

# Notice of Meeting



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## District Planning Committee

Wednesday, 8th July, 2020 at 6.30 pm

### Written Submissions

#### Members Interests

Note: If you consider you may have an interest in any Planning Application included on this agenda then please seek early advice from the appropriate officers.

Date of despatch of Agenda: Tuesday, 30 June 2020

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**Agenda - District Planning Committee to be held on Wednesday, 8 July 2020 (continued)**

**To:** Councillors Phil Barnett, Dennis Benneyworth, Hilary Cole, Carlyne Culver, Clive Hooker (Chairman), Alan Law (Vice-Chairman), Royce Longton, Ross Mackinnon, Alan Macro, Graham Pask and Tony Vickers

**Substitutes:** Councillors Adrian Abbs, Jeff Beck, Graham Bridgman, Jeremy Cottam, Tony Linden, David Marsh, Steve Masters, Geoff Mayes, Andy Moore and Garth Simpson

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# Agenda

## Part I

**Page No.**

(1) **Application No. & Parish: 19/01063/COMIND Land to the South of Ravenswing Farm, Tadley**

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<b>Proposal:</b>	Erection of Class A1 Foodstore, car parking, access and landscaping
<b>Location:</b>	Land to the South of Ravenswing Farm, Tadley
<b>Applicant:</b>	Lidl UK Limited
<b>Recommendation:</b>	To <b>DELEGATE</b> to the Head of Development and Planning to <b>REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION</b>

Sarah Clarke  
Head of Legal and Strategic Support

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Moira Fraser on telephone (01635) 519045.



**West Berkshire**  
C O U N C I L

## District Planning Committee

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020

### Written Submissions

<b>Item:</b>	(1)
<b>Application Number:</b>	19/01063/COMIND
<b>Location:</b>	Land South Of Ravenswing Farm, Adjoining Aldermaston Road and Silchester Road, Tadley
<b>Proposal:</b>	Construction of Class A1 foodstore with associated car parking, access and landscaping.
<b>Applicant:</b>	Lidl Great Britain Ltd

**Submissions received:**

Aldermaston Parish Council	None
Adjoining Parish Council:	None
Tadley Town Council	None
Silchester Parish Council	None
Baughurst Parish Council	None
Basingstoke and Deane	None
Objectors	Sue Brown
Supporters	Alec Bray Allan Follett Andrew and Sarah Ramsay Catherine Wilde Derek Kerkhoff Eileen Walsh Grace Jones James Harris Margaret Lightbody

	N. A. Dodson Phillip Channing Wendi Batteson
Applicant/ Agent	Lidl - James Mitchell None

### **Written submission from Sue Brown – Objector**

I am not against this store being built in Tadley. However I do have grave concerns re the traffic. The road is not wide enough to have a dedicated right turn off the A340. There has been a recent accident opposite where the entrance to the store will be with the air ambulance having to attend. If traffic has to queue this will impact at the traffic lights on the junction of Franklin Avenue, Pamber Heath Road and the A340. Any queue on the left hand side of the road would impact on traffic at the lights at the Falcon triangle, again causing chaos. Obviously this would all then affect the smaller roads in Tadley. Either queues would make it extremely difficult for emergency ambulances to get to the doctor's surgery in Franklin Avenue or for the fire service to leave from their building again in Franklin Avenue.

Having attended their presentation, I know a traffic survey was undertaken. However I don't think they understood the amount of traffic that AWE produces particularly in the late afternoon or that from local business. We get a lot of large lorries/delivery vehicles passing through on the A340. There is also the school run to consider.

I hope you will take my views into consideration.

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## Written submission from Alec Bray – Supporter

My family and I support the application for the Lidl store for Tadley.

I note that there are Newsletters from AWE on a regular basis telling us how their focus is on community working. However when there are major planning applications to improve the community we always hear that the main objection/restrictions are due to AWE,

This Lidl store is for the town of Tadley – in Hampshire – and it benefits the people of Tadley. It is an accident of geography that the location of the proposed store is in West Berkshire, and I note that the store will not benefit communities in West Berkshire (such as Aldermaston) to anything like the extent that it affects the nearby community, which is Tadley. It is unfortunate that a decision which affects a major community is being decided by a planning group divorced from the area principally affected.

It is about time that AWE stood up and supported local development to improve the heart of Tadley community, especially as many employees of AWE are local residents. I would urge all councillors on this committee to understand what this application means to this town.

1. There is a pressing need to boost the economy of Tadley.
2. There is a need to provide more job opportunities for local residents .
3. Currently there is very little competition for Sainsbury's: while there are a number of small neighbourhood "grocery" stores, there is no nearby provider of a similar range of commodities to a major Supermarket. Essentially, Sainsbury's have a monopoly in Tadley . There are a number of consequences of this: in the main, it means that various groups – especially those disadvantaged by mobility problems, no independent transport, or on low incomes end up paying more for their shopping.
4. Currently a lot of residents decide to shop further afield (for example, in Basingstoke or Newbury) and this in turn reduces the amount of time those people spend shopping locally: this in turn affects other local businesses in Tadley.
5. There is also the issue of environmental impact and increased carbon emissions if people are having to travel further.
6. Currently Tadley has a population equivalent to a small town, but because of its piecemeal growth – to support AWE, we note - it does not have a town centre and there are not the right facilities to support this. By having a Lidl in Tadley, there may be a general increase in footfall through the town, which in turn may lead to the creation of a better community hub and increase the number of businesses locally who might be attracted to the town.

In this context, it should be noted that it is expected that future town developments will focus on health and wellbeing. This includes being able to walk to local facilities such as supermarkets. The Lidl development will support this by allowing people to stay local, by having another supermarket to walk to: this will increase exercise and promote improved health and well-being.

Thank you for your interest in this matter.

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[REDACTED]  
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22 June 2020

Dear Members,

**Lidl Foodstore Application, Tadley - Application Ref No - 19/01063/COMIND**

I am writing in support of Lidl's foodstore planning application, as outlined above.

Having read the agenda notes and attended the meeting of the Eastern Area Planning Committee meeting on 4 December 2019, my observations as a local resident are listed below, and I would ask that this letter be shared at the upcoming District Planning Meeting on Wednesday 8 July 2020.

I've outlined my observations below, supporting Lidl's application:

- There is an exceptional need for an additional supermarket in the Tadley area with over 90 per cent of local residents being in favour of this application.
- The site is well-served by a very frequent bus route and is only 200 metres from the town centre, is opposite two banks and is close to housing, making it an ideal location for customers arriving by foot, bicycle, bus or car.
- The proposed store would offer much needed retail choice to residents in Tadley. Currently, Tadley has only one major supermarket, and if COVID-19 has taught us anything, it is the need for better access to foodstores in the local area. At present visits to alternative Discount foodstores by residents of Tadley and the surrounding villages, means travel to Basingstoke, Newbury or Reading, which usually involves longer car journeys.
- At a time of uncertainty, with high unemployment expected, can we really turn down the willingness of a major supermarket to invest in the local area, bringing with it much needed local employment and improved choice and competition?
- I would suggest that the proposed site is seen by many as part of Tadley town centre and offers no public access or recreational benefits. It is on busy main roads and surrounded by buildings, one side being residential and the other two sides being industrial. There are many alternative local "green lung" areas in and around Tadley which do have excellent public access. Conversely, suitable brownfield locations within a short distance of the town centre are very limited and are not so conveniently placed.

- With regard to any public safety issues concerning the proximity of AWE I would suggest that the same issues could be faced by the many local housing estates, commercial and retail sites, which are also close to AWE in Tadley. In fact, some existing buildings are even closer to AWE. I would hope that with the cooperation from all parties involved that any safety concerns could be satisfactorily addressed and uniformly applied to the area.

I would appreciate please, if you could take these observations into account in reaching your decision on Lidl's foodstore application. I do hope that planning permission will be granted as the proposed development has massive public support and brings with it a number of positive benefits to the local residents of Tadley and the surrounding areas.

Yours sincerely

Allan Follett

## **Written submission from Mr Andrew Ramsay & Mrs Sarah Ramsay**

As a Tadley resident and an AWE worker, I sincerely hope you approve the proposal. In the interim between the objections relating to the lack of emergency procedures, Sainsbury's has been asked what, if any emergency procedures are in place. The in store staff had no clue. When approached for a written response, no evidence could be found in support of a viable emergency plan within the reply.

The same was true of Budgens store which situated directly on the fence line of AWE within the Falcon Shell petrol station, when they were approached with the same query.

The advice provided by AWE to local residents such as myself, in the highly unlikely event of a radiation leak (in the form of Alpha particulates into the atmosphere) would be to shelter inside, closing windows and doors.

Alpha particulates are only an internal hazard, if inhaled, ingested or injected.

Gamma radiation (as is the hazard at power plants such as Fukushima or Chernobyl) poses absolutely no risk to the proposed site or the local residents.

As the population of Tadley continues to grow, we need the infrastructure to support this. The recent C19 restrictions have highlighted the pressure which a moderately sized single supermarket has placed upon it attempting to supply a population which has increased by nearly 50% since it was constructed.

Tadley is not an affluent town, and the most financially vulnerable have little or no choice other than shop at Sainsbury's or local convenience stores - especially with government advice currently to avoid public transport wherever possible.

Those lucky enough to have their own transportation, are increasing carbon emissions and congestion with needless journeys into Basingstoke, Reading or Newbury to avoid paying the higher prices of Sainsbury's.

Local government have a duty to reduce carbon emissions wherever possible. This is an obvious example of where such reductions are possible.

Lastly, I would urge you to consider the local employment opportunities this proposal will bring to the local area, which will have a positive effect on the local economy and taxation.

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## Written submission from Catherine Wilde - supporter

Dear Members,

I would like to put forward my complete, wholehearted support for Lidl's planning application. In my opinion there is an exceptional need for a new foodstore in Tadley. In particular, the current Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted how vast this need is. Sainsbury's was overwhelmed, and I have struggled to purchase the necessities.

As a lifelong Tadley resident, I have always been aware our grocery options are significantly limited in price and variety. Sainsbury's has a monopoly as the only large store centrally located on the main bus route. The location suggested for Lidl's foodstore is ideal as it is central, easily accessible, affordable to travel to and near other more specialised retail outlets, reducing time, cost and environmental impacts for residents.

The store would notably improve the retail availability and product choice with a broad range of affordable goods, which is important: Tadley has 12,000 residents, but lacks diversity in groceries. This means people are forced to travel further afield or go without. On the back of the economic recession and rising food prices, this is less and less viable.

The Office of Fair Trading notes continuing concerns about lack of local competition, with an ideal of three or more "one-stop" stores within 15 minutes. In contrast, we only have the option of Sainsbury's or travelling far into Basingstoke/Newbury, which results in increased, unsustainable reliance on journeys by car. Furthermore, Lidl's unique selling point is its discount prices. Because of this, a Lidl would offer a qualitative improvement of choice, opportunity and quality of life, especially for poorer parts of the community.

[Personal data redacted]. I have often struggled with affording groceries. I cannot use public transport easily, nor are the Basingstoke stores readily accessible by bus. Bringing shopping home is difficult without driving everywhere, and has a higher impact on the environment which I'm uncomfortable with. Having the option of a discount retailer without having to travel would be life-changing for me and many others in disadvantaged groups.

The new Lidl store wouldn't draw many more people onto the roads as people would be diverting from Sainsbury's, or would go shopping after work or errands. There are also other discount retailers in other nearby cities, so it wouldn't be bringing traffic into Tadley, but rather cutting carbon footprint and boosting the local economy by encouraging residents to shop nearby.

It would also benefit other local businesses: by cutting food and transport bills, there is more money to spend on other products. I also think the creation of 40 new jobs with competitive salaries, paying Living Wage, would be a huge benefit to the community, as well as encouraging healthy competition. Furthermore, I appreciate that Lidl tries to buy British produce, support our farmers and source responsibly.

I hope you will consider these significant benefits in your decision as to whether or not to grant planning permission.

### **Written submission from Derek K Kerkhoff - Supporter**

I am writing to add my support to the proposed Lidl store in advance of the next planning meeting on July 8th.

I have seen the amended plans and disagree with the planning officer that the visual impact of the planned development will be negative, the building is already in an urban area and opposite a small trading estate which is hardly beautiful.

The cladding and brick facade in the proposal now seems entirely adequate.

In terms of the settlement boundary, Tadley has continued to expand in all areas over recent years and I, like most residents, see this area as within central Tadley for all practical purposes.

So, I find the planning officer's objections misplaced, if the economy and development of Tadley is to be considered going forward.

This development must be seen as a positive step for Tadley and the surrounding communities.

It will provide a boost to the local economy, job opportunities, a more diverse shopping experience and provide some needed competition to Sainsbury's .

I would hope that the District Planning Committee will take into account the overwhelming local support for this proposal and vote accordingly.

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**Written submission from Eileen Walsh – Supporter**

Dear Sirs,

As the proposed development lies on the Hampshire/Berkshire border the fact remains that local residents are not officially represented. As I point out, in the enclosed letter to the planning committee chairman, this seems vastly unfair as there is strong support locally for the application. I have made more detailed points in a previous communication to you.

...

Dear Sir,

As chairman of West Berks. planning committee would you please circulate this to your members.

Having already e-mailed my views previously I hope that you can consider this from the point of view of a local resident. I do not wish to be impolite, but the fact remains that we have no representation on your committee, and indeed many of you live some miles from Tadley. This seems to be vastly unfair to us.

Support for Lidl appears to be very strong locally. The current restrictions in view of the Covid epidemic have highlighted the need for extra shopping facilities.

May I appeal to you, especially as one of the older residents, to consider this very carefully (as I trust you will).

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### **Written submission from Grace Jones – Supporter**

I wish to make the following submission to the above application:

During the recent COVID 19 pandemic, due to the exceedingly high demand for basic food products Sainsburys could not supply what was being demanded and consequently ran out of supplies.

This meant that people had to travel to other areas to obtain basic foods during a lockdown which was what we were told not to do. Given that we could have a second wave come the winter, this will happen again.

Had we had a second large food outlet supplies would have been better and the most vulnerable people would not be forced to break lock down.

Given that planning permission is being granted for yet more houses the food supply in Tadley can only get worse.

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**Written submission of James Harris – Supporter**

As a resident of Tadley for 20 years I am strongly in favour of the above proposal. I believe having another supermarket in the area would be beneficial to local residents. Personally, I would be able to walk there reduce the amount of local traffic, I imagine others are in the same position.

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### **Written submission from Margaret Lightbody - Supporter**

To the Planning Committee deciding the fate of a Lidl's store in Tadley

With the final decision of a Lidl's store in Tadley being made on July 8th 2020 as a long-term resident of the town I am asking that permission is granted for the store.

Tadley lies on the fringes of two different counties. The actual site of the store is within yards of Hampshire yet the fate of the store with West Berks Council. Many residents of Tadley are very much in favour of the shop with a tiny minority opposed. Surely our views should count for something?

One of the stumbling blocks is apparently the extra traffic caused to the town. Compared with Reading or Basingstoke Tadley has no traffic problems to speak of. The frequent back-up of vehicles queuing at the traffic lights could probably be solved by moving the bus stop. I would suggest that due to COVID-19 the traffic heading to AWE alone is much reduced in the future with more people working from home. Another is the lack of a bunker should there be an "incident" at AWE. Could anyone tell us which businesses currently operating fairly close to the Site have their own bunker?

The crux of the matter is that for me the building of a Lidl's store in Tadley would provide choice. We do not run a car so the only large supermarket we can use is Sainsbury. We are still shielding due to COVID so cannot even use the buses to get into town. With further outbreaks not ruled out it would mean no freedom of choice for us for the foreseeable future. What a boon for people like us having a Lidl's shop in the town would have been at the start of lockdown.

Please pass the planning application for a Lidl's store in Tadley. We desperately need something other than just houses built in the area.

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**Written submission from N.A. Dodson - Supporter**

Tadley as you are all aware as one supermarket Sainsbury's, Tadley being a Town would benefit having another supermarket to give the town's population more choice where they shop. West Berkshire council seems to have no problem granting planning for housing e.g Tesco's boundary hall site but seem to close their eyes when something that might benefit the community of Tadley .Are you singing front the same hymn book as AWE that old chestnut roads traffic can't cope. What a feeble excuse

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**Written submission from Phillip Channing- Supporter**

I am in favour of this planning application as we need more choice to shop at Tadley and helps to employ more local people.

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## **Written submission from Wendi Batteson - Supporter**

Your officer's report is well set out and acknowledges this application is finely balanced. There has been significant support for this application in comparison to objections made. As a resident of Tadley, I would welcome this store and sincerely hope you approve it, albeit against the officer's recommendation. The reasons for refusal cite an "overriding need to protect open countryside from urban growth". It is clear if you look at page 59 of your agenda pack that this application takes up a comparatively small area of countryside in the corner of the area which has significant urban development opposite the site on two sides. Although there is a small area of countryside between this site and Falcons Fields, (if one were to go in a straight line up Mulfords Hill), the principle of development on what is countryside is clearly permissible.

I believe Lidl have done much to mitigate against any harm to local visual amenity and the wider landscape character. The development sits within a stones throw of the urban built form of Tadley and the loss of green infrastructure and landscape harm is minimal in comparison to the benefits the development will bring in choice and costs to residents of Tadley. One of the biggest benefits as I see it, which is reflected in the many letters of support is the green impacts in fuel saving from less travelling out of Tadley for a wider choice of groceries. The other smaller food stores (Co-op/Budgens) tend to concentrate on staple essentials and not a wider choice of items that Lidl would deliver at a greater cost saving to most households. This is of vital importance to many families coming out of lockdown and the uncertain economic future that beholds many on furlough or being made redundant. These factors should also be considered in your determination.

The huge site of AWE has an urbanising effect as it bounds Reading Road. The area of countryside is in fact bounded on all sides with urbanising development. Consequently, although it is important to retain countryside, the loss of this relatively small area would not have such a huge impact given the proximity of other urbanising areas so close to the site. This in my view is an overriding factor that can be taken into account, when making your decision, and is also a material consideration. The need for this development within the wider settlement area is why it has achieved such huge local support. Another factor to be

considered, is the amount of housing development that has gone on within Tadley in recent years, in spite of objections from the ONR (AWE). This appears to be standard objection, but not one that warrants them appealing such decisions or calling them in for the secretary of state to determine. If there were such concerns for nuclear safety then I do wonder why these sorts of developments have gone on without challenge.

I ask you to approve rather than refuse this application.

## **Written submission by James Mitchell, Regional Head of Property, Lidl – Applicant**

Good Evening Members,

As members will be aware the proposal before you this evening was approved by the Eastern Area Committee in December last year.

I have provided the brochure sent to Eastern Area members prior to that meeting which I trust is helpful as a reminder to Eastern Area members and especially the other members of the committee.

Since that time Lidl have continued to work with officers to further enhance the scheme ahead of your determination tonight. In advance of this meeting I have provided a further brochure summarising those improvements which I hope members have found useful. These changes have enabled the previous reason for refusal concerning the lack of an acceptable emergency plan to be removed. Our emergency action plan is confirmed as being agreeable with final details secured by condition. As part of this revised plan we have introduced an emergency only vehicle exit to Silchester Road to be used in the event of an emergency at AWE avoiding exiting traffic obstructing blue light services on Aldermaston Road.

At the time of the Eastern Area meeting there was demonstrable large-scale support for our application. This has continued to grow since with a further 261 people supporting through Lidl's consultation exercise taking the total number to 5,531 (93.92% in favour). A further 229 personal letters of support have been sent to the Council taking the total to 1,141 (92.09% in favour). Crucially only 40 people (0.68%) in Lidl's consultation and 26 (2.1%) in the Council consultation raise objection on the grounds the officer cites as his reasons for refusal.

It seems the public believe the benefits of the scheme significantly outweigh the proposed reasons for refusal when judged on balance.

In conclusion these proposals;

- Create 40 new jobs recruited locally with potential for career progression.
- Provide much needed choice and competition Will claw back some of the £81M of expenditure lost to other centres making Tadley more sustainable in its own right.
- Provide a CIL contribution in excess of £350,000.
- Offer biodiversity benefits with the retention of trees and hedgerows and 38 new trees planted to assist in screening the development.
- Offer solar panels, provide electric vehicle charging points, are zero carbon and are highly sustainable with 280T of carbon saved by reduction of car journeys.
- Are supported by many, many thousands of local residents who crave the benefits the scheme will offer.

Our scheme has evolved and improved beyond recognition through the course of the application. We trust the planning committee will now weigh the myriad of benefits in the planning balance.

I sincerely hope that members will confirm the Eastern Area Committee resolution and grant permission for the scheme allowing Lidl to deliver this new facility for Tadley which would be in keeping with the exceptional levels of public support.

Thanks for taking the time to consider my comments.

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