury's, the campaign against the superstore would be abandoned. "However, were a majority to reject the

## Tory wants referendum for residents

right and reasonable to expect the superstore to withdraw its plans," Mr Goldsmith said.

"Sainsbury's is always very keen to be seen as exerting a positive impact on communities and it would be extremely difficult for it to appear to be going against, or undermining, local democracy."

He added: "The use of local referendums is something we should encourage. Whatever developments happen in a community should reflect what that community wants."

In a letter to Richmond, Mr Goldsmith said: "I believe that the referendum I am proposing offers a perfect opportunity for the council to settle in the best and preferred interests of the community what is becoming an increasingly controversial issue."

Sainsbury's plans were approved by a government inspector last year after being turned down by Richmond. Councillors told a heated public meeting recently there was little they could do to prevent the store being built.

Councillor Eleanor Stamler said: "This is nothing to do with Richmond. The council was distressed when it heard the inspector had overruled their own councillors. At no stage has the council supported this application, nor have councillors."



**Evening Standard, 2 May 2007**

# A Brief Guide to the Planning History.....

- About 20 months ago, Oakmill Properties Ltd applied to Richmond Council Planning Department for permission to develop land on the site of the car showroom at the top of White Hart Lane and other land adjacent to it.
- They proposed building a retail unit on the ground floor and a number of flats above. The type of retail unit was not specified, but one set of plans indicated something along the lines of a 'Tesco Express' type establishment.
- A record number of objections to the plans were lodged with Richmond Council by local residents.
- Richmond Planning Department duly rejected the plans.
- Oakmill then submitted revised plans which included some parking for the residents of the proposed flats, other minor amendments and two alternative arrangements for the retail space, indicating either three small units or one large one.
- Local Councillors still opposed the plans, but instead of rejecting them again, the Planning Department did not reject the applications, but let them 'run out of time'. The applications therefore went to Appeal.
- In October 2006, a 'common ground agreement' was apparently agreed between the Council and Oakmill, stating there WAS a need for such a retail outlet and it would have NO impact on existing businesses. No good explanation has ever been given for such an astonishing volte face by the planning department.

- In November 2006, the Appeal Inspector granted permission for the development, despite overwhelming local opposition and despite clear evidence of the negative environmental and social impact that the development would have. There was at this stage still no clarity on whether 1 retail unit or 3 small units was being proposed.
- A six-week deadline for the Council to appeal in the High Court was allowed to lapse, on the grounds that it would be costly and would fail (despite independent legal advice to the contrary)
- Finally, in February, the White Hart Action Group was formed to make local democracy work.

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**WHITE LANE**

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