



## Straiton 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.*

#### **The proposals**

##### **1. What are the proposals?**

The current Aldi proposal is for a small local scale foodstore with a gross floorspace of 1,879 sqm gross / 1,315 sqm net foodstore, with 104 parking bays. The final design may change depending on discussions with the planning authority and following feedback from this consultation exercise.

##### **2. What type of planning application will be submitted?**

A detailed planning application is proposed to be lodged in the coming weeks which will include the full detail of Aldi's proposals including the design and size of the building, its appearance, the site layout, car parking and pedestrian and vehicular accesses.

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. This consultation is therefore a voluntary undertaking by Aldi to ensure that the local community is appropriately informed of the facts concerning their proposals and can make comments to help inform the final scheme, before they are lodged with the Council.

**Please note** - Once the formal application is submitted, there will be an opportunity to make formal comments to the Council on the planning application.

##### **3. I thought this site was allocated for countryside uses?**

Within the adopted Local Development Plan, the site is allocated as countryside land where only a limited range of uses are permitted. Despite this, the site is surrounded on all sides by existing development or proposed new development. We therefore consider that the site does not meet the typical characteristics of a 'countryside' location and believe a case can be made for retail development on this land. This will be covered in the supporting Planning Statement.

##### **4. What are the timescales for the proposals?**

We are targeting a planning application submission in spring 2021 and if planning permission is granted, we anticipate that construction on the store could begin in late-2022 with the store opening mid-2023.

##### **5. What are the views of the Planning Authority?**

The formal views of Midlothian Council will only become clear once the planning application is submitted, which we anticipate will be in Spring 2021. In the meantime, we have engaged in pre-application discussions with officers at the Council regarding the proposals to agree the scope of the planning application submission.

##### **6. What is the relationship with the 'New Pentland' development proposals?**

Aldi have a land deal in place to purchase the site if planning permission and an alcohol license are granted by Midlothian Council. Whilst the Aldi development proposals are designed to ensure the two developments can complement one another, the Aldi proposals will be taken forward as a separate planning application and separate development.

As part of Aldi's proposals, they will widen the access onto Pentland Road, so that it could serve both developments. The proposals also incorporate the inclusion of an access point for the new Pentland development, behind the store, should that scheme also be approved.

### **The Proposed Aldi Store**

#### **7. How big will the store be?**

The proposed store will be 1,879 sqm gross with 1,315 sq.m sales space. This is comparable to the store under construction in Dalkeith, but larger than the two nearest stores at Oxfords and Gilmerton Road in Edinburgh.

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

Aldi have a unique servicing system, which minimises 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 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 restrictions are deemed necessary, they would be controlled via planning condition. The planning application will be 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 local suppliers from the Lothians area. This includes suppliers of bakery goods, meat and fish products, soft drinks, spirits and alcoholic products, many of whom supply Aldi across Scotland.

In addition, from Aldi's core range of 1,880 lines, over 450 products are sourced from Scotland. 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. Won't the proposals have a significant impact on nearby centres?**

As part of our application, we will need to demonstrate that proposals comply with Policy TCR2: Location of New Retail and Commercial Leisure Facilities. As such, a retail impact assessment will be submitted with the planning application to fully consider relevant policy matters including deficiency, impact and sequential considerations. The Council's own Retail Study from 2012 previously identified that there is capacity for new foodstore provision within the authority area to meet the needs of the expanding population and reduce leakage of expenditure to Edinburgh and East Lothian, which these proposals could help deliver. Aldi know from experience that many shoppers from Midlothian already leave to visit their stores at Oxfords and Gilmerton Road. The proposals would therefore reduce that shopping journey and provide jobs to Midlothian instead.

Given that the 2012 Retail Study was based on a number of assumptions about developments that didn't actually happen (e.g. Aldi Penicuik, Sainsburys extension at Straiton), we consider that there is more than sufficient capacity to accommodate the Aldi development.

The retail impact assessment will also consider where trade is likely to be diverted from to the new store. However, given the volume of excess capacity identified, it is considered that the majority of this will come from other large scale stores nearby, such as ASDA and Sainsburys at Straiton, or from existing Aldi's beyond the catchment area.

In addition to the above, town centre healthchecks will be completed for designated centres such as Loanhead, Bonnyrigg/Lasswade, Roslin, Bilston and Poltonhall, Bonnyrigg.

### Employment

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

The proposals will create employment of up to 35 positions, comprising a mix of full and part time jobs for local people, together with additional construction jobs and jobs on the Aldi distribution chain.

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 +£3.2m 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 advertise these nearer the time of their planned opening.

### Environmental Matters

#### **14. Will there be any detrimental impact on the amenity of residential properties nearby?**

The nearest residential properties lie approximately 66m from the boundary of the service yard and store plant. As a result, we do not believe that their amenity will be impacted by this 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.

A noise impact assessment will be submitted with the planning application to fully consider these matters and will be viewable via the Council planning portal once the application is submitted.

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

There are minimal trees on site at present, but the proposals include for the installation of a number of trees on the site boundary to enhance the appearance of the development. Please refer to the proposed landscaping plan that will be submitted with the planning application for further details.

**16. Will there be any impact on ecology and wildlife?**

We are undertaking an ecology survey to investigate these matters fully and ensure that the proposals mitigate any issues that arise from the survey. This will be included within the final planning application submission.

**Transport**

**17. How much traffic will the new Aldi store generate?**

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. In addition, a number of vehicle trips will be diverted from shopping at other retail stores. The impact of any additional traffic will be modelled, and results presented within the Transport Assessment associated with the application.

**18. How will this affect the Pentland Road / Straiton Road signals?**

Traffic analysis will be undertaken in the Transport Assessment for this junction and surrounding junctions to measure the impact of Aldi traffic. It is not predicted there will be any negative impact on the surrounding road network, however this would be mitigated against if necessary.

**19. Is there enough parking?**

104 spaces will be provided including 81 standard spaces, 5 standard disabled spaces, 9 parent and child bays and 4 electrical vehicle charging spaces (2 of which are disabled). This is the typical provision for all Aldi stores and is predicted to be more than adequate for the store. The parking levels are compliant with guidance set out by Midlothian Council.

**20. How can I reach the store using public transport?**

Bus services are available adjacent to the site on Straiton Road and connect to the pedestrian access point. These stops are served by 5 different services, connecting into Edinburgh and surrounding towns. Lothian Buses 47 is the most regular, operating every 30 minutes and providing a link between Penicuik and Granton Harbour. Borders buses X62 also provides a regular service and both the x62 and 47 run a frequent weekend service.

**21. What pedestrian and cycle routes are available from the store?**

The site is well located to encourage trips by bicycle. National Cycle Routes (NCR) 196 can be reached within a 10-minute cycle and connects with Penicuik and Bonnyrigg. There are footways and crossing points on roads surrounding the Aldi and the footway along the southern half of Pentland road will be extended along the store perimeter to meet a pedestrian access point.

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

22. There is good access to cycle routes and extended 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. Additionally, Aldi stores only require 1 or 2 HGV deliveries per day helping to minimise the impact from HGV's on both the road network and residential amenity.

**23. Will the store benefit from Electric Vehicle Charging Points?**

The proposals include 4, free to use 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. Further spaces will be 'future proofed' for easy conversion. The demand will be monitored and if it's high, Aldi will consider implementing more.