

09/01032/FUL: PROPOSED ADDITIONAL 21 CAR PARKING SPACES AT ALDI FOODSTORE, AT BRETTON WOODS SCHOOL SITE, FLAXLAND, PETERBOROUGH.

VALID: 29 SEPTEMBER 2009

APPLICANT: ALDI STORES LIMITED

AGENT: THE HARRIS PARTNERSHIP

REFERRED BY: COUNCILLOR NICK SANDFORD AND BRETTON PARISH COUNCIL

REASON: INCREASE IN CAR PARKING MAY BREACH THE CAR PARKING STANDARD IN THE PETERBOROUGH LOCAL PLAN AND IT WOULD GENERATE ADVERSE TRAFFIC TO THE AREA

DEPARTURE: NO

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## 1 SUMMARY/OUTLINE OF THE MAIN ISSUES

The main considerations is:

- Whether the proposed additional 21 car parking spaces is contrary to the Local Plan.
- Whether it will generate adverse traffic to the area.

The Head of Planning Services recommends that the application is APPROVED.

## 2 PLANNING POLICY

In order to comply with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan policies set out below, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Development Plan Policies

Relevant policies are listed below with the key policies highlighted.

The Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement)

T1- The Transport Implications of New Development

T9- Cycle Parking Requirement

T10- Car and Motorcycle Parking Requirements

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG13)

### Material Planning Considerations

Decisions can be influenced by material planning considerations. Relevant material considerations are set out below, with the key areas highlighted:

## 3 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

The application relates to the proposed additional 21 car parking spaces within the approved Aldi Foodstore.

## 4 DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is the former Bretton Woods School at Flaxland, Bretton.

Planning permission (07/01697/FUL) was granted for the construction of an Aldi foodstore with 76 car parking spaces and landscaping scheme. The site main entrance is from Flaxland. The boundary treatment comprises of partly lined trees and soft landscaping. The front facing Flaxland boundary treatment comprises of 1.2m high hooped metal railing and the rest of the boundary treatment comprises of 2.5m high close board fence. The area is characterised by mixed use comprising of offices, retail outlets and residential buildings.

## **5 PLANNING HISTORY**

The relevant planning history includes the following:

- 07/01697/FUL- Planning permission for the construction of an Aldi foodstore with 76 car parking spaces, associated access road and landscaping. This has now been implemented.

## **6 CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS**

### **INTERNAL**

**Head of Transport and Engineering** – No objection.

**Travel Plan Officer:** This application is within the current guidelines for maximum standards (and retrospective) I do not see we can object to this application.

The cycle stands installed are too close to the wall to be of convenient use (as reported from a local resident and demonstrated from the photo submitted) According to the Peterborough Cycle Design guidelines, 600mm minimum should be allowed between a wall and a stand perpendicular to the wall. Aldi foodstore ie, the applicant, should re-install these to be of use to customers arriving by bike.

**Landscape Officer:** No objection on landscaping scheme.

**Wildlife Officer:** No objection because proposal will not affect any wildlife species.

### **EXTERNAL**

**Bretton Parish Council** objects to this proposal on the following grounds and urge the application to be determined by planning committee or full council:

- Food retail units the maximum parking standards is 1 space per 14 sq. m. For a 1,683 sq. m unit this would be a maximum of 117 spaces but there is already considerable parking nearby associated with the centre and hence a provision of 73 spaces is appropriate. This includes 4 spaces for disabled access.

**Architectural Liaison Officer:** No objection.

### **NEIGHBOURS**

Any letters of objection or comments received will be included in the committee update report.

### **COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Nick Sandford is concerned that the increase in car parking may breach the car parking standards in the Peterborough Local Plan and result in an over provision of car parking in the area. This location is very well served by public transport and there are good cycle routes leading to it, which should reduce the need for large amounts of car parking. There is also a big car park owned by Sainsburys just opposite the site and other car parks within walking distance. In the update report Cllr Nick Sandford has withdrawn his objection.

**a) Introduction**

The approved and implemented Aldi foodstore includes 76 car parking spaces and cycle stands. During the construction stages of the approved application registered under (07/01697/FUL), the applicant decided to include an additional unauthorised 21 car parking spaces bringing the total of car parking spaces within the site to 97 rather than 76. The store opened to the public in October 2009. The current application relates to the proposed additional 21 car parking spaces is therefore considered as a retrospective planning application registered as (09/01032/FUL).

The original size of the first application site registered as 07/01697/FUL which was approved by planning committee in 2008 is shown in blue line in the site plan. The retrospective planning application for the additional 21 car parking spaces is now shown in redlines within the site plan. This extension of land is part of the land sold to the applicant, although did not form part of the planning application that was considered in 2008.

The applicant's justification for the additional 21 car parking spaces has been evaluated in accordance with National policy (Planning Policy Guidance – PPG13 Transport) and the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement).

**b) Policy issues**

The applicant's justification for the proposed additional 21 car parking spaces was derived from the findings of the survey that was carried out as soon as the Aldi foodstore was opened to the public in October 2009, even before it reaches its maturity. Based on a gross floor space of 1,618 sq.m, the provision of 97 car parking spaces equates to 1 spaces per 16.7 sq.m of gross floor area (1618/97 spaces = 1 space per 16.7 sq.m of gross floor area)

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG13-Transport) provides maximum car parking standards at national level. For example, foodstore developments exceeding 1000 sq.m of gross floor area, the maximum standards is 1 space per 14 sq.m of gross floor area (GFA). Peterborough City Council has adopted the PPG13 parking standards as their local standards. Hence, the proposed 97 car parking spaces complies with PPG13 and Peterborough City Council's local parking policy being equivalent to 84% of the maximum standards.

The applicant carried out a car park survey at the site on Friday 23 and Saturday 24 October 2009. The Friday survey was undertaken between 08:00-20:00 hours while the Saturday survey was undertaken between 08:00-19:00 hours. The store is open 09:00-20:00 on a Friday and 08:30-19:00 on Saturday and the survey therefore included the entire store opening hours. The evidence from survey revealed that the maximum car parking accumulation was 61 vehicles at 12:00 on Saturday 24 October 2009.

The survey also recorded pedestrian movements into and out of the site between 11:00-13:00 hours on each day. The survey recorded all pedestrians' movements separately identifying pedestrians linking with the Bretton Centre. The survey indicates that on Friday 23 October, there were 32 pedestrians' trips to the store between 11:00-13:00 hours along with 216 pedestrian trips to the Bretton Centre (figures based on store arrivals). The corresponding Saturday figures were 28 and 254. Thus, there is a very high level of trip linkages between the Aldi foodstore and the Bretton Centre which is beneficial in terms of sustainability.

**Other material consideration**

The above survey has been carried out in October 2009 before Aldi reaches its trading peak in 3 to 5 years after opening. The empirical evidence from the survey that has been carried out demonstrated that trade is likely to increase substantially between now and when the store reaches maturity. This will be partly driven by existing customers purchasing more products and partly through the expansion of the customer base. It is therefore envisage that the likely realistic estimate of the increase in car park usage is 40% and the existing peak accumulation of 61 vehicles is indicative of a peak car park accumulation of 85 vehicles at maturity.

For example, the applicant argued that for a car park to operate efficiently, a surplus of 10% of spaces is required and thus 94 spaces would be required to meet operational requirements. Hence, the Aldi future requirement is for at least 94 car parking spaces. In order to make the existing cycle stand more customer friendly as advised by the Travel Plan Officer, the applicant confirmed on 24 November 2009, that their contractor has been instructed to undertake these works which will be completed in the next few weeks. There is no reason why their survey or the figures presented should be disputed.

## **8**      **CONCLUSIONS**

Subject to the imposition of the attached conditions, the proposal is acceptable having been assessed in the light of all material considerations, including weighting against relevant policies of the development plan and specifically:

In policy terms the proposed additional 21 car parking spaces are in compliance with both National policy and development plan policy contained in the Peterborough Local Plan (First Replacement) 2005. The empirical evidence from the survey that was carried out linking the number of pedestrians and vehicles visiting the Aldi suggested that this proposal is sustainable.

The number of pedestrians shopping at Aldi during the initial opening days demonstrated that the location of the store and its users are considered sustainable and the additional 21 car parking spaces will not adversely affect traffic in the area. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policies T1, T9 and T10 of the Peterborough Local Plan, Agreed Travel Plan and PPG13.

## **9**      **RECOMMENDATION**

The Head of Planning Services recommends that this application is APPROVED.

Copy to Councillors Fitzgerald, Morley, Nash