

Highway Response

Ref: RECON 24/0782

Date: 30/12/24

PROPOSAL: RESERVED MATTERS (CONDITION 01) FOR PROPOSED RETAIL STORE, NURSERY (D1) AND 3NO. COMMERCIAL UNITS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS IN LOCAL CENTRE AND PARTIAL DISCHARGE OF CONDITIONS 07 (LANDSCAPING), 08 (MATERIALS/FINISHES TO EXTERNAL SURFACES), 9 (MATERIALS/FINISHES FOR HARD LANDSCAPED AREAS), 10 (BOUNDARY TREATMENTS), 12 (PARKING), 15 (EMERGENCY ACCESS), 16 (ROADS, CYCLEWAYS AND FOOTWAYS), 17 (GREEN TRAVEL STRATEGY), 19 (NOISE ASSESSMENT), 22 (LIGHTING), 23 (ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT PLAN), 24 (SITE LEVELS), 27 (GROUND CONDITIONS), 28 (VERIFICATION REPORT), 32 (PILING WORKS), 33 (SURFACE WATER), 34 (FOUL AND SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE AND STORAGE) AND 39 (CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGY) RELATING TO OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION 06/0471 FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF SITE TO CREATE A MIXED USE URBAN EXTENSION

SITE: Land West Of 1 Kings Wall Drive Newport South Wales

Case Officer: Geraint Roberts

Highway Officer: Kevin Jackson

Following receipt of further information and a revised Technical Note (TN03) we would update our comments as follows.

Highway recommendation:

Objection maintained.

Highway Comments:

TN03 contains a table of highway comments and rebuttals. We have used the same numbering below for ease.

1. It is not disputed that the previous TN referred to the details described. The issue is that the application does not consider them further. There is no consideration of the obvious convenient linkages between this site and the extensive residential development. There will be buses passing close to the site, but these are not referenced, and no attempt is made to create appropriate and more direct linkage / stops for what should be the main catchment. There is no recognition of the desire lines into/through the site for pedestrians. We therefore consider the point still stands and maintain the objection.
2. We note the introduction of additional pedestrian access points. We would comment that only one of those labelled "11" is meaningful. Internally there is no route along the desire line and there are conflicts with manoeuvring or loading HGVs for all pedestrians entering from the north to visit the Aldi. The nursery and units 1-3 are well served on this side, but poorly served from any other direction.

Residents of the area east of the site (Bridling Cres etc.) have to walk around the site before they can enter it. Access in the northeastern corner of the site would serve a significant number of pedestrians. (Refer to servicing for further issues/conflict details). We therefore still consider the access for pedestrians to be inappropriate and have unnecessary conflicts.

3. The stop referred to on Queensway would not serve both directions and local residential areas. Stops to the north of the site would benefit from local services and provide for an extensive local residential area. These should be provided.
4. Long stay cycle parking must be secure and fully weatherproof. Simply "covered" is only appropriate for short stay (not employee) use. We would accept an internal provision for Aldi, but it must be a designated secure space, with cycle stands, not an "allowable practice". Staff parking is needed to avoid objection. Whilst detail can be agreed via a condition, it is necessary to have an understanding of the quality required and agree the location and capacity to be provided.

No condition will be discharged based on warehouse parking being allowed. The condition will also seek employee parking for other premises.

5. It is not known how the electricity for charging is proposed to be provided. We would not expect Lidl to pay for it (indeed they may provide a commercial service) and we would not expect other businesses to have no provision. Whilst two spaces and ducting to future proof it could be acceptable for Lidl, additional provision is expected for other tenants/owners on the broader site.

6. We are aware of the contents of the TP, but maintain it is not strong enough and will be undermined by over-provision of parking. The Active Travel Officer will however be the one to comment in detail.
7. Whilst Newport's standards for parking are based on gross area, the difference is not sufficient to justify a giant leap in requirements. Furthermore, the Lidl is being promoted on the basis of being a relatively low traffic generator (compared to operators of larger stores). The standard for 2000 sqm stores is therefore considered most appropriate. Being 45sqm above this does not justify a step change. The standard for "supermarkets and superstores, predominantly food" would be synonymous with the larger stores and a much more onerous trip generation assessment.

The reference to the Tring appeal decision is not a factor that we would give weight to. It is clear from the first line of the extract that it is a discussion of a site that does not meet the council's requirements for sustainability and will be more reliant on cars than it should, simply by virtue of its location. The Inspector appears to be being pragmatic about the constraints and use of the site. To earn any weight, it would be necessary to show that the stores are comparable.

Furthermore, it would be necessary to demonstrate much higher trip generation than has currently been assumed. The parking accumulation and junction impacts would all need to be revisited.

All current research and best practice papers accept that the provision of excess free parking encourages car use. Whilst a car will be preferred for bulk shopping, a lot of shopping doesn't require one and this is another factor relied upon to justify low trip generation. The assumption of low car use and higher "walk in" clearly contradicts with a need for a high parking demand. The two cannot be accepted together.

We understand that there are occasions when stores will be much busier like Christmas, but all planning and design work must be based on neutral days/weeks/months. Our objection to the level of parking proposed is therefore maintained.

8. Minibus parking is noted, but the location requires buses to reverse the length of the car park which is not supported.
9. Confirmation of bay sizes noted and no further comments.
10. The commercial units will have no control over the vehicle sizes used to deliver to them and articulated vehicles up to 16.5m should be anticipated. Swept paths are requested to confirm they can enter and leave without reversing.

It should also be noted that all HGV loading/unloading will impact through flows and more importantly will obscure forward visibility of the crossing point. This raises safety concerns that should be addressed via better provision for pedestrians.

11. We note that HGVs can access the yard as now suggested, however this is still a significant safety concern. Stopping on a crossing and obscuring pedestrians from other vehicles is an issue as well as the fact that pedestrians will walk behind it. In addition, cars will stop behind it and they may not be seen either.

Vehicles entering the loading area also cross the route of pedestrians whilst reversing, notably those cross visiting the nursery and the retail, but also those entering the site from the northern access adjacent to the nursery. We would suggest this could be the largest pedestrian flow through the site.

It is not entirely clear what level of inter-visibility is available for vehicles exiting the yard and this also needs to be demonstrated. The assessment should take account of the gradient of the service access.

There are a number of other points of conflict with pedestrians and other vehicles as the swept path assessments demonstrates clearly. These could however be accepted as the vehicles are travelling forwards.

The store is likely to have more than two deliveries a day as is suggested, but even that would be sufficient to raise an objection. The other vehicles are likely to be rigid, but these also have very poor visibility in reverse and HGV collisions are disproportionately high for reversing vehicles.

Any reversing of HGVs in a public area will raise objections and as previously stated, the proposal is contrary to what was agreed at outline. It therefore raises an objection on grounds of highway safety.

12. We note confirmation of the waste strategy and there are no further comments.
13. This proposal is being considered on its own merits as policy dictates. Whilst we would support overnight deliveries, this would not be appropriate for all deliveries and therefore not a reasonable condition. Furthermore, we would not expect nighttime deliveries to be supported by colleagues in environmental health.

Lidl's responsibilities do not in any way reduce our duties and reversing HGVs in public areas is undoubtedly a safety concern that could and should be avoided. The first action when considering any risk assessment is to consider how the risk can be eliminated at the design stage. There is adequate space on this site to provide a safe solution.

Conclusion

The Technical Note does not satisfactorily address the concerns raised and Highways maintain objections on grounds of safety amongst others.