



September/October 2020

## Proposals for a new Aldi neighbourhood food store, Mon Bank, Newport

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### Frequently Asked Questions

This document contains an overview of the common questions and queries raised through the consultation period, and as discussed on the online webinar on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020. They have been grouped into themes for ease of reading.

All information is available on the consultation website, and also viewable in the online virtual exhibition, both of which can be accessed via <https://aldiconsultation.co.uk/monbank/>

If you would like to speak with a member of the project team with any further queries, please contact [monbankaldi@planningpotential.co.uk](mailto:monbankaldi@planningpotential.co.uk) or 0117 214 1820.

### Traffic, Transport and Access

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**1. Will the new store cause disruption with traffic through Mon Bank? How will the local roads and junctions cope with a supermarket in this location?**

This is a point we have been looking at very closely. We are proposing a number of improvements and traffic related changes (for example, increasing the width of Abberley Hall Road and considering sequencing of the traffic lights at Cardiff Road to improve the traffic flow in the immediate vicinity). Wherever possible, we will be seeking to identify areas in which we can actually make improvements to the current situation such as through contributing to road improvements in Mon Bank. For example, we will be seeking to engage proactively with Newport City Council to ensure that Monmouth Castle Drive will not be used as a 'rat run' through the estate. In addition, we will accept a planning condition that stipulates that deliveries can only be made from Cardiff Road, to ensure delivery vehicles do not travel through Mon Bank.

**2. What alterations are being proposed to the local roads to accommodate this store? How will Abberley Hall Road cope with the increased level of traffic?**

We are proposing to make improvements to Abberley Hall Road, which will make it wider in some places to accommodate the proposed access for cars and delivery vehicles. We have moved the proposed access point for the service yard closer to the car park access point also, which reduces the amount of Abberley Hall Road that will require infrastructure improvements to accommodate increased use. Our proposed improvements will be closely considered by statutory consultees and the highways authority to ensure they are acceptable in traffic terms.



**3. Why can't there be another access point off the roundabout, rather than accessing the site off Abberley Hall Road?**

Unfortunately, the current roundabout layout does not facilitate the addition of a 5<sup>th</sup> arm to access the store both in technical design terms and road safety implications and in this regard Entran (Aldi's traffic consultants) consider that introducing a 5<sup>th</sup> arm in this location would fail a Road Safety Audit. Therefore, this option would not be accepted by the Council.

**4. Why can't the access to the car park be closer to the roundabout?**

We have looked at moving the car park access point on Abberley Hall Road closer to the roundabout. However, national visibility requirements can only be met in the current proposed location, as the access point needs to be far enough away from the roundabout so that people leaving the roundabout have enough time to see the access point. Further, an access closer to the roundabout could result in vehicles queuing back towards the roundabout as they wait to enter the site, which would cause safety issues at the roundabout. Therefore, this option is not technically acceptable. The site access location has been examined by an independent Road Safety Audit and found to be acceptable

**5. How will the access arrangements to the site be made safe for pedestrians?**

We have proposed a number of pedestrian improvements as part of the proposals. These include crossing points at the main site accesses, tactile surface coverings at appropriate locations around the site and traffic management procedures within the site (for example, a one-way system in the car park). Pedestrian access has been examined by an independent Road Safety Audit and found to be acceptable

**6. How will the delivery vehicles access the site? Are the roads suitable for HGVs of this size, length and weight?**

Delivery vehicles will access the site via Abberley Hall Road and through the service yard entrance, which will be gated in between deliveries. The roads accessing the site are suitable for the types of vehicles that will be accessing the store, and where required, road improvements will be made – for example, widening Abberley Hall Road. The HGV access route has been examined by an independent Road Safety Audit and found to be acceptable.

**7. Will the delivery vehicles be accessing the site at all hours? How many deliveries will there be? Won't they cause traffic jams and additional delays, especially if they drive through the estate from the south via Monmouth Castle Drive? Can't you just change the delivery times after planning permission to increase them/have them during the night?**

The store would require just one to two deliveries per day (restricted to the daytime only) and we are looking at how we widen the road into the proposed store so that delivery vehicles manoeuvres take place only within the site. Due to the minimal number of deliveries per day, it is unlikely that they would cause any traffic delays. Access would only be made via Cardiff Road, so there will be no HGV journey's through the Mon Bank Estate.



Once agreed as part of the planning application, delivery procedures (number and timing restrictions) can not be changed. If Aldi wished to change this a new application on this point would need to be made to Newport City Council.

**8. How can you minimise the sounds of reversing lorries and unloading?**

Aldi has a very efficient and quiet unloading process which takes place entirely indoors. The delivery lorry will reverse up to the service gate and unload straight into the warehouse. There will be no metal cages being used outside of the building, meaning deliveries will happen swiftly and noise will be kept to a minimum.

The service yard will be surrounded by a 3m high wooden acoustic fence, which would also minimise noise of vehicles and activity during deliveries.

**9. What measures will be taken, both during and following any construction, to ensure that residents living close to the site are still able to access their properties and park at their houses as they are currently able to do?**

We will be working closely with the highways authority and statutory consultee to agree any appropriate road amendments (such as line marking). During construction, Aldi operates a robust construction management process, which will mean that all activity and contractor vehicles will be within the site, which will be appropriately hoarded. Further details about this can be found in the [Construction Environmental Management Plan](#), which will be submitted as part of the planning application.

**10. How will road safety be addressed to account for the increase in local traffic volumes around the store?**

Road safety, traffic and access are all of high importance to Aldi and are being considered in detail as part of a [Transport Assessment](#) and associated supporting documents. The project team is consulting closely on this aspect with relevant statutory consultees and the highways authority. Updated versions of these documents will be submitted as part of the planning application. We will only be able to proceed with a new store if the proposals we put forward are deemed acceptable in all these respects by the Council.

**11. Won't increased vehicle usage, and additional HGV's cause damage to the local road?**

All local roads will be either already deemed suitable, or we will make them suitable, to accommodate the level and type of traffic envisaged to result as part of these proposals. Once adopted, the roads will be maintained by Newport City Council.



## Location and Need

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**12. Why has this location been chosen? Is it appropriate to build a retail unit on this piece of land?**

Aldi strongly believes that there is a requirement, and capacity for, a new store of this nature in this location to serve the local population. The decision to pursue this site is the result of a significant local area search for suitable premises, however there are none that meet the business requirements. This point is also something that Aldi will need to demonstrate within its planning application documents to the satisfaction of the local authority.

**13. I thought this land was safeguarded as green space? How can you build on it?**

This site is brownfield land (meaning that it is land that has been previously developed). It was originally earmarked for the delivery of office buildings when the residential development was approved and was marketed for a number of years for this purpose. However, there is no demand in the market for this type of use and following two years of marketing, other uses are now acceptable considerations in planning terms.

**14. There are plenty of empty units in the close proximity (e.g. Docks Way, Former Sainsburys site, Maesglas). Why are you seeking to build a brand-new store?**

We are grateful for a number of other suggestions of alternative pre-existing buildings in the local area. However, Aldi has a specific requirement for its new stores and all other vacant premises locally are not suitable for the requirements of Aldi's modern shopping approach. For example, they are constrained in terms of access and potential for redevelopment to meet Aldi's requirements for design and sustainability. Aldi has searched for many years to find a suitable alternative on this side of Newport without success. The site at Mon Bank provides an opportunity for a new, modern, sustainably constructed store to serve this side of Newport. This point is also something that Aldi will need to demonstrate within its planning application documents to the satisfaction of the local authority.

**15. There are too many food stores in the local area already. Why do you want to build another one?**

Aldi strongly believes that there is a requirement, and capacity for, a new store of this nature in this location to serve the local population. Our other stores in Newport are significantly over-trading, meaning we can't properly deliver the service to meet the demand. Building a new store such as that being proposed is a significant investment for Aldi, and it would not be commercially viable for us to pursue it if we did not believe there was the demand in the area for our offering.

**16. Won't an Aldi in this location mean there are less trips to other existing shops, which would be harmful to the local economy?**

Due to the nature of an Aldi store – we have no butchers or bakery in store, we don't sell tobacco, or magazines, and have a very limited product range compared to other shops – our stores generally require other trips to other local shops for people to complete their



purchases. We find that an Aldi store in a local area can have positive impact through generating linked trips to other shops and facilities, and by retaining shoppers in the locality.

## **Amenity, Design and Environment**

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### **17. Will the store overshadow local houses?**

As a result of feedback, we have changed the store design to minimise its visual impact and its height in relation to the surrounding properties. The store proposed is a flat roofed design, which is significantly lower than a two-storey house, meaning that it would not cast shadows on surrounding properties. Indicative imagery of the proposed store, and its relationship with the local area can be found on the website: <https://aldiconsultation.co.uk/monbank/>.

### **18. How has the local design for the estate been considered in the development of the store? (e.g. Redrow Heritage style).**

As noted above, design of the store has been a central consideration. In addition to the height of the store, we will also discuss the appearance and use of outside materials to ensure that it aligns with Newport City Council's expectations for a new building in this location.

### **19. Will the proposals mean that the pathway around the site, which is currently accessible to dog walkers and pedestrians, be closed off?**

The existing pathway around the site will be retained. Additional planting and landscaping will be undertaken around the boundaries, but this will not affect access.

### **20. Won't building a store in this location have a detrimental impact on the local biodiversity. What is being done to protect and enhance the local environment?**

We place a high importance on biodiversity and environmental issues and will be seeking to demonstrate that our proposals have no adverse impact in this respect in the local area. We will be undertaking detailed surveys and addressing this point within the planning application documents.

### **21. What is to stop Aldi building the store and then leaving after a few years, meaning that we'd be left with an empty unit?**

This development is a significant investment for Aldi, and we intend to occupy the store for many years to come. It is not in our interest to develop a new store unless we are sure that we are able to maintain it and service our needs for the foreseeable future.

### **22. Who will be responsible for maintaining the planting on and near the site? Has consideration for additional litter also been taken into account?**

Aldi retains a landscaping maintenance team for all of its stores. This ensures that the boundaries, planting and landscaped areas are consistently reviewed and cared for. Where required, planting and fencing will be trimmed, replaced, and looked after on a regular basis.



An on-site caretaker will also maintain the car park and external areas on a daily basis – this includes litter picking and flagging any other issues that need attention.

## Security and Anti-social behaviour

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**23. How will you prevent an increase in anti-social behaviour during the evenings and overnight when the store is closed? How will you prevent and manage people wanting to meet with cars in the car park after hours for example?**

We are proposing to install drop bollards at the entrance to the site to prevent access after-hours. In addition, we will have store CCTV and additional security measures, which should deter anti-social behaviour. These security measures are linked directly with the local police and the store manager will be on hand to assist with any emergencies should they arise outside of operating hours.

**24. What if someone leaves their car in the car park overnight? How will they access it after hours?**

It is likely that there will be some form of parking charges for the car park, which should act as a deterrent. It will not be encouraged for people to park in the car park and leave the car for the day.

**25. We're concerned about the additional number of people in close proximity to a residential area. How can you ensure that it is maintained and secured effectively through the day, but also at night-time?**

We are proposing to install drop bollards at the entrance to the site to prevent access after-hours. In addition, we will have store CCTV and additional security measures, which should deter anti-social behaviour. These security measures are linked directly with the local police and the store manager will be on hand to assist with any emergencies should they arise outside of operating hours.

**26. Is there a policy in place to prevent anti-social behaviour or to prevent people gathering at store entrances, but not using the shop?**

This would be dealt with on a case by case basis by the store management team, who will liaise closely with shoppers and local residents to assist with issues of this nature.

## Other

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**27. Won't the proposals cause local house prices to go down?**

There is no proven link to house prices being reduced due to the proximity of a new Aldi store. In fact, there have been some studies which show that proximity to a store like Aldi can represent a benefit as buyers look to purchase houses with easy access to local amenities.

**28. What benefits will Aldi bring to Mon Bank? If the Barrack Hill store closes, all those jobs will come here so there will be very few brand-new jobs?**



A new store in this location would increase the choice and accessibility of discount food offering to local residents this side of Newport. The new Aldi food store would create approximately 40 new jobs, including managerial positions.

Aldi employees receive industry leading wages above the National Living Wage (at least £9.40 per hour), proven opportunities for career progression, high levels of training, and a guaranteed minimum of 20 hours' work per week.

It is Aldi's aim to recruit staff locally for its new stores and, as a result, most staff live close to the store where they work.

More information on career opportunities with Aldi can be found at: [www.aldirecruitment.co.uk](http://www.aldirecruitment.co.uk).

To clarify, the Barrack Hill store is not closing, it is relocating, so those jobs will transfer to the new site at Crindau, plus a number of additional jobs will be created. So, this store will create a net addition of c. 40 jobs for Newport.

**29. When will the planning application be submitted and how long will it take for a new store to be built?**

We are currently preparing the planning application documents for submission in October (2020). We would envisage it taking a year or so before we would begin construction (if granted permission), and another year before it was ready to open.