

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/22/0154

Site Address: Aldi Foodstore
Plymouth Street
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 0TP

Development: Non-material amendment to the landscaping scheme relating to planning permission P/21/0225 for store extension

Case Officer: David Cross

Application Expiry Date: 11th August 2022

Consultation reply date expired:

APPLICATION SITE

The application site, which measures approximately 0.56 of a hectare, includes the Aldi Foodstore and Simon Jones Cars, located on the southern edge of the town centre. The Aldi store is adjacent to the south-west boundary of the site, which lies adjacent to the River Taff, with the remaining areas largely comprising a carpark. Along the north-east boundary of the site is the car sales forecourt with a small sales office that adjoins the main highway (Plymouth Road) serving the site.

To the north-west, the site is bound by a roundabout that provides a link to the surrounding area, including the town centre to the north and the A470 trunk road to the south. To the south-east is a bowls club and associated carpark, which shares the same access off Plymouth Road as the Aldi store. It is also noted that there is a retaining wall that separates the car sales area from the Aldi store and there are a number of trees planted within the carpark with a planted verge along the north-west boundary.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks approval for non-material amendments to the landscaping scheme of planning permission P/21/0225, which forms part of the wider development to extend the Aldi store and to reconfigure the layout of the carpark. The approved landscaping scheme involved the planting of 4 trees at the centre of the carpark, together with two rain gardens that would support a sustainable drainage system. A grassed area with three trees was also proposed along the north-east boundary between the main highway and carpark. Additionally, a planted area would be created in the eastern corner of the site adjacent to the main access on to the highway. The existing planting along the north-west boundary would be retained as part of the development.

It has been highlighted by the applicant that the four trees to be planted at the centre of the carpark would impact on the performance of the proposed raingardens, which are required to manage the surface water. Therefore, it is proposed to reposition these trees elsewhere within the site, of which two of the trees would be located along the north-east boundary, (adjacent to the previously consented trees) to form a row of 5 trees. One of the trees would be located in the planted area adjacent to the main access on to the highway and the other would be located to the west, within the existing planted area adjacent to the steps. All other aspects of the development would remain as previously approved.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/21/0225 - Proposed extension to Aldi Stores, demolition of the existing car sales building, boundary wall, and forecourt to facilitate extension, re-configuration of the existing car park and other external works

Permission GRANTED on 30.11.2021

P/16/0069 - External alterations to existing store, including alterations to elevational treatment and glazed shopfront and minor repairs to external areas (including re-surfacing of car park etc).

Permission GRANTED on 26.04.2016

P/06/0671 - External changes to building and erection of glass canopy.

Permission GRANTED on 05.02.2007

P/05/0495 - Extension (to provide 320 sq. m. of retail and storage floorspace)

Permission GRANTED on 21.12.2005

CONSULTATION

No consultation exercise was carried out.

PUBLICITY

No publicity exercise was carried out

POLICY CONTEXT

National planning policy

The Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Edition 11, February 2021:

Para 3.5 – 3.15 set out the importance of high quality design to ensure inclusive design, to promote environmental sustainability and ensure high environmental quality. Regard should also be given to the special characteristics of an area, community safety and to encourage sustainable forms of transport.

Para 3.55 notes that previously developed land wherever possible should be used in preference to greenfield sites where it is suitable for development.

Para 4.1.43 – 4.1.56 set out the need to reduce the level and speed of traffic in new development, the provision of car parking and how this may be integrated into new development to minimise the reliance on cars. Transport assessments are also an important mechanism to determine anticipated impacts a development proposal may have.

Section 4.3.3 acknowledges that in order to ensure maximum contribution to the well-being goals the planning system must promote viable urban and rural retail and commercial centres. It must sustain and enhance the vibrancy, viability and attractiveness of retail and commercial centres. It must also improve access to and within the retail and commercial centres by all modes of transport.

Section 4.3.8 – 4.3.23 notes that where a need for additional retail has been identified, planning authorities should consider the most appropriate form, scale and location of this provision to best meet the need. It emphasises a town centre first to the sequential approach for the location of new retail development, before consideration is given to edge of centre and then out of town sites. New out of town retail developments or extensions should not be of a scale, type or location likely to undermine the vibrancy, attractiveness and viability of those retail and commercial centres that would otherwise serve the community.

Sections 4.3.26 – 4.3.29 consider the potential retail implications a new retail development may have on designated retail centres, which may impact on their viability and vibrancy. Where appropriate retail impact assessments may be required and the use of conditions may be necessary to limit any changes over time i.e. loss of existing provisions, changes to the range of goods or the sub-division of units etc.

Para 6.4.21 – 6.4.23 note that local authorities should seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and build resilient ecological networks to ensure that any adverse environmental effects can first be avoided, mitigated or compensated. Regard should also be given to any potential impacts on protected species which may result in disturbance or harm to the species or its habitat.

Technical Advice Notes (TAN):

- TAN 4 Retail and Commercial Development, November 2016
- TAN 5 Nature Conservation and Planning, September 2009
- TAN 12 Design, March 2016
- TAN 15 Development and Flood Risk, July 2004
- TAN 18, Transport, March 2007

Welsh Government Planning Guidance: Approving Non-material Amendments to an Existing Planning Permission (July 2014).

Local planning policy

Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-2031:

- Policy SW4 - Settlement Boundaries
- Policy SW11 - Sustainable Design and Placemaking
- Policy EnW1 - Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience
- Policy EnW3 – Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species.
- Policy EnW4 - Environmental Protection
- Policy EnW5 - Landscape Protection
- Policy EcW3 - Retail Hierarchy – Supporting Retailing Provision
- Policy EcW4 - Retail Allocation
- Policy EcW6 - Out-of-Town Retailing Areas

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

- SPG 4 Sustainable Design, July 2013
- SPG 5 Nature and Development, May 2015

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main considerations of this application relate to whether the proposed changes to the landscaping scheme would constitute a non-material amendment. In this respect, consideration is given to the potential impact the changes would have on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

An Arboricultural report was submitted in support of planning application P/21/0225, which reviewed the condition of the existing trees along the boundaries of the site and within the carpark. Whilst the existing vegetation along the south-west and north-west boundaries would largely be unaffected by the development, some of the trees within the existing carpark and adjacent to the north-east boundary would be lost as a result of the proposed rearrangements to the carpark. The report noted that the affected trees were typically of low quality, although a small group of trees were deemed to be of moderate quality. To compensate for the loss of these trees, it was proposed that 7 extra heavy standard trees would be planted at the centre of the carpark and along the north-east boundary, 3 large specimen shrubs would be planted in the north-east corner of the site and 514 new shrubs would be planted within large planting beds.

The revised landscaping scheme illustrates the planting schedule across the site would largely remain the same as previously approved and it is only the relocation of 4 trees to the boundaries of the site that would be amended. There would not be a reduction in the number of trees to be planted, which in part provides ecological enhancements and compensates for the loss of the existing trees. The amended landscaping scheme would provide an attractive environment that appropriately responds to the urban surroundings. The proposal would be minor in nature and would not result in a material change to the approved scheme. Furthermore, the proposed changes would not conflict with the LDP policies.

CONCLUSIONS

For the above reasons, the proposed development is acceptable and would constitute a non-material amendment to the originally approved scheme. Accordingly, the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: **BE APPROVED** subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping (Drawing No. 13892_P03 - Soft Landscape Proposals Rev K), shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the beneficial use of the extension hereby approved or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason - To ensure that the new development will be visually attractive in the interests of amenity and to accord with Policy SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

27/6/22