

**DISTRICT PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
**8<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020**

**UPDATE REPORT**

**Item No:** 4(1)      **Application No:** 19/01063/COMIND      **Page No.** 15-59

**Site:** Land South Of Ravenswing Farm Adjoining Aldermaston Road and Silchester Road Tadley

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**Planning Officer Presenting:** Michael Butler

**Member Presenting:** N/A

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**Written submissions**

**Parish Council:** N/A

**Objector(s):** Sue Brown

**Supporter(s):** 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 and Wendi Batteson

**Applicant/Agent:** Lidl - James Mitchell

**Ward Member speaking:** Councillor Dominic Boeck

**1. Additional Representations**

The Local Planning Authority has received 95 further representations in support of the application, bringing the total number to 999. A further 22 representations in objection have also been received, bringing the total number to 86.

It is very difficult to provide a single precise figure as to the total number of representations received in various forms because there have been duplicates from the same households. For clarity, the total number of registered contributors is reported. For example, two residents named on a single letter would be counted as one contributor. Whereas the totals quoted by the applicant would take the same letter as two. Furthermore, Committee Members will recognise that some contributors have submitted multiple representations to the Local Planning Authority, as well as direct to Committee Members.

The applicant has also undertaken a separate consultation exercise over the application period, which has now been some 14 months. This has resulted in an online petition which has been highlighted in the brochure sent out by the applicant to Committee Members. In

addition, as Members will be aware, further additional emails of representation have been sent directly to Committee Members, both in support and against the proposal.

Amongst the representations, Committee Members have also received three emails of support from Councillors from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, one of whom is the Leader of that Council. Councillor Rhatigan notes that the issues raised are they believe that if the application site had been located in the Borough, it would have received approval, it is very difficult to find a suitable brown field site for such a store in Tadley itself, use of the store will be by those who live and work in the area anyway. Drainage should not be a problem and in the spirit of local democracy the resolution of the Eastern Area Planning Committee should be upheld. It is regrettable that public participation is not allowed in the COVID-19 situation. Councillor Bower identifies the much improved retail competition if the store is approved and the savings of local families on public transport per week by not having to travel to other stores further afield. Finally Councillor Carruthers notes that in addition to the cheaper prices, it will provide additional jobs.

A letter of support has also been received from Councillor Vaux of Tadley Town Council. The letter highlights the local support to the application, and that there were in excess of 30 people in the audience to the Eastern Area Planning Committee. Councillor Vaux urges the Committee to grant planning permission citing insufficient choice for local residents, reducing the need for residents to travel, the expense of travelling for those least able to afford the cost of travelling, and that the COVID-19 lockdown has highlighted the need for a store, and that people feel unsafe travelling on public transport. In response to the officer recommendation, Councillor Vaux highlights that the majority of the Tadley population lives in Basingstoke and Deane, and that this location is within the vicinity of the largest group of shops and commercial buildings in Tadley.

The matters raised in support and objection broadly align with those representations already been received, but the following is an additional summary:

#### Support

- The store will provide more jobs.
- It will help to undermine the monopoly of Sainsbury's in the town.
- The visual impact point is not well founded: the area is urbanised in any event, by the proximity to the AWE. The proposed landscaping will reduce the harm anyway.
- Only a small portion of a greenfield site will be taken up as the location plan shows.
- It is unfortunate that the location of the store is so close to the Council boundary. Most Tadley residents who will benefit from the store do not live in the District area.
- The population will benefit from a discount food store.
- The COVID-19 crisis has brought into focus the benefits of having good local facilities in communities in easy reach.
- Tadley has grown in recent years and so needs better shopping facilities.
- The location is sustainable: shoppers will be able to walk to the store rather than drive — good for the environment and good for those without cars.
- The location will assist local health and wellbeing of residents.
- The applicant has achieved a lot in producing the safety/lockdown plan, far more than other stores/applicants in the past, so they should not be penalised on this issue.
- It will mean residents will not need to travel further afield to shops in Reading, Basingstoke and Newbury, so reducing carbon production. And less road congestion further afield.
- Do not believe that traffic congestion on the A340 will be a problem as this is "bad" at peak times due to the AWE but locals will know this and so avoid those times to shop at the store.
- In favour of the emergency access –why not use all the time?
- Like the revised elevations and design of the store
- The store will improve the wider economic vitality and viability of Tadley town centre.

- It will be very useful in location terms for AWE staff.
- Cannot understand why the officers are objecting to the application, given the significant benefits which will arise, although do note that the recommendation is one of balanced refusal.
- The store is well designed and like the solar panels.
- It will be ecologically beneficial
- If the application is approved it will benefit Berkshire by additional business rates but will benefit Hampshire residents by better shops. A fair arrangement.
- Council has been prevaricating for too long on the application-approve it now.
- It will not be an eyesore.

#### Objection

- The location of the store has not changed so the impact upon traffic at peak times and other times will still be “bad”.
- No new store needed — Tadley already has enough.
- Why lose yet another greenfield site?
- Increased noise and pollution caused by more traffic on the roads – not good for children with asthma.
- Increased light pollution.
- The application if approved will set a harmful precedent for other schemes nearby.
- It will encourage more rubbish to be created across the area.
- Site falls within designated nuclear protection zone so should not be built upon. It is there for a reason.
- Why approve another food store when the retail giants are closing some of theirs due to increased deliveries?
- West Berkshire has a defined and approved local plan which carefully designates settlement boundaries which should be respected. This application if approved will not do so and a harmful precedent will be set.
- The town will lose its character and charm if the application is approved.
- Another access onto the A340 will be potentially hazardous.
- Local shops will find it harder to compete with Lidl which will be a shame.
- The site floods and so building on it will exacerbate the situation elsewhere in the town.
- Development would be a blight on the countryside and is not needed.
- It will disrupt north/south existing pedestrian and cycle flows on the pavement alongside the A340.
- It will mean the loss of an important hedgerow and local wildlife.
- Development alongside the Silchester Road which leads to the Roman town is a shame.