

Submission from a petrol station owner in Cheltenham

14 August 2006

Dear Sir,

I own a petrol station in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire where we are surrounded by supermarkets selling petrol at times at cost price. Over the past few years this has forced at least eight independent stations to close down. What they neglect to mention is that the fuels they sell are of inferior qualities compared to the branded fuels.

Our margin on the petrol we sell has diminished over the past few years trying to compete with the supermarkets, no wonder, so many stations have disappeared.

To make things worse for us, that's if they can actually do so, our local Tesco has had a petrol station next to it's supermarket for sometime, it is off the main road but already on route for its customers entering and exiting the store. However, they are now in the process of expanding the store as well as building a brand new petrol station right on the main road less than half a mile away from my site. It was bad enough trying to compete with the slightly hidden site. The land on which the new petrol station is to be built was purchased five years plus ago, yet another piece of land purchased by Tesco that has been sat on for some years waiting for the right moment.

Still, as part of the planning they have offered to pay so many millions to the council for improving the bus services and the local road layouts, after all they need to attract and make it easier and more convenient for THEIR customers to get to THEIR supermarket.

CAN NOBODY SEE THROUGH THE GAMES THEY ARE PLAYING? CAN THEY NOT BE STOPPED FROM MANIPULATING THE LOCAL COUNCILS?

Your attention to this problem would be greatly appreciated.

Please help the local small business man to survive.

I would hate to be chased away from my own country, along with the millions that have already done so.

Yours faithfully

Mr A M Porter.