

## **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.