

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.