



Hazlehead Consultation

Frequently Asked Questions

This document will be updated following the consultation event with any questions asked at that event not included below. It supplements the information which is contained on the display boards, also available on the website.

01/07/2020 - This Q+A has been updated following submission of the formal application. Any changes are identified by red text.

The proposals

1. What are the proposals?

Aldi have applied for detailed planning permission for the erection of a new discount foodstore, parking, access, landscaping and associated works.

The current Aldi proposal is for a small local scale foodstore with a gross floorspace of 1,868sqm (21,463 sqft) gross / 1,315 sqm (14,154 sqft) net foodstore, with 101 parking bays.

2. What type of planning application has been submitted?

A detailed planning application has now been submitted, and can be viewed on the Aberdeen City Council Planning portal at <https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=QBTM78BZIAI00>.

Due to the size of the proposals, the scheme is only a 'local' scale development in terms of the planning regulations. As a result, there is no statutory need to undertake pre-application consultation. The consultation that was undertaken is therefore a voluntary undertaking by Aldi to ensure that the local community is appropriately informed of the facts concerning their proposals and could make comments to help inform the final scheme, before they are lodged with the Council.

Please note – Now that the formal application has been submitted, comments can be made directly to the Council.

3. What has changed between the consultation and the submitted application?

Following pre-application discussions with the City Council and feedback from the public consultation events additional changes were made to the scheme, as set out below:

- Reduction in aisle widths within the car park to accommodate a larger soft landscape strip to the south of the site, facing onto Countesswells Road;
- Introduction of higher standard trees and at a greater quantity on the western and southern boundaries, from the originally proposed 7 trees in this area to 14;
- Reconsideration of the size of the SUDs pond, to avoid impacts on the root protection area of trees in the north-east of the site;
- Movement of the vehicular access point to accommodate the Council's Roads Department's request concerning junction spacing; and
- Provision of a new path out with the site, on the north of Countesswells Road, to provide enhanced pedestrian linkages to residential areas nearby. This suggestion was made during the public consultation events and Aldi were pleased to be able to accommodate the request.

4. I thought this site was going to be used for housing?

The site is currently owned by Dandara, who have in recent years secured permission for a variety of development layouts on the wider site, for housing use and associated landscaping. This part of the site could not be developed due to the presence of the electricity pylons, however, these restrictions do not apply for a retail development.

5. What are the timescales for the proposals?

Now that the planning application has been submitted, if it is granted we anticipate that construction on the store could begin in mid-2021 with the store opening in early 2022.

6. What are the views of the Planning Authority?

The formal views of Aberdeen City Council will only become clear once the submitted planning application is assessed.

The Proposed Aldi Store

7. How big will the store be? Is it smaller or bigger than Cornhill or Beach Boulevard?

The proposed store will be 1,315 sq.m sales space. This is slightly larger than our other Aberdeen stores which have 1,035 sq.m and 1,185 sq.m sales space respectively.

8. What are the typical servicing hours of an Aldi store?

Aldi have a unique servicing system, which minimizes the noise created through the servicing of their store. This is so successful that the majority of their stores require no servicing restrictions at all despite the close proximity to residential properties.

Aldi typically only receive one or two deliveries per day helping to minimize the impact from HGV's on both the road network and residential amenity.

Servicing hours will be discussed with the Planning Authority during the determination of the planning application and if these are deemed necessary, they would be restricted via planning condition. The planning application has been supported by a Noise Statement to consider these matters further.

9. What are the proposed opening hours?

The store would be open 8am-10pm Monday to Saturday and 9am-8pm on Sundays.

10. How sustainable are the proposals?

The proposals have been carefully designed to meet, and exceed where possible, current building standards. The sustainability measures incorporated within the Aldi store include energy efficient light fittings and recycling of waste heat from the refrigeration systems. The proposals also include a reverse vending machine to allow Aldi to deliver a Deposit Return Scheme (referred to as 'DRS' on the Site Plan), as required by The Scottish Government to boost recycling levels across Scotland. More information on the Deposit Return scheme can be [found here](#).

11. Does Aldi work with any local suppliers?

Yes, Aldi work with a range of suppliers from the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire area. This includes suppliers of fish and seafood, eggs and bakery goods, many of whom supply Aldi across Scotland.

In addition, from Aldi's core range of 1,880 lines, over 400 products are sourced from Scotland, with the aim of reaching over 450 by the end of 2020. These Scottish products equate to 20% of sales in Scotland. The business was also recently awarded 'Scottish Sourcing Business of the Year' award at the Scotland Food and Drink Excellence Awards.

Retail Planning Policy Matters

12. Why does this Aldi want to develop a store in this area of Aberdeen?

Aldi currently operate only 2 stores within Aberdeen, at Cornhill and Beach Boulevard Retail Park. They have ambitions to have between 6 and 7 stores within Aberdeen in the future, to meet the growing demands for access to their award-winning offer.

Aldi have been seeking to identify a suitable location within the west of Aberdeen for many years, with the site at Hazlehead, Countesswells Road representing an available, suitable and viable option. This new store is designed to meet both existing demands for improved access to local shopping facilities and to cater for the growing population within this area of the city.

By delivering a new store at Hazlehead, it will allow local shoppers to meet their food shopping needs closer to where they live and improve the sustainability of these regular journeys.

13. Won't the proposals have as significant impact on nearby centres?

The proposed catchment for the Aldi store is approximately a 7 minute drivetime from the store location. This means customers are likely to drive up to 7 minutes to reach this store and is the area which Aldi are therefore seeking to service.

Within this general area, Aldi have been looking for site for a number of years, and if they were able to secure a site in an allocated retail centre they would happily locate there. However they have been unable to identify any other sites which are available or suitable to accommodate the development and associated car parking, servicing arrangements etc. This is despite looking for a number of years.

A comprehensive Retail Impact Assessment has been undertaken which considers the impact of the proposals. **This has now been submitted as part of the planning application.** This exercise has found that nearby centres including Seafield, Mannofield, Cults and Bielside contain a limited choice of food retailers, and those which are present are small convenience stores, rather than large supermarkets.

In retailing terms, it is an accepted concept that in terms of trade diversions that Aldi would only compete with similar retailers, this is known as 'like competes with like'. This means that any trade diversions would be derived from similarly sized stores in terms of scale and offer. This would be operators like Asda and Sainsburys at Garthdee, or the Lidl at Mastrick. As a result, the existing small shops in the nearby local centres will be unaffected by the proposals.

Finally, we have undertaken town centre healthchecks (October 2019) of these nearby centres which have confirmed that vacancy rates are low, with both Cults and Seafield having no vacant units, Mannofield having 2 and Bielside only 1. Therefore these centres are performing well and showing good signs of vitality and viability.

14. This development will impact the value of my property.

This is not a material planning consideration for the assessment of a planning application.

In any case, recent research has identified that properties close to an Aldi store typically increase more in value than a property close to some other retailers, and those not close to a retailer.

Moreover, the consultation exercises have found that the majority of local residents do support the proposals in principle.

Employment

15. How many jobs will be created? / What is the level of investment (£m)? /How do I apply for a job?

We anticipate that the new foodstore will create up to 35 direct full and part-time employment opportunities for local people. The development will also provide in-direct spin off benefits for Aldi's suppliers, with many based in Scotland.

In terms of their own operations, Aldi pays above average wages within the industry and the company regularly seeks to employ staff locally for its new stores. Aldi run two of the most successful graduate and apprenticeship schemes in the UK.

The proposals collectively represent a +£3.95 m investment into the area by Aldi.

In terms of applying for jobs, the proposals are still in their early stages and it is only once they are successfully through the planning process that there will be opportunities to apply for the new positions. Aldi would be advertise these nearer the time of their planned opening.

Environmental Matters

16. Will there be any detrimental impact on the amenity of residential properties nearby?

The nearest residential properties will lie approximately 30m from the boundary of the site to the north, however we do not believe their amenity will be impacted by the development. Aldi have a unique delivery system that reduces any noise associated with the activity and typically only receive one to two service deliveries a day, thereby further minimizing any impact that might arise. **The submitted Acoustic Assessment provides further detail in this regard.**

17. Will there be an impact on the existing trees and landscaping?

A small number of mature trees lie within and on the edge of the site. Our proposals retain the majority of these, particularly along the southern edge and south east corner of the site. In addition, the proposals include the planting of approximately 15 new trees around the edge of the site.

Following consultation feedback and changes to site layout, additional landscaping has been provided within the proposal. Although the proposals result in the loss of 9 trees, a total of 27 will be planted in replacement.

18. Will the proposals increase flooding?

As part of the planning application, Aldi are required to fully consider drainage and flood risk matters and ensure that there is no impact on nearby properties.

In line with current guidance Aldi are required to ensure that the proposed surface water flows from the site be restricted to mimic a greenfield discharge as if the site had not been developed.

In order to do this, Aldi's proposals involve the installation of a Sustainable Urban Drainage

System (SUDS) to the east of the store (in green), which is fed by a storage tank to the west of the site (blue box). In the event of an extreme storm, the system would keep any water on the site, and discharge it into the existing drainage network locally at a controlled rate to avoid any flooding taking place. This system will be further supported by filter trenches within the car park area.

The submitted Drainage Impact Assessment including Flood Risk discusses this in further detail.

Transport

19. How much traffic will the new Aldi store generate?

The network peak hours are considered 08:00-09:00 and 17:00-18:00 during weekdays and 12:00-13:00 on weekends. We predict the Aldi will have 53, 110, and 192 vehicles either entering or exiting the carpark during each peak hour respectively. The most traffic will be generated on the weekend, which is generally when the existing traffic levels are at their lowest. There will still be traffic generated during the network peak hours during weekdays, however a proportion of customers are expected to come from vehicles already passing the site i.e. they will visit the store as part of a longer journey, for example going to or coming from work at the start or end of the day, or on the way home from the school run.

20. How will this affect the Springfield Road / Countesswells Road signalised junction?

Traffic analysis has been undertaken in the Transport Assessment. It is proposed that the signal timings are altered to increase the efficiency and capacity of the junction. By changing the signal timings, more time will be given to busier arms of the junction, reducing queuing time. Traffic modelling shows the traffic generated by Aldi will have a limited effect on the capacity of this junction with queues increasing by a maximum of one car per approach. Delays as a result of the Aldi will be minimal.

21. Will the location of the access effect the operation of the junction into Robert Gordon sports fields?

Following our consultation event, and discussion with both Aberdeen City Council roads officers the proposed store access has been moved further west to comply with the specific junction spacing standards of the Council. Aldi have also engaged with representatives of Robert Gordon.

Full details off the operation of the access have been modelled within the submitted Transport Assessment to ensure it works efficiently. Please refer to this document if you require further information.

22. Is there enough parking?

Following the consultation event and alterations to the scheme, parking numbers have now been reduced with 101 spaces now proposed, comprising 77 standard bays, 7 accessible bays, 10 parent and child bays and 2 electric charging bays. This amount accords with the Council's parking standards.

This is a reduction from the 112 spaces originally proposed and discussed during our consultation.

23. Which bus services are available from the closest bus stops?

Bus services are available on Countesswells Avenue a short distance to the east of the proposed store. By the time the proposed store is built, two more bus stops will be in place directly

adjacent to the Aldi on Countesswells Avenue, west. These bus stops serve and will serve First Bus number 15 which provides two services in each direction per hour to surrounding residential areas, running between Airyhill and Craigiebuckler.

24. How will the amount of traffic generated be kept to a minimum?

There is good access to cycle routes, footpaths and footways on surrounding roads that will reduce need to travel to the store by car. 8 cycle parking spaces will be provided for customers at the store entrance. Staff will be encouraged to travel sustainably or car share.

25. Will the store benefit from Electric Vehicle Charging Points?

The proposals include 2 electric vehicle charging points within the customer car park. The electrical vehicle charging spaces are located close to the store entrance and will allow customers to charge their vehicles while shopping. If demand is high for these spaces, Aldi will consider implementing more.

26. There isn't currently a pathway along the northern edge of Countesswells Road to the east of the site. Can this be improved?

We have considered this suggestion and following discussions with Aberdeen City Council Roads officers, we have amended our plans to include a new footway in this location. This will also include new entrance hoops to the pathway.