

## Objector #1

I object to the application by Tesco Stores Ltd to sell alcohol and other refreshments indoors and the sale of alcohol off premises from 0600 to midnight seven days a week, as set out in the retailer's application.

An off-licence in this area would encourage crime and disorder and threaten public safety. The well-recognised tendency for purchasers of alcohol to drink their bottles and cans as soon as they can, and as close to the point of sale as they can, will inevitably threaten public safety in this part of the Prom.

There is also a risk of drinkers becoming a public nuisance, particularly after dark. It takes very little imagination to foresee that Neptune's Fountain - a celebrated local landmark opposite 106 Promenade - would soon be colonised by inebriated drinkers by day and night; the waters of the fountain itself would soon be full of cans and bottles. What is currently an attraction for visitors would soon become a no-go area, particularly for families with children.

This risk of public disorder is especially acute at Imperial Gardens and Montpellier Gardens nearby. Very cheap alcohol sold to the public by Tesco, especially by the retailer itself through its special offers, will be carried and drunk in both locations, with empties left scattered about each park. Neither Imperial Gardens or Montpellier Gardens will be safe at night if Tesco's licence is granted and cheap alcohol can be bought a few hundred meters away and drunk by crowds of people sitting on the grass. Alcohol is currently available at bars and restaurants in both locations, but the prices place a limit on excessive drinking; this will no longer apply once Tesco Express arrives and people realise they can buy its cheap booze and carry it round for an evening's partying in the parks. The noise and disturbance to local residents is obviously a factor when considering this application.

The arrival of a downmarket retailer such as Tesco Express in what is traditionally one of the county's most upmarket shopping streets probably spells the end of the Prom's upmarket status. For evidence, consider the presence of a Tesco Express next to John Lewis in the High Street. The clash of retailing cultures has been hugely damaging to John Lewis. The constant rough sleepers outside Tesco Express, the filthy pavement, the litter everywhere and numerous Big Issue sellers and noisy buskers. It's almost unbelievable that the Council and Cheltenham Civic Society think a Tesco Express is acceptable in the Prom.

## Objector #2

I feel that the licence as described is inappropriate for several reasons:

- At a time when central government are taking measures to assist the currently struggling hospitality industry, (including being more flexible about licensing hours), the issuing of such a licence in the centre of Cheltenham will surely disadvantage existing pubs, restaurants, wine-bars, etc. which are vital contributors to Cheltenham's economy.
- The proximity of the outlet to Imperial Gardens will sure increase numbers trying to drink in the park. This will put pressure on police and also disadvantage Cheltenham Trust's Garden Bar and related facilities which are – by contrast - in keeping with the surroundings and vital to the Trust's financial wellbeing (to which CBC contributes).
- Tesco's low prices will potentially encourage students and other young people to buy alcohol either more frequently or in larger quantities. Will the shop be provided with sufficient and suitably experienced staff to police self-check-out machines and deal with any arguments which arise.
- Based on the experience of the Montpellier Coop convenience stores can become targets for alcohol-related shop-lifting – are the police prepared to deal with this. In addition, the Promenade has a concentration, particularly late at night, of people who appear to be homeless, some of whom appear to have alcohol-related issues.
- Have Tesco sought planning permission in relation to their signage and fascia in this conservation area?
- There is no indication that the alcohol sales will be restricted to start at 10am on Sundays, as is the case for nearby outlets such as Marks & Spencer.
- I have never heard of Tesco operating what appears to be a late-night bar. Have they provided details of other examples, including how it will be staffed and monitored so it does not burden the police or result in increased anti-social behaviour. And why are the hours for this so late? Will they employ a 'bouncer' as most outlets do late at night in the area?
- The store is right on the main pedestrian route from the centre of town to the Racecourse – are the police prepared to monitor increased alcohol-related anti-social behaviour on the route? Are the Racecourse prepared to increase alcohol searches on entry?
- The need for a convenience store near the Prom is not proven as one which opened near Rymans closed after a relatively short time. The area is well served for grocery shops, including by Tesco's own shop at the Brewery, M&S, Sainsburys and others.
- Given this, is this perhaps a trial site for the 'late-night bar' offering? If this is the case, the area is also well-served for pubs, bars, etc. – almost to saturation point and the extent that some people walking home from theatres, cinemas, etc., sometimes already feel at risk.

I urge the Licensing Department and Councillors to turn down this application for all – or even some – of the above reasons.