



PRESS RELEASE

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FOURTEEN YEARS TO GET ONE WIN – BUT THAT IS ALL THAT’S NEEDED

The RSA was disappointed to hear that Tesco have finally been granted planning permission for a supermarket in Sheringham, Norfolk, after fourteen years of trying. Whatever the merits or otherwise of the proposal, it is appalling that a supermarket giant is effectively guaranteed eventual success purely through having the massive resources to keep coming back and back with their application, sometimes with only cosmetic changes, despite a Government Inspector having ruled against them following a full public enquiry.

A supermarket can be turned down any number of times, but seemingly only have to succeed once for the process to be closed. It is easy to see how heavily the odds are weighted against communities with an alternative view whose wish is to preserve their heritage.

This was a sad decision for the town and its rural hinterland, with its shopping centre based around the presence of a number of good quality independent food and other shops, some of whom will now be forced to close - as witnessed in countless other locations across the country and, indeed, as acknowledged in Tesco's application.

There seems little doubt that the day will come when the country will regret the huge power that successive Governments have granted to supermarket chains, with the resultant uniform and identikit retail offer across so many cloned towns – and of course the day is getting nearer when the supermarkets will be able to charge what they like, with any effective competition having been neutralised.

Notes for editors:

The Rural Shops Alliance (RSA) was formed in April 2001 and now represents over 7,200 independent retail members, employing some 40,700 staff. The RSA – a trade association with a difference – exists to be the campaigning voice of the independent rural retailer and the source for practical support particularly in terms of retail best practice. Many ‘blue chip’ and ‘retail service’ suppliers sponsor and partner the work of the RSA and help the organisation with category management and best retail.

More Information:

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