

Epsom Civic Society

formerly Epsom Protection Society

shaping the future, safeguarding the past

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Justin Turvey
Interim Head of Place Development
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
The Town Hall
Epsom
KT18 5BY

3rd May 2023

Dear Justin,

Ref Planning Application 23/00402/FUL Former Dairy Crest Site Objection

The Epsom Civic Society are very concerned at this proposal to construct a new supermarket retail facility in Alexandra Road, Epsom. A very similar proposal was previously presented by Aldi (Planning Application 15/01346/FUL), which was subsequently refused by the Council. Many of the refusal comments are still applicable.

Since Aldi's previous Planning Application, a new Lidl has been opened in Upper High Street, approximately 400m from this site. The Lidl complex includes residential units and is adjacent to the Town Centre retail area. The Lidl supermarket is mainly used by shoppers walking from within the town centre shops.

We suggest that this site is more suited for a residential development rather than a food retail unit. It is noted that the recent Draft Local Plan did not allocate this site for housing. This was a mistake as the location would lend itself extremely well for flats and possibly affordable housing. Also, there would be a valuable contribution to our current housing targets.



The site is located adjacent to the Pikes Hill Conservation Area. This presents a similar situation to the proposed Police/Ambulance site in Church Street, which is located adjacent to the Church Street CA. The Council has recommended that the proposed residential development would adversely affect the CA. The Aldi site is identical in its nature and juxtaposition.

The previous Aldi scheme was refused based on the following:

- The proposed development is not in accordance with the development plan strategy as it promotes retail space outside of the town centre.
- The Application is contrary to the requirements of Section 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- It does not promote a town centre first approach to retail development in particular to Policy CS14 (Core Strategy 2007) and Policies E3 & E14 of the Epsom Town Centre Action Plan (2011).
- The proposed development is in close proximity to the five ways junction and will cause an increase in the volume and nature of traffic generated. Contrary to Policy CS16 of the Core Strategy 2007
- The footpath to the east side of Church Road fails to provide a safe, convenient and attractive access for all, contrary to Policy CS16 of the Core Strategy 2007.

The major problem of operating an Aldi site in this location is the vehicle trafficking for shoppers, staff and deliveries. The only access identified is from Alexandra Road close to the five way junction, at 12m distance. At present it is one of the most challenging junctions for the motorist. Views are impaired by parked cars and traffic proceeding at speed down Alexandra Road. The addition of the Aldi store entry/exit can only further complicate this dangerous junction. Our other local Aldi stores generate high traffic levels resulting in queuing traffic e.g. Kingston Road, Ewell Aldi store. Where and how will the traffic form queues? Surrey Council Highways need to fully review the traffic challenge before any approvals can be considered.

The construction works are planned to be completed in 2 stages i.e. Enabling Works and main construction activities. We note that the attached Construction and Environmental Management Plan does not explain the contractor's approach to the sheet piling works at the east boundary of the site. These works could create ground movements to the Old Cottage Hospital and houses in Wyeth's Road. There is no explanation of proposed piling plant, height of reduce level excavations, temporary supports, ground water containment, noise and vibration levels.



In conclusion, Epsom Civic Society strongly objects to this proposal. The additional traffic will be significant and create a dangerous situation at this busy junction. A residential proposal would be better suited for this site and a welcome addition to our housing needs.

Yours Sincerely,

Bob Hollis (Vice Chair of The Epsom Civic Society)

