

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR COMMUNITIES FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

1996 to present day:

**WITH THE 14 YEAR SAGA - OF THE ESTON COMMUNITIES FIGHT
TO REGENERATE ESTON - LIKENED TO A SHAKESPERIAN
TRADEGY**

***" ALDI - TO BE OR NOT TO BE." THAT HAS BEEN THE QUESTION
ON THE LIPS OF THE ESTON COMMUNITY FOR 14 YEARS."***

IT IS NOW - ' NOT TO BE'.

We cannot relate the whole of the 14 years "saga" of Eston Precinct. We would like to pay tribute to all the businesses and residents who have supported our long struggle and sadly the many businesses having to close their doors. Now the politicians blame in the media- social media/internet shopping, but that wasn't the case for quite a few years. Having your own shops, town centre, is part of our social fabric. Wanting to walk down to your local centre, have a chat, meet people. For many who live on their own, loosing this life-line can bring many problems with it, loneliness, mental health problems, isolation. What does it solve building a big supermarket next door to your local area, having to travel down to it by bus or car. If you are older or live on your own, family live away, are dependent on others, losing your independence. Local transport is poor, having to carry shopping a lot longer distance. The modern world of these high flyers, giant supermarkets, and politicians who do not live in real world sat at their desks, looks good on paper, but we the people live in the real world out there, they don't.

The problem with Eston Centre was that it was thorn in the side of the councils plans for a super new district centre just down the road from us called "Low Grange Farm" (which is actually in South Bank) consisting of a large Tesco Supermarket, other shops, added to this over 1,000 houses, all supposed to regenerate South Bank. They had failed to regenerate South Bank and its neighbour Grangetown even after pouring in approx 73 million pounds of SRB funding to do so. So the next plan was to create a new district centre on the boundary here called "Low Grange Farm." But the people objected, in 2001 they attended the Governments Enquiry in Public to the object to the councils plans, including the Low Grange Farm

development, the people succeeded, the councils plans were thrown out. But the council still continued with this and at the EIP hearing in public in 2007, with their new proposed local plan through the LDF, the residents objected once again, presenting lots of documented evidence, some which you can read below. The Government Inspectors findings here were that the council had to prove that development of a new district centre on the Trunk Road would have no detrimental effect on Eston and Normanby centres. Who did this- the council themselves - stating that it would have no effect on Eston & Normanby Centres!!!!

When Tesco submitted their planning application for the Low Grange Farm it had the support of the labour council too, even when their own consultants stated it would have a detrimental effect on Eston and Normanby centres. One labour councillor for Eston even sent a letter of support to the planning committee supporting Tesco!

REDCAR AND CLEVELAND REGENERATION MASTERPLAN FOR GREATER ESTON A VISION FOR GREATER ESTON WE ALL KEEP ASKING – WHAT IS THE COUNCILS GREATER ESTON - HERE IT IS WHAT THE COUNCIL NOW STATE IN THEIR DOCUMENTS – QUOTE:

“By 2024, Greater Eston will have been transformed. The current impression of housing estates dominated by highways of housing estates, dominated by highways will be a distant memory.

Greater Eston will be a small town comprising a number of distinct neighbourhoods, with a big heart, focused on, shops, schools and community facilities.

The town centre will be focused on the A1085 which acts as a High Street, linking together – shops schools, new parks, leisure facilities, underpinned by a strong public transport infrastructure. Accessibility to Redcar, Middlesbrough, South Tees and the wider Tees Valley will continue to be a major selling point.”

ARE WE ALL IN IT TOGETHER - WERE IS THE CONSULTATION?
Who was overseeing the development and delivery of this strategy; For quite a few years it was called **The Greater Eston Management Board (made up of councillors, officers, other agencies, with no feed back to the communities themselves)** The councils document also stated “ essentially this is a plan for 6 communities-

Eston/Grangetown/Normanby/Ormesby/South Bank/Teesville, it is their future and so they have a major say in what the future should look like, but that this is the councils vision!

Do you feel as if you have or are playing a part in this?
e.g. **Eston Town Hall to go – New Civic centre to built at Redcar-Finnegan’s Hall is to go.**

Also Lackenby and Lazenby do not appear to be included in the councils regeneration plans?

Some proposed sites for house building in the regenerations plans(councils LDF) to go to the Councils Cabinet included , **Lazenby, High Street,Eston, Marske, building off the A174.** The council owns lots of land in Loftus. The council is looking for sites to build “Executive Housing” in the borough .(concern is that this ‘could’ be on green fields sites).

Trunk Road – next to the proposed Tesco superstore, proposal to build 450 homes by private developer – the council own the other half of the land here. (the total number of houses proposed to be built here is approx 900+).

Statement from Eston Residents Association regarding the withdrawal by Aldi supermarket in Eston

Aldi's decision not to build one of their stores in Eston, quite frankly has come as no surprise to the Eston community. We have endured this fiasco for nearly 14 years - while it has been ERA's, Eston Business Community and the community of Eston's priority for nearly 14 years for the development of the precinct – development meaning a " proper 'supermarket and revamped shops . Labours priority has been the development of a new district centre on the Trunk Road, including a large supermarket, more shops, pub/restaurant and surprise, in the new planning application for the housing, in the traffic assessment report it states also for a an Aldi supermarket!!!!

- At the 1st Gov. Enquiry in 2001 and 2nd government enquiry in 2007 which included the proposal for a new district centre on the Trunk Road; labour councillors have continually supported this proposal. They never attended either to support the Eston community/businesses in support of Eston district centre or regeneration of same. Only ERA, Eston business community and Eston independents councillors represented Eston centre on both occasions.
- Labour council were offered the Crown land on the precinct into council owner ship as far back as 1997, but refused. Only taking it on one year before the last council elections (2010) why? Their developer pulled out as the developer for the precinct. So labour progressed with what can only be described as a sticking plaster job in the run up to the council's elections in May 2011. It looks ok as you ride past in the car – but visit it and it is a mess, cheap pavements that are stained due to not being sealed, unkempt flower beds, walkway that runs past the shops to the Post Office –slippy and dangerous. vandalised broken trees and tree guards.
- Labour have continually extolled that they are the only ones that can deliver on Eston precinct. Making many 'predications' over the years both on the radio, leaflets and media i.e. Aldi will be coming in a few months etc. which has turned into 14 years of promises.
- Yes they have spent £275,000 of council tax payers money in a compensation gesture to the Eston people, yet in the previous administration 2003-7 they would not support funding in full council for the implementation of safety work on the precinct as identified and following concerns from Cleveland Fire Brigade and actually went as far as stating that they would this funding for safety works to the audit commission (double standards again). Didn't they spend £275,000 of tax payers money also?
- Labour councillors supported Tesco's planning application for the Trunk Road development – even though their own consultants in the planning report predicted at least a 13% fall in trade for Eston and at least 10% for Normanby businesses, who are already struggling to keep their doors open.

- Labour have ignored the EIP government planning inspectors report at both the hearings in 2001 and 2007 who stated “before any development on the Trunk Road they had to look at the implications of this on Eston, Normanby and Ormesby centres”.
- There was no consultation (when the council spent £275,000 on the precinct) with the residents or businesses as to the design or what was needed or where.

It appears that the council has had to spend council tax payers money on work that Aldi and their developer had promised to do as part of the precinct development, and have not done it very well - just ask the businesses and residents of Eston.

Eston Precinct: This 1960's concrete eyesore .Presto closed their store in Eston in 1997:

- 2000 - the council and Aldi Stores hold public meeting to announce Aldi's proposal to develop the store and the precinct.
- 2001 - Eston Residents and Business Assoc. represent the town at an EIP hearing by the secretary of state to investigate the council's proposal to build a new district centre on the Trunk Road, 1 mile from Eston. They stated that our existing town centres and communities should be regenerated. The hearing stated that the council must prove that any new development would not have any impact on Eston Centre.
- 2003 - Still no movement on Aldi's development proposals. Cleveland Fire Brigade contact ERA with great concerns over the decline of the precinct and community safety. Council stated that the new build for the precinct would be up and running by 31st March 2003. Aldi cancels all meetings with council from June to October.
- December 2003 – ERA collect a petition with nearly 2,000 signatures in one week. Aldi reply to ERA stating they are still committed to Eston.
- May 2004 – Aldi announce that they will not be coming to Eston.
- ERA has campaigned for nearly 13 years for the re-development of Eston Precinct; we have been successful in getting some remedial safety works. This ugly eyesore has not deterred us in our work to promote our town centre and community.
- January 2007 – ERA represent the town again at the Government EIP Hearing, presenting evidence for the regeneration of our existing town centre.
- 2008/9 – A new developer with a proposal for Eston Precinct, including Aldi coming back on the scene as the supermarket. The developer gets planning permission from the council. The community waits with anticipation that this time we will be successful with a new development on the precinct.
- June 2010 – precinct update – the developer has pulled out. Aldi Supermarket says they are still committed. Council take over the common areas from the Crown Estates and start to make repairs on these areas.
- The Eston Business community has suffered since 2000. They have waited for this development, but some in the mean time have had to close their doors. They have had very little support from the Teesville councillors, no regular meeting which should have been a courtesy to them by the councillors. Businesses have lost out on 2 funding packages, one from LEGI which would have enabled them to improve their premises and promote their businesses and also a security funding package, to improve security of their premises. Why the chair of the business association was informed that the council advised the funders that the businesses on the precinct were under re development and regeneration with the Aldi development of Eston Precinct.

Meanwhile, over the years the Aldi building has been left to rot, infested with vermin, along with being an eyesore. The residents feel that it is now the **priority and duty** of care the council to hold Aldi to account. Because the council and Aldi do not have to look at it every day.

To remind the Council and media also that Eston is still categorised as a District Shopping centre in the Tees Valley hierarchy of shopping centres and has to remain so. While we appreciate new businesses coming to Eston, like convenience stores NISA and Spar, a Supermarket is vital to the Eston people and also to support Eston and the existing businesses.

ALDI HAVE ANNOUNCED IN THE MEDIA RECENTLY OF THE MANY STORES THEY ARE TO OPEN ACROSS THE N.E. INCLUDING OUR AREA. THEY HAVE OWNED A PREMISES HERE IN ESTON FOR 14 YEARS - THIS SAGA HAS BEEN A DISGRACE AND SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED TO HAPPEN AGAIN.

ISN'T IT IS ABOUT TIME THE GOVERNMENT HELD THESE COMPANIES TO ACCOUNT WHO BUY UP EMPTY LARGE BUILDINGS/PIECES OF LAND AND LEAVE THEM TO DECAY AND BRING COMMUNITIES DOWN, WHICH HAS HAPPENED IN ESTON TOWN CENTRE FOR 14 YEARS.

In reply to leader of Redcar and Cleveland Councils letter in the local Gazette still waiting to hear plans re. Aldi and Eston. It is his labour council who should get a social conscience. Stating "Aldi are disgraceful in their behaviour with Eston Precinct."

Yes Aldi are, but so is the council whose mandate and priority has always been the Tesco and Trunk Road development since 1999, with the deletion of South Bank and Eston as district centres. What he fails to point out is that on the Eston Precinct, the failure was firstly the Labour administration who for years let the whole area (not just Eston) deteriorate into a slum which brought the residents of Eston to join together with the business community campaigning from 1997 to present day for regeneration of the precinct and 14 years later we are still waking up to ground hog day with Eston precinct.

Aldi came on the scene on 21st November 2000 with the labour council, at a packed public meeting in Eston Institute, promising a new development on the precinct which would be completed within 12 months, a start date given. Labour had only one official meeting in 3 years with Aldi (which was clarified by officers) Eston businesses had hardly any contact with Aldi but labour kept on saying that Aldi were coming and it became like a "Whitehall farce", with many businesses suffering badly, having to close.

Over the subsequent years Aldi's track record of meeting with any council administration was is poor. Aldi pulled the plug on Eston in a sudden shock move in 2004 and have made a few failed attempted come backs over the subsequent years. Aldi still own the large Presto Store on the Precinct. Through all the many years Saga of Eston Centre, labour in this area supported Tesco planning application even though the consultants stated it would have a detrimental effect on Eston. He and no other labour councillor never attended any of the Government EIP meetings to speak up for Eston Centre and its regeneration.

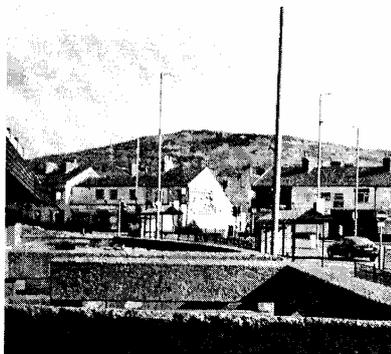
If the labour administration could access LEGI funding to purchase LEO's on the Redcar front to acquire the site to build their "Vertical Pier". The community has asked " Why wasn't not LEGI funding accessed to compulsory purchase the Old Presto Store, Eston (which the LEGI funding was actually targeted for struggling businesses and new businesses in specific areas such as ours in the first year of its 4 year allocation from the government).

ALDI COULDN'T FAIL TO BE A SUCCESS IN ESTON CENTRE, A LARGE CATCHMENT AREA, CRYING OUT FOR A DECENT SUPERMARKET! 14 YEARS ON IS ANYONE OUT THERE!

THE LABOUR COUNCIL STATES IN THE LOCAL MEDIA - BETTER TOGETHER - WHOSE KIDDING WHO? THE FOCUS OF THEIR REGENERATION AND THE MILLIONS POURED INTO IT HAS BEEN IN REDCAR.

BELOW IS AN EXAMPLE OF ONE OF THE MANY LEAFLETS DISTRIBUTED BY THE LABOUR COUNCILLORS REGARDING ALDI AND THE ESTON PRECINCT

ALDI DEVELOPMENT - ESTON SQUARE LATEST.



- **Aldi and the Council are totally committed to the development of the Eston Shopping Precinct.**
- **None of the properties belong to the council.**
- **If agreements between the business people and Aldi flounder, then the council can invoke compulsory purchase orders – we don't want to do this because we want to be fair to the business's of Eston – It is a last resort.**
- **Your local Labour candidates are totally committed to the £1.3 million Aldi development.**
- **Vote for Sheelagh Clarke, George Dunning and Norman Pickthall, your 3 Labour candidates to be sure of the Aldi development for the people of Eston.**



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POLITICAL FACTS ABOUT ESTON:

ESTON IS SPLIT UP INTO 2 WARDS:

- **ESTON WARD - 3 COUNCILLORS**
- **TEESVILLE WARD - 3 COUNCILLORS**

Teesville Ward:

- **THE ESTON PRECINCT IS IN THE TEESVILLE WARD WHICH HAS BEEN REPRESENTED BY 3 LABOUR COUNCILLORS WHO FROM 2007 TO PRESENT ARE 3 CABINET MEMBERS & THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL.**

Eston Ward:

- **2011-14 THE ESTON WARD IS REPRESENTED BY 3 LABOUR COUNCILLORS ALL WHO ARE CABINET MEMBERS.
2007-11 2 ESTON INDEPENDENT COUNCILLORS
1 LABOUR COUNCILLOR.
2003-7 - 3 ESTON INDEPENDENT COUNCILLORS
PRE 2003 3 LABOUR/ CABINET COUNCILLORS.**

2007-14 REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH LABOUR COUNCILS RULING CABINET CONSISTS OF 10 COUNCILLORS OF WHICH IN 2011-14 6 REPRESENT THE ESTON AREA. (2 thirds of the cabinet) including the leader and deputy leader of the council - also 2 of these Eston Labour cabinet members were first time elected councillors in 2011 elections and each given a cabinet seat and portfolio straight away.

GREATER ESTON - WHAT IS IT?

THE COUNCIL DECIDED TO CALL OUR AREA " GREATER ESTON"- BUT WITH NO CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMUNITIES INVOLVED.

THE GREATER ESTON MANAGEMENT BOARD:

A QUANGO WHICH WAS MADE UP OF COUNCILLORS, OFFICERS AND OTHER AGENCIES TO DECIDE/PLAN THE SUPPOSED REGENERATION OF OUR AREA - WITH NO CONSULTATION OR REPRESENTATION FROM LOCAL BUSINESSES OR COMMUNITIES-EXCEPT IN THE LAST FEW YEARS THEY GAVE WHALE HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION A SEAT ON THE BOARD WHOSE CHAIR, A LABOUR COUNCILLOR AND ALSO HAD A SEAT ON THE GREATER ESTON MANAGEMENT BOARD. NO INFORMATION WAS DECIMATED BY THESE REPRESENTATIVES TO ERA OR AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS IN THE AREA. FOR OVER 2 YEARS THE ESTON INDEPENDENT COUNCILLOR ASKED CONSTANTLY FOR COPIES OF THE MINUTES OF THESE OFFICAL MEETINGS WHICH SHE DID NOT RECEIVE AND FINALLY RECEIVED SENT A FEW BY REGISTERED POST BY THE COUNCIL OFFICERS!

ESTON - A POLITICAL FOOTBALL - ARE WE BETTER OFF TOGETHER?

ESTON AND ITS PEOPLE HAVE BEEN USED AS A POLITICAL FOOTBALL, FOR 17 YEARS THE ESTON PRECINCT WHICH IS ACTUALLY IN THE TEESVILLE WARD, HAS BEEN IN THE POLITICAL HANDS OF TEESVILLE LABOUR COUNCILLORS, THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBERS BEING THE COUNCILLORS WHO HAVE NEVER ATTENDED ANY EIP MEETING GOVERNMENT MEETINGS TO SPEAK UP OR REPRESENT ESTON AND THE COMMUNITY. THEY SUPPORTED TESCO'S DEVELOPMENT ON THE TRUNK ROAD EVEN THOUGH THEIR OWN CONSULTANTS STATED IT WOULD HAVE A DETRIMENTAL AFFECT ON ESTON CENTRE. THEY EVEN REFUSED CONSULTATION EVENTS IN ESTON ITSELF ON THESE ISSUES, WHEN THE ESTON INDEPENDENT COUNCILLOR SENT A REQUEST FOR THIS, THE REPLY CAME BACK STATING THAT THE THEN ESTON TOWN HALL, WHICH INCIDENTALLY WAS IN SOUTH BANK WAS ADEQUATE.

SOME OF THE FACTS ARE BELOW INCLUDING SOME OF THE EVIDENCE - WHICH WAS PRESENTED BY ESTON RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION & VINCE SMITH (THEN ESTON INDEPENDENT COUNCILLOR FOR ESTON WARD) TO THE GOVERNMENTS EIP MEETING IN 2007 WHO WERE LOOKING INTO THE COUNCILS PROPOSED PLANS FOR THE NEXT 15-20 YEARS INCLUDING HOUSING, SHOPPING, TRANSPORT, LEISURE ETC, WHICH WAS TO BECOME THE COUNCILS LOCAL PLAN. A FEW CONSULTATION EVENTS WERE ORGANISED AROUND THE BOROUGH, BUT WERE BY INVITATION ONLY. WHEN THE 2 ESTON INDEPENDENT COUNCILLORS TURNED UP TO THE CONSULTATIONS THEY WERE INFORMED THAT THEY SHOULD NOT REALLY BE THERE AND THAT THEY COULD GO IN BUT NOT SPEAK TO ANYONE, JUST OSERVE! ISN'T CONSULTATION ABOUT LISTENING TO AND TALKING TO PEOPLE?

BELOW IS THE EVIDENCE COLLATED AND SENT TO THE GOVERNMENTS INSPECTOR BY ESTON INDEPENDENT COUNCILLORS AND ESTON RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION IN THE FIGHT FOR OUR TOWN AND COMMUNITY.

ALL TRUE AND FACTUAL

EVIDENCE IN ANSWER TO PROCEDUAL MATTERS- THE COUNCILS LACK OF PROPER AND MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT AND CONSULTATION WITH ALL THE COMMUNITIES OF GREATER ESTON – AND ALSO POLICIES CS 2 3 and 18 ON THE GREATER ESTON AREA

FROM ESTON INDEPENDENT COUNCILLORS & Eston Residents

Association – 12 January 2007

1. 1996 - Officer from Redcar and Cleveland Council commissioned the Grimley Report on Eston – nothing actioned. (Same officer is now the lead officer for the proposed Low Grange Farm District Centre and housing project) **report submitted as additional evidence.**
2. 1997 – Redcar and Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency did a report on Eston – nothing actioned. **Part of the report on Eston Centre and retailing submitted additional evidence**
3. 1999 – Redcar and Cleveland conceived the proposal of a new district centre in their local plan. This was challenged at the 2001 EIP hearing by House builders Federation, other companies, local businesses and many residents and local businesses. **(see point 4 and report submitted)**
4. 2001 – EIP Hearing in Public on New Tees Valley Structure Plan – Deputy Prime Minister’s Independent Panel – Eston Residents, Eston Business People (supported by over 2000 signed petition) and Normanby Forum (representing Normanby) all spoke against the Council’s proposal for a district and new Centre on the Trunk Road, the removal of South Bank and Eston as District Centres and for Regeneration of our existing communities (2001) **(Eston Residents and Business Association report and 2000 Eston Businesses petition submitted as additional evidence)**

5. 2002 – Banks of the Weir Consultation – commissioned by Redcar and Cleveland Strategic Partnership (2002). Five public meetings held, not one in Eston itself. At nearly all five meetings overwhelming support against the proposal for a new district centre on the Trunk Road. **(see report submitted)**
6. 2003/4 – Middlesbrough and Eston PCT organise consultation events in the area for their proposal of a new health village for the Greater Eston Area. Stating that they would come back to the communities of the Greater Eston Area with a final consultation, to date that has not happened.
7. December 2004 – Eston Independent request a meeting with Colin McCloud, Chief Executive of the Trust who assured them both at this meeting that it was a standalone development and had nothing to do with the Council trying to push through proposals for the district centre on the Trunk Road and that the PCT would be doing a final consultation with the Greater Eston Community when they became site specific and final details. No further consultation has taken place by the PCT in the greater Eston Area, even though both the PCT and Council have gone site specific for the building of the Health Centre on Normanby Road, South Bank. Residents here sent a large petition to Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council last year object to this. **(submitted as evidence Petition from residents of South Bank & Normanby Road against the building of the Health Centre here)**
8. 2004 – Redcar and Cleveland Council organised 2 drop in consultation centres for the people of South Bank. However, people whose houses were not involved were allowed to be part of the consultation and figures. This also happened at a consultation outside Asda Superstore on the A66, South Bank!
9. ODPM recent turning down of the application for Asda at South Bank to move to a new site at Middlesbrough's new Middlehaven site was solely because of the effect it would have on the regeneration of South Bank.

10. The people of South Bank have handed in a petition to the Council against demolition of their homes.
11. People of South Bank set up a group (RAG) to regenerate South Bank where it is, but this group was taken over by a small group involving councillor to promote the Council's proposal to bulldoze and rebuild on the Trunk Road.
12. **Late 2004 – Redcar and Cleveland Coalition Council brought in more consultants, DTZ Piedo, last year who sent out a leaflet questionnaire to, they say, 8000 people, with questions such as: 'do you think good shopping is important, jobs etc, pick the most important 3 in this group etc.**
13. No workshops or full consultation have taken place in Eston, Normanby, Teesville, Grangetown, Whale Hill or Lazenby – or even with the business community of these areas.
14. The Council has called it the Regeneration of Greater Eston – putting all these communities – South Bank, Teesville, Grangetown, Lazenby, Eston Normanby in the pot to get more funding for the development of the Trunk Road, yet failed to inform or keep updated all the communities of this area.
15. The Council has written the new district centre in the Local Development Framework, which replaces the Council's Local Plan, and South Bank does not exist in this document and is replaced by the Council's proposed new development – Low Grange Farm.

16. 160 Residents of South Bank called a meeting in May last year to inform the Council that they opposed the bulldozing of their homes.

However, at a meeting at South Bank in August 2005, which residents called to question the Cabinet Member for housing and the Director of the Development Department, the Director stated to an angry audience, who did not want their homes pulled down and to move away, that nothing had been definitely decided. It had to go to Cabinet for a decision at the end of the year and that if streets had only one or no properties boarded up, then that street could stay. She stated that there had been no firm decision by the Council but that this seemed the most sensible plan on the table. It would then go the Council's cabinet, and then Council could make the decision. No developers would come to build in South Bank. Council would be door-knocking shortly every household in the proposed area of demolition to question finances and circumstances to discuss what measures were available for them!

The meeting informed the Cabinet Member, Director of Development and the Labour Councillor for South Bank that the video the Council had produced for the Chief Executive to show at the recent Harrogate Conference, to Government Office etc, did not involve them; it was only a biased view from handpicked people.

The meeting informed these officers and Councillor that the site proposed to move the South Bank Community to was nearer to industry and problems related to that. The meeting was angry at the waste of millions of SRB money 'wasted' in the area. Asking where it had gone – the South Bank Councillor, who was on the SRB Board was challenged by a resident in the meeting, who was a Board member too, but stated he did not know what was going on, with meetings arranged which he knew nothing about etc.

The Director stated that the Council had to make a bid for the money to get the best share. They have consulted for 4 years! The bid would go in late October, early November.

17. The Council going public in the media in April 2005 did a lot of damage to South Bank Communities chances of selling their properties, this was stage managed by the Council without any proper warning to the South Bank Community and overnight their homes became unsalable. This was objected to by the Eston Independent Councillors who were ignored, but it was supported by the Labour and the Coalition Council. It was morally wrong.

This is about business and money, and not about people and communities. Once again millions of pounds will be thrown at the wrong issues.

18. A recent report published named Redcar and Cleveland Council as one of 39 Council's not using brown field sites, instead using green field sites.
19. Severe loss of open space of which we have little now in the so-called Greater Eston Area. Residents of Teesville and Church Lane have joined together and objected to the council at this present time selling off greenfields on Church Lane to build house on, they were only made aware of this when planning was applied for. **(evidence submitted communities objections to planning committee re the councils proposal to sell off these greenfields to build houses on)**

20. This is a social problem that the Council and other agencies have failed to tackle.
21. New legislation, now Council's can deal with absent landlords.
22. The communities of the area do not want more shopping here, but want our existing communities regenerated, the social problems tackled, green spaces saved and more facilities for young people, families to meet and join together socially, and to look to what we need to attract visitors to our borough.
23. Spatial Strategy – Councils should build on brown field sites and save open green spaces. This Council is not doing this.
24. ODPM and others rethinking **Refurbish not flatten**.
25. South Bank has a strong multi-cultural community that lives and works together. **(see statement from Mr. Uddin, member of multi-cultural organisation South Bank stating grave concerns and lack of proper consultation)**
26. The Greater Eston Management Board is a quango of Ward Councillors, Cabinet Members, Housing and other agencies who are driving this through, but have never and still have no community representation from the Greater Eston area, no partnership working at all with the community.

27. The business and residents of Eston do not want a new shopping development etc on the Trunk Road, they want their own centre properly regenerating, to keep their District Centre status, not a make and mend with a satellite store, too much water has gone under the bridge. Ten years they have been campaigning for development. They do not want to become a pub and takeaway city. The elderly population has grown in this area and they want to walk to their local shops for this is about keeping together the social fibre of our communities.

28. The Local Government Association made the following statement over a year ago *“UK High Street in Identity Crisis” Britain is fast becoming a nation of ‘Clone Towns’ whose local individuality has been swallowed up by bland shopping centres and chain stores. Streets once filled with independent butchers, greengrocers and family-owned general stores were being taken over by ‘faceless’ supermarkets, fast-food chains etc. Clone stores have a triple whammy on communities – they bleed the local economy of money, destroy the social glue provided by real local shops that holds communities together, and they steal the identity of our towns and cities. The report also stated that ‘by promoting local shops we can enhance diversity and increase the vitality of local economies and reverse the trend that is we have already been taken over by clones’.* This is what the people of this area have been saying for the last 10 years but the council will not listen.

29. If government allows councils to carry out this bulldozing of communities, we will be eroding the character and diversity of our country and end up a country full of toy towns made up of little boxes.

30. The consultation has been stage managed in this Greater Eston Area. The glossy Fund Bid Brochure and reports is not the true picture of what has really happened, for a large majority of people are unhappy and still quite ignorant of what the Council is planning. In this scenario, consultation has and still is a very flexible word.

31. The majority of people in the Greater Eston Area do not know of the existence of A Greater Eston Management Board, LSP and the Community Network, which has only started to function properly in the last 2 years. Previously it was dysfunctional and None of these 3 organisations have represented the Communities of the greater Eston area at grass roots level, no community representation from this area Greater Eston Area are represented on the Greater Management board or LSP, or sub committees of these organisation who are the key partners with the council in steering the plans and regeneration of the Greater Eston area.

32. The most important fact here is that the communities have asked for their existing communities to be regenerated. To send out 8000 questionnaires asking things like, what do you think is important in your area, shopping, houses and things like this, of course we all think shopping facilities are important, jobs are important, they are questions which are put to the people to get the peoples real concerns and feelings, but weighted for the Council to get what they want.

33. In February of 2005, at Guisborough Hall, at the Freedom of the Borough Ceremony, the Chair of Redcar and Cleveland Partnership spoke to Councillor Higgins and expressed his concern over the consultation process for the Greater Eston Strategy and proposed new district centre on the Trunk Road, commenting he felt that he was not getting the true 'picture' of the consultation of the people's feelings on this subject. To which Councillor Higgins agreed and both parties spoke for about 15 minutes on this subject.

34. The issue here is that Redcar and Cleveland have been trying since 1999 to push this project through the Council's Local Plan. They got a knuckle rapping from the EIP Panel in 2001. Why? They brought Nathaniel Lichfield Consultants in who could not even get a proper report ready for the hearing. They then felt they had the green light to go full speed ahead when the ODPM report came out on Asda's refusal to move to Middlehaven. Since 1999 no attempt has been made to regenerate South Bank itself. The council are still working with the same plan as

proposed in 1999. The same lead officers are the driving force from 1999 to 2007. This has been a very officer led project, along with the LSP, Redcar and Cleveland Partnership and the Greater Eston Management Board (no representation from the communities of the Greater Eston Area on any of these till the last year on the LSP board, via the community network but they still do not represent the communities of the greater eston area). The communities have not been equal partners, nor have they been involved in any designing, planning or putting suggestions or ideas forward as to what THEY want in their individual communities of indeed the Greater Eston Area. The people of South Bank had to force the council to look at their plans they have drawn up for the regeneration of South Bank. **(please see submitted up-to-date evidence from the business community of Eston)**

35. We are greatly concerned at the Political inference in these plans, one cabinet member stated to a full coalition meeting that they must get the district centre and new housing on the Trunk Road and also the Coatham Enclosure Development started before the next Council elections in 2 years time! It is not about politics, it is about the people and getting the right way forward for a more sustainable future for the residents and business people of the “Greater Eston Area.”
36. 40% of Eston Ward Households do not have a car (2001 Census).
37. Local Bus companies have just cut back and also pulled out on services in the Greater Eston Area.
- LSP, in the first 4 years no grass roots community involvement. Even most councillors were not aware of, or knew very little of the workings of the LSP, Hence Just over a year ago the council called a special Scrutiny committee to look into and question the workings of the LSP.
- **(scrutiny report submitted as evidence).**
38. Eston Independent Councillors refused Consultation List of Council’s LDF consultees, even on a confidence basis, it was just a need to know that there was a fair spread of consultees across the borough, especially in the Greater Eston area.

39. Tees Valley Structure Plans policy is to enhance the appearance, safety and environmental quality of centres.
40. Low Grange Farm site is predominantly greenfield site which is in conflict to the Regional Spatial Strategy. The council's proposal in the spatial strategy is for far too many houses in the Greater Eston Area.
41. NRF funding for 2005/6/7 is now targeted at propping up Council projects, allocated on a commissioning basis with only the LSP priority groups involved and allowed to bid for the funding. No outside groups, i.e. community, etc being involved in the process. We are aware that this is government directive. but the council been successful in bidding for over half of the 2 years NRF funding itself. If government officers spoke to many hard working community groups across Redcar & Cleveland they would get a different prospective on all of this. But they do not , The community is not taken notice of when contacting any government outside bodies or ministers and it seems that what feedback the council gives is the acceptable route.
42. **The Voluntary Organisations Network NE is concerned that local people are not empowered to deal with issues that are relevant to them and it is important that local groups see themselves as having a stake in the development and that it is not seen as something done to them. However, sadly this is the case in Redcar and Cleveland, particularly in the Greater Eston Area.**
43. The people and community of Eston feel that the council's priority should have been to regenerate Eston Precinct and Centre. The withdrawal of Aldi in 2004 left Eston Centre in a more serious state of decline. However the council's priority has been a new district centre on the Trunk Road. No determined effort by officers to secure a developer for the centre has taken place, the official line from the council has been that the only saving grace for Eston Centre is a 106 agreement secured by the council from the developer of the new district centre on the Trunk.

44. We challenge the councils evidence put forward for the deletion of South Bank and the development of a New district centre on the trunk road on the above evidence and also on the evidence of the EIP inspectorate hearing in 2001, whose findings stated that Eston had to function as a district centre six years on, January 2007, if you look at Eston Centre and Precinct the decline is even greater, and when one accesses the variety of retail now, that has also reduced, leaving the door open for the council to put forward a case to say Eston is not the vibrant shopping centre it used to be strengthening their argument for a district centre on the Trunk Road. The residents and business would respectfully ask the Inspector to look more closely at this and it could be seen to be deliberately motivated by, to make a stronger case for plans for low grange farm as a district centre.
45. As further additional evidence to inspector against the submissions for low grange farm, a genuine developer has approached Redcar & Cleveland Council for a full-scale redevelopment of Eston Precinct in August 2006, Python Properties. But the catch 22 issue is, it needs the councils support and is still not a priority with Redcar and Cleveland Council. This development of Eston Centre, back to what the people need and want would affect the councils case and retail assessment capacity given as evidence for a district centre on the Trunk Road, as the developers would bring in established named business and shops along with a supermarket, which could make it more difficult for the council's proposal for low grange farm. **(Submitted to support this evidence Pythons Properties initial proposed plans sent to Redcar and Cleveland Council and the council's statement in the Evening Gazette January 5th 2007).**

ALSO SUBMITTED AS EVIDENCE – COPIES OF THE ESTON COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER ON THE COUNCILS POOR CONSULTATION AND AGAINST LOW GRANGE FARM AND FOR THE REGENERATION OF ESTON CENTRE. SUPPORTING THIS IS ALSO EVIDENCE OF THE ESTON COMMUNITIES BATTLE FOR OVER 10 YEARS FOR REGENERATION OF ESTON DISTRICT CENTRE.

THE LAST DEVELOPER WITHDREW FROM THE PRECINCT EARLY 2010, ALDI ANNOUNCED THEIR INTENTIONS NOT TO COME TO ESTON AND TO PUT THEIR STILL DERELICT BUILDING ON ESTON PREINCT UP FOR SALE (THEY OWNED THE BUILDING SINCE 2000 BUT DID NOTHING WITH IT) BUT ALDI ANNOUNCE THEY ARE TO OPEN 60 NEW STORES INCLUDING SATELLITE ONES, BUT NOT IN THE DERELICT BUILDING THEY HAVE OWNED FOR 10 YEARS ON ESTON PRECINCT?

PRESENT DAY: ALDI HAVE PUT THEIR DERELICT STORE THEY HAVE OWNED ON ESTON PRECINCT FOR 14 YEARS UP FOR SALE - WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT THEIR IS INTEREST BEING SHOWN BY ANOTHER HIGH STREET RETAILER THOUGH NOT SUPERMARKET. IF THIS FINALLY MATERIALISES IT WILL AT LEAST OPEN UP A DERELICT EYESORE AND HOPEFULLY, IF IT HAPPENS, BRING MORE FOOTFALL INTO THE TOWN TO HELP OUR EXISITING BUSINESSES.

A copy of one of our many attempts to contact Aldi to on behalf of the Eston Community.

Mr. Paul Foley,

UK Managing Director – ALDI STORES, Holly Lane, Atherstone, Warwickshire
CV9 2SQ.

8th October, 2012.

Dear Mr. Foley: **Aldi Premises – (Old Presto Store) Eston Precinct, ESTON.**

We write to you on behalf of the whole community of Eston to ask if any decision has been made regarding the Old Presto Site on Eston precinct have after nearly 12 years of waiting, And Aldi's decision not to build their store at the above premises which they purchased on Eston Precinct (the old Presto Store) in Eston Town Centre, a supermarket we have been desperately waiting for 12 years now, which is vital for the regeneration of the Town Centre .Given all the above, could you kindly let us know:

2. Are there any indication of any proposed purchasers.
1. Given Aldi's announcement that they intend to open more stores would you reconsider your decision to come to Eston and/or open up the old Presto building.

We are once again sorry that Aldi have felt up to date that it wouldn't be a viable venture in Eston, but can assure you that it would have been an asset and something that has been desperately needed for so many years. As we have previously stated in letters and many petitions to yourself that there is a very large catchment population around centre and also residents do not want to be forced to travel out of the area or to the new Tesco store which is actually not in Eston but in South Bank, which has been looked on with disdain by many residents and business and we believe is not the success that the council wished it to be. . We have also an ever growing elderly population who want to walk to their own shopping centre, Aldi would have been ideal, also Eston is an official Town centre and a proper supermarket would bring vitality and viability back to Eston for everyone.

The businesses on the precinct have lost 2 lots of grant funding in recent years for their businesses due to the proposed re-development of the precinct and Aldi's Store. Although this grant funding had nothing directly to do with Aldi itself, but could have been directed through council channels, however the council stated that the buildings were to be demolished for the Aldi's supermarket. We are sure you understand our concerns now as the importance to us to have all the facts of the situation at hand with respect to and for the Eston Residents and Business community, concerning Aldi's intentions and their large derelict old building, for Eston needs to move positively forward after over 12 years of waiting with so much hope .We would appreciate most sincerely if you could contact us in answer to this letter as soon as possible and hope you understand all the Eston communities concerns. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Ann Higgins, Chairperson Eston Residents Association -Dave Fisher, Chairperson, Eston Business Association (Mr. D. Fisher Owner of Kate's Cards, Eston Precinct).

2014 - PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE TRUNK ROAD

The people of Eston feel they have been well and truly sold down the river by this council. Why? Aldi it appears are now coming to Eston, but not our Eston the councils Greater Eston Low Grange Farm development on the Trunk Road. For it states in the present Major Outline Planning Application No.

R/2014/0372/OOM on Page 11 Traffic Report-

5.0 SUMMARY

5.1 The Traffic Assessment has been carried out to accommodate a development of 1018 No. residential dwellings, a 1000 sq ft food store (Aldi), a fast food outlet (McDonalds) and a sandwich shop (Greggs) with access onto the A1085 trunk road and the slip road to the A66.

The council have also sold their 2 plots of land here to Lady Hewley Trust to facilitate this development. At the 2010 council planning meeting for the Tesco development residents and businesses of Eston, Normanby and also South Bank objected, and also "Lady Hewley Trusts" solicitor who told the public open planning meeting " they objected on access issues so the council would not get the other low cost supermarket and shops here". He was silenced by the labour committee chair! How can the leader and cabinet members deny any knowledge now of Aldi intentions/decision to come to Eston centre in the derelict store they have owned for 14 years? Aldi choose the bigger carrot dangled. How can we have any faith in this council now - Greater Eston? when did they ask the people about this also? Never!

THE DEVELOPMENT ON THE TRUNK ROAD IS ALSO BEING MARKETED AS BEING IN ESTON, REDCAR. WHEN INFACIT IT IS TRUNK ROAD, SOUTH BANK.

GO TO THE COUNCILS WEBSITE AND TYPE IN THE PLANNING APPLICATION BELOW AND READ ALL THE DOCUMENTS RE THE COUNCILS PLANS FOR THE TRUNK ROAD.

OBJECTIONS LETTER SENT BY MANY RESIDENTS TO REDCAR & CLEVELAND COUNCIL THIS YEAR:

Development Management Section

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Redcar & Cleveland House
Kirkleatham Street
Redcar
TS10 1RT

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to register my strong objection to the Major Outline Application R/2014/0372/ OOM for the following reasons-

The Local Plan Policy H 3.2 identifies Land at Low Grange Farm, South Bank for up to approximately 1000 dwellings ,whereas now looking at up to 1250. Surely this should have been included in both Draft and Local plan which we have not been fully consulted on and allowed to make comment/objection?

It states on Page 122 that the Council supports proposals for the development of the site yet housing from year 2015/16-2019/20 is 50 2020/21 -24/25 is 100 2025/26 -29/30 is 160 and after 2029/30 310,a total of 620 which if this proposed development is accepted the number of houses is doubled!

Why has it been found necessary for England & Lyle Design and Access Statement to appear in documents on website in such small type making it difficult to read even when expanding? I trust that there is no implied intent to deter anyone reading full content? Can this be improved for all to read more easily?

I object to the poor access from existing road and also the pressure that extra traffic, initial and ongoing site and vehicles generated from the houses along with expansion to Low Grange Farm shopping area will have travelling in both directions of Trunk Road A1085 and interaction with pressures on A66 as well as A174.

I do not believe sufficient regard has been made in the Traffic Assessment to account for other housing developments in surrounding area and is unsound and information used outdated.

Part of the site has historically flooded during periods of excessive rainfall and drainage away from site should receive higher attention than appears to have taken place.

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Part of the site has historically flooded during periods of excessive rainfall and drainage away from site should receive higher attention than appears to have taken place.

The development would have further detrimental effect and impact badly on the viability of Eston and Normanby Centres.