

TRANSPORT TECHNICAL NOTE

Project: Proposed Aldi store, Croydon Road, Caterham

Client: Tandridge District Council

Prepared by: DHA

Date: July 2022

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Transport Technical Note (TN) has been prepared on behalf of Tandridge District Council (TDC) in relation to the proposed Aldi store on Croydon Road in Caterham. The site is the subject of a live planning application (Reference: TA/2021/1800).

1.1.2 The applicant has submitted a Transport Assessment (TA) in support of the application, in addition to several Technical Notes offering clarification and further information to Surrey County Council (SCC) as the Local Highway Authority. Following receipt of the additional information, SCC have raised no objection to the application.

1.1.3 TDC as the Local Planning Authority nevertheless maintains concerns, particularly with respect to the level of on-site parking proposed, and DHA were commissioned to review the supporting evidence.

1.1.4 DHA produced a TN dated June 2022, which was issued to TDC, SCC and Aldi's transport consultant. This identified a number of areas of concern and/or areas for clarification, which are summarised as follows:-

- The parking accumulation assessments presented to date indicate that the proposed on-site parking provision will be insufficient to accommodate typical weekend peak demand;
- Parking controls and physical highway measures should be investigated to prevent overspill on the immediate highway network;
- The peak parking demand periods should be assessed using half-hourly or 15-minute intervals, to better reflect customer turnover and further understand the extent of any parking deficiency;
- Clarification is sought as to how staff parking will be accommodated; and
- The swept path analysis submitted for a delivery vehicle should be verified.

1.1.5 A meeting was subsequently held on 8th July 2022 between TDC, DHA and the applicant's planning and transport consultants to discuss these points, and a formal response was received on 18th July 2022. The content of this response is summarised below, together with commentary from DHA.

1.2 Technical Response – 18th July 2022

Bullet Point 1 – Parking Accumulation

- 1.2.1 Further parking accumulation assessments have been provided, based on data from five Aldi stores in similar geographical locations to the proposed Caterham store. These assess the period from December 2021 to June 2022, providing an average weekday, Saturday and Sunday accumulation profile.
- 1.2.2 It is demonstrated that the weekday average and weighted average maximum parking demand could be accommodated within the proposed car park.
- 1.2.3 The Saturday average and weighted average are shown to be close to the capacity of the proposed car park, while the Sunday weighted average is shown to be at the capacity of the proposed car park for several hours, based on data from the months of April and June 2022.
- 1.2.4 It is noted that the data collected during December 2021 and the early part of 2022 are likely to be affected by the ongoing Covid pandemic, when restrictions such as mask wearing were still prevalent. Such measures are likely to have deterred people from visiting busy environments such as supermarkets and therefore this casts doubt as the representativeness of the data presented. Given that the proposed car park is forecast to operate at capacity on an average Sunday, then even a relatively small element of suppressed demand in the data presented is likely to manifest itself in regular overspill parking during neutral conditions.
- 1.2.5 Moreover, it is noted that forecast demand based solely on the East Barnet Aldi store is shown to exceed the capacity of the proposed car park during several of the weekday and weekend periods. Indeed, Google Streetview images of the East Barnet site dated April 2022 show vehicles queueing within the site and blocking back on to the public highway, as shown in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: East Barnet Streetview Image – Car Park Access (courtesy of Google Maps)

1.2.6 Vehicles are also shown contravening the double yellow line restrictions along the site frontage, as shown in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2: East Barnet Streetview Image – Site Frontage (courtesy of Google Maps)

1.2.7 This serves to reinforce the importance of providing sufficient on-site parking capacity, particularly in locations such as that proposed in this case, where appropriate off-site parking opportunities (e.g. public car parks) are unavailable. Indeed, given the nature of the local highway network around the proposal site, it is not considered that any degree of overspill would be acceptable from a highway safety or amenity perspective.

Bullet Point 2 – Parking Controls

- 1.2.8 It is noted that the applicant is willing to provide a Section 106 contribution to fund additional waiting restrictions on Croydon Road. The applicant's transport consultants propose to replace the existing single yellow line restrictions with double yellow line restrictions, to prohibit parking at any time.
- 1.2.9 As illustrated in Figure 2 above, the implementation of double yellow line restrictions alone is often insufficient to prohibit short-term parking or waiting on the public highway, and given the concerns outlined above regarding the capacity of the car park, the likelihood of on-street parking is considered to be increased in this case.

Bullet Point 3 – Parking Accumulation Intervals

- 1.2.10 The applicant's transport consultants have confirmed that it is not possible to provide parking accumulation data from the sample sites in half-hourly or 15-minute intervals.

Bullet Point 4 – Staff Parking

- 1.2.11 It has been confirmed that an element of staff parking does occur at the six stores assessed, which would be accounted for within the data provided. Whilst this is noted, it is reiterated that there are no suitable locations for off-site parking in this case and therefore any staff that were to drive to the proposed store would be highly likely to park on-site; therefore adding to the potential for overspill.

Bullet Point 5 – Swept Path Analysis

- 1.2.12 Swept path drawings were provided for an articulated delivery vehicle as part of the Servicing and Management Plan submitted in support of the planning application. These demonstrate that delivery vehicles would be required to undertake an unusually confined manoeuvre within the car park in order to access the delivery bay, which would often take place during store opening hours, when customers and moving vehicles would be present. This gives rise to highway safety concerns.
- 1.2.13 The site layout plan further indicates that the parking bays would measure 2.4m by 4.8m, which is below the 2.5m by 5.0m which is more typically requested by Local Highway Authorities and thus there would be an increased risk of larger vehicles overhanging the parking spaces and conflicting with the swept path of the delivery vehicle.
- 1.2.14 The applicant is willing to accept a condition restricting deliveries during peak operational periods, which would address these issues to some extent, albeit not fully.
- 1.2.15 The applicant's transport consultant has separately submitted equivalent swept path drawings for a refuse freighter, which demonstrate that whilst the manoeuvre would be less confined, it would result in the vehicle obstructing public access to the car park during collection periods.

1.3 Summary and Conclusion

- 1.3.1 On the basis of the information provided to date, the applicant has failed to demonstrate that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users, and there is the potential for unacceptable highway safety impacts to arise, contrary to Paragraphs 110 and 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework.