

Statement of Community Involvement

Aldi Store, Exhibition Way, Exeter
On behalf of Aldi Stores Limited



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Planning Potential Ltd**London**

Magdalen House
148 Tooley Street
London SE1 2TU
T: 020 7357 8000

Harrogate

14-15 Regent Parade
Harrogate HG1 5AW
T: 01423 502115

Bristol

13-14 Orchard Street
Bristol BS1 5EH
T: 0117 214 1820

Report Author: Sarah Curnow

sarah@planningpotential.co.uk

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Executive Summary

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared on behalf of Aldi Stores Limited in support of a full planning application for the demolition of the existing Aldi store and adjacent vacant building, and its replacement with a new Aldi store and extended car park at Exhibition Way in Pinhoe, Exeter.

Aldi has carried out engagement with local people to gather feedback on Aldi's plans for the site in the Pinhoe ward of Exeter City Council.

Aldi's programme of direct consultation and engagement included:

1. Communications with the Pinhoe Ward Councillors;
2. An in-store display with details of the proposals, dedicated email address and phone line for feedback or questions, and feedback form, with freepost envelope and ballot box for comments.

Responses to the consultation have now been received, and Aldi is delighted that there was significant interest in the proposals with 102 responses to date. An overwhelming majority of these supported the plans, with 95 (93%) in favour, 2 (2%) opposing the plans, and 5 (5%) not sure. Further analysis is contained within this document.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This SCI provides details of the public consultation Aldi has facilitated to support its proposals for the demolition of the existing Aldi store and adjacent vacant building, and its replacement with a new Aldi store and extended car park at Exhibition Way in Pinhoe, Exeter
- 1.2. The project team is fully committed to engaging and liaising with the community in order to understand the key issues that local people consider relevant to their neighbourhood.
- 1.3. A programme of community engagement has been designed to ensure local stakeholders are provided with details of the proposals and have the opportunity to provide their feedback.
- 1.4. This document clarifies the best practice approach to consultation followed by the project team, detailing key activities and documents, setting out feedback received, and highlighting recurring themes and conclusions.

2. Planning Policy Context

- 2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It outlines and encourages positive community engagement between all parties involved and affected by the proposals. Specifically, the NPPF states that:

"Early engagement has significant potential to improve the effectiveness of the planning system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better co-ordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community."

- 2.2. The NPPF also recognises that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities.
- 2.3. Section 122 of the Localism Act introduced a new duty for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for planning applications above a certain size.
- 2.4. It includes publishing the details of the application in a manner that would reasonably bring the application to the attention of the majority of the persons living in or occupying premises near the application site.
- 2.5. Developers should have regard to community responses when finalising schemes and should submit a statement with their planning application to show that they have consulted with the community, and taken responses into account. This should also be considered by the Local Planning Authority in determining the planning application.

3. Key Consultation Activity

COMMUNICATIONS WITH WARD COUNCILLORS

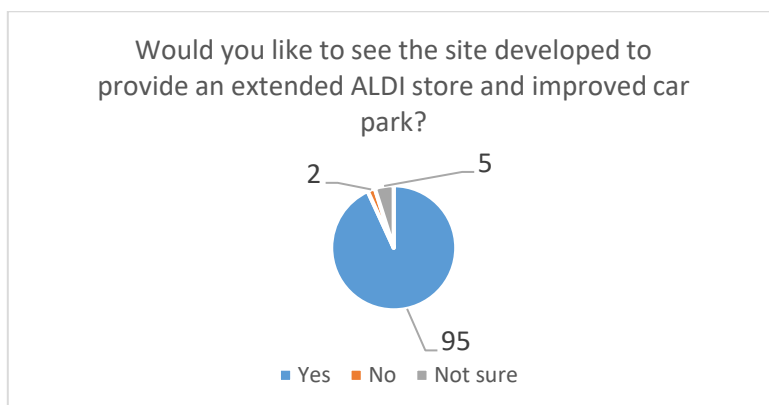
- 3.1. Ward Councillors for the Pinhoe ward of Exeter City Council, Councillors Duncan Wood, David Harvey and Trish Oliver, were sent an introduction to the scheme which outlined the proposals, included proposed site plans, and details of the community engagement being undertaken.
- 3.2. At the time of writing responses had not been received from the ward councillors.

INSTORE BOARDS AT ALDI, EXHIBITION WAY, PINHOE

- 3.3. Prior to submission of the planning application, in-store boards with full details of the scheme and proposed plans were installed at the Aldi at Exhibition Way (see image of display at appendix 1).
- 3.4. The boards included details of the proposals, and included the number of a dedicated telephone line to the consultant team, and an email address for feedback (see full content of boards at appendix 2).
- 3.5. The boards were accompanied with a feedback form (appendix 3), and ballot box for feedback responses. Freepost envelopes were also available so customers could take away a form and complete it in their own time, before returning feedback to the consultant team.

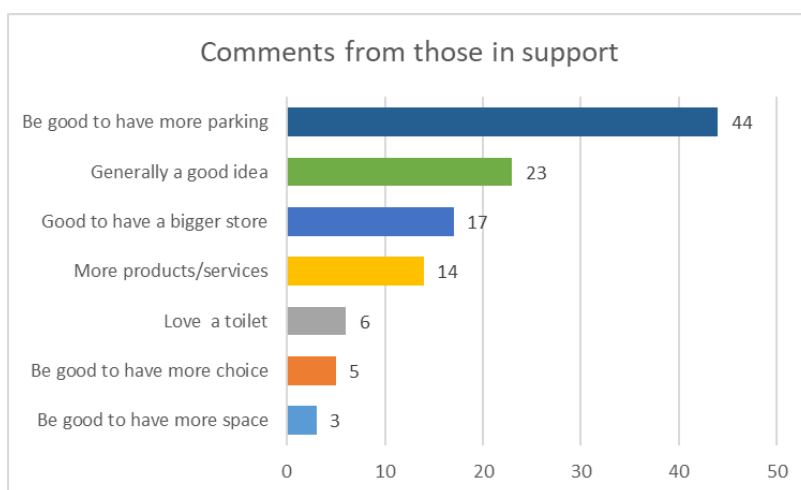
4. Review of Response to Public Consultation

- 4.1. There was considerable interest in our proposals with 102 feedback forms received in the post and in-store ballot box, to date.
- 4.2. The project team has been encouraged by the positive response to the proposals with 93%, or 95 respondents, in support. Five people (5%) were not supportive, and two (2%) were not sure.



FURTHER COMMENTS

- 4.3. Respondents were also asked whether they had any comments about the proposals. Not everyone had a comment but those received are summarised below.
- 4.4. There were 95 respondents who were supportive of Aldi's proposals, the comments provide an indication of the key reasons why. The most common response was that it would be good to have more parking, 44 people referred to the existing problems with queueing and lack of car park capacity at the store; 23 people simply said that it was a good idea, or words to that effect; 17 people said it would be good to have a bigger store / more room; 14 asked for further products and services with the larger store; six people mentioned that they would love to have a toilet; five people said it would be good to have more choice, and three people said it would be good to have more space.



4.5.

Please note: one respondent may have contributed comments about more than one theme, while many respondents did not make any comment.

4.6. Typical comments included:

Be good to have more parking

- Great store but parking has always been difficult so an enlarged car park would be ideal.
- Very often the existing car park is insufficient for the number of cars wishing to park before entering the shop. This forces drivers to park on adjoining roads, causing congestion. An enlarged Aldi store will enable a wider range of items to be on sale.
- Extra parking is essential.
- A very good idea. Both the store and car park have outgrown their present capacities.
- An extended and improved Aldi Store at Exhibition Way would be very welcome. Especially needed is more disabled parking. There is never enough. My husband and I are both disabled and find it very difficult when we have to park far away from the store entrance. Also, seating at the parking area would be much appreciated. Thank you.
- I think this a good idea. The current car park is too small and the store could be larger.
- I visit Aldi at least once a week and feel that improved car parking is required. It would also be nice to have a wider selection which would come with a larger store.
- It would be brilliant if the new building could be eco friendly in some way - solar power, roof garden etc. And if it looks pretty that would also be nice. More parking would be fantastic.
- It would definitely be an asset to have more car parking and a larger store but not sure all the effort involved is going to make the shopping experience and easier. Present entry not bad BUT exit of car park curb is protruding and the exit corner on the cul-de-sac is only available when a car is coming down to come into the car park by driving up on to the kerb which can ruin vehicle tyres. There I feel entry and more important excess is a serious issue when deciding the new layout. At this stage I have not studied the plans, but good luck with your proposal.
- We are excited about having a new Aldi Store in this area with extended car park. Parking at the existing store car park can be stressful at times due to lack of spaces.
- The building was never designed as a supermarket and so the current car park is not sufficient as a supermarket car park. Frequently visitors to the store are forced to park on approach roads to the store. It would be much better to have a bigger car park.

- We would like to add our support for the plans to build a new improved store for us and to increase the number of parking spaces allocated. We feel that this will improve the aesthetics of the area, as well as improving our shopping experience. It would be very good if an instore bakery could be incorporated as well, then Aldi would provide more competition to Lidl.
- We use Aldi at Exhibition Way, Exeter on a regular basis. It is a very good store with very helpful staff. The car park can be challenging with queuing cars backed up into the road, causing delay. A bigger store with a bigger car park would be smashing.
- Will there be a place for motorbikes to park? Rather than use a whole space for cars.
- A bigger car park would be great!
- I would welcome the new store because parking can be an issue at certain times.
- Extra parking spaces would be an advantage. Improved entrance to car park would help. I use this store for most of my shopping so am concerned as to how long the store would be closed for while redevelopment takes place.
- Cycle parking would be useful at new store.
- Very excited to hear you are expanding. Current car park lacks the space required for a busy city store.
- Plans are much better than the current buildings/car park.
- Please ensure you have plenty of disabled parking and this is controlled to stop other people using these important places.
- All sounds good but the car park needs to be extended as a priority before the store. Also the parent and child spaces need to be checked more as there are many people without children who park in there. Perhaps if they were moved further back from the entrance they might not
- Expansion on this site is to be welcomed. Design and layout looks good. Make sure to have plenty plants and trees throughout the car park. Also the access to the car park need to be improved as the road is too narrow causing congestion on to and off the site.

Generally a good idea

- Very welcome.
- I am a pensioner with a limited income and having adjusted to packing my bags using your purpose built shelf, I use you regularly. I find your goods on a par with other supermarkets and in some instances better. Yes please bring it on.
- I agree to the proposals for the improvements of the above store. I find the above store very satisfactory for a lot of my shopping.

- Please can we have some self-service tills or an express item till for people that purchase a few items. I hope all the fabulous staff will be retained and rewarded with enhanced staff friendly rest rooms! A most welcome change to the area.
- It would be a welcome enhancement to the store.
- Am delighted that this is taking place.
- Good idea
- Great idea.
- Badly needed!
- Long overdue! When will it open!
- Please improve and keep this store.
- More employment opportunity for a popular well run supermarket chain with good products without the need for dozens of ranges of the same products.

Good to have a bigger store

- Larger car park well overdue. Larger store would be good too. Self service tills as well as normal check-outs would be an improvement.
- I think this a good idea. The current car park is too small and the store could be larger.
- We have all used you from when you first opened, we are all looking forward to extra parking and a bigger store. We all love your stuff but we will be sad if you have to close for improvements. From all of us at Glendinnings up the road from you. Good luck.
- Desperately needs larger car park area and store - outgrown the existing site!
- Long overdue. Building and car park have long been too small. Bring it on!
- A very good idea. Both the store and car park have outgrown their present capacities.
- As Lidl are building a store just down the road, you need to maximise the shop and car park. They might take trade from Aldi as they have a large site! I have shopped at Aldi since they opened but unfortunately you are a victim of your own success! Good luck, I shall still shop in Aldi!
- My friend (who always visits Aldi for her shopping) has persuaded me to visit Aldi to do my main weekly shop. I like your store but I would really welcome a larger store with much more parking. Yes please.
- Yes please would like bigger store
- We use Aldi at Exhibition Way, Exeter on a regular basis. It is a very good store with very helpful staff. The car park can be challenging with queuing cars

backed up into the road, causing delay. A bigger store with a bigger car park would be smashing.

- I really enjoy going to Aldi and having a good look around a bigger Aldi would be fantastic.

More products/services

- More tills bigger car park. And a till for elderly people who aren't able to be as fast as you like!
- Please can we have some self-service tills or an express item till for people that purchase a few items. I hope all the fabulous staff will be retained and rewarded with enhanced staff friendly rest rooms! A most welcome change to the area.
- Not before time. Car parking has been a problem for some time now. Self checkout would be an advantage also! Particularly for less than 10 items.
- Larger vegan range I hope! (oh, and toilets...)
- Please stock hash browns. Never in stock.
- Would like to see self service tills and less staff manned tills as often these are not in use and for those with small amounts of shopping get help up at these types of tills.
- Please could you have usable bicycle parking area and sheltered area to tie up dogs. I use shop regularly as do other cyclists and dog owners. Currently it is difficult sometimes to find place to park bikes/dogs. Many thanks
- Should include self service checkouts or 10 items or less queue.
- Better cycle parking. Ideally Sheffield stands, covered from rain, near the shop's doors. Linked to above, should have access from Exhibition Way and its new cycle path.
- A fresh bakery would be a good addition.
- Would like to see an in built bakery. Better selection of meats for roasting i.e. extra large chickens., larger cuts of meat for roasting especially to feed 6+ people.
- I love this Aldi the staff are great and I can get all my essentials but more parking would be fab also more of the smaller trolleys. I would love a bakery too. Thank you.

Love a toilet

- Would be a good idea to have a customers toilet. Please could we have an in house bakery.
- Essential you provide public toilet on sight. I would spend more time and money in store if you did and I know many more who would.

- Very long overdue!! As we only shop at Aldi we are looking forward to using the new premises with larger selection of goods increased parking (hooray!) and customer toilets. Just need to get cracking.

Be good to have more choice

- I visit Aldi at least once a week and feel that improved car parking is required. It would also be nice to have a wider selection which would come with a larger store.
- Look forward to extra choice of products in a bigger store.
- We have seen the footfall greatly increase. The car park now provide insufficient space for shopper. We purchase around 90% of our weekly shop at Aldi. An increased range would be most welcome. The staff are friendly and welcoming making shopping a real pleasure.

Be good to have more space

- It would be great to 1. Have a toilet 2. more room in the aisles 3. more car parking
- We always get what we call car park envy when we go to a new Aldi store, there is always so much more room. I suppose it will have the new store layout but I am sure we will get used to that.
- The turning from Exhibition Way into the car park is tight and too small especially when cars are going in and out together. Can you make it wider, bigger, less tight. Thank you!

COMMENTS EXPRESSING CONCERN

- 4.7. Although 95 questionnaire respondents were supportive of the proposals, two opposed them, and five were unsure.
- 4.8. The concerns for those opposed to the scheme, or not sure, were that they preferred a smaller store, because they were more personal and they liked having less choice; some people were also worried about the existing store being closed while the works were being carried out.
- 4.9. The comments received were as follows:
- Approve extended car park but not sure about store. Present one is very friendly and orderly, went to Honiton recently seemed a shambles and couldn't find anything. Also exit there Sooner the better a bit more competition for the other stores around.
 - Whilst I agree that having a bigger store means more selection of products etc., one of the main reasons that I (and I know many others) shop there is the fact that it is small - easy to navigate, not loud or overwhelming, quicker as no need to dither over 10 or more choices of one item etc. Most importantly

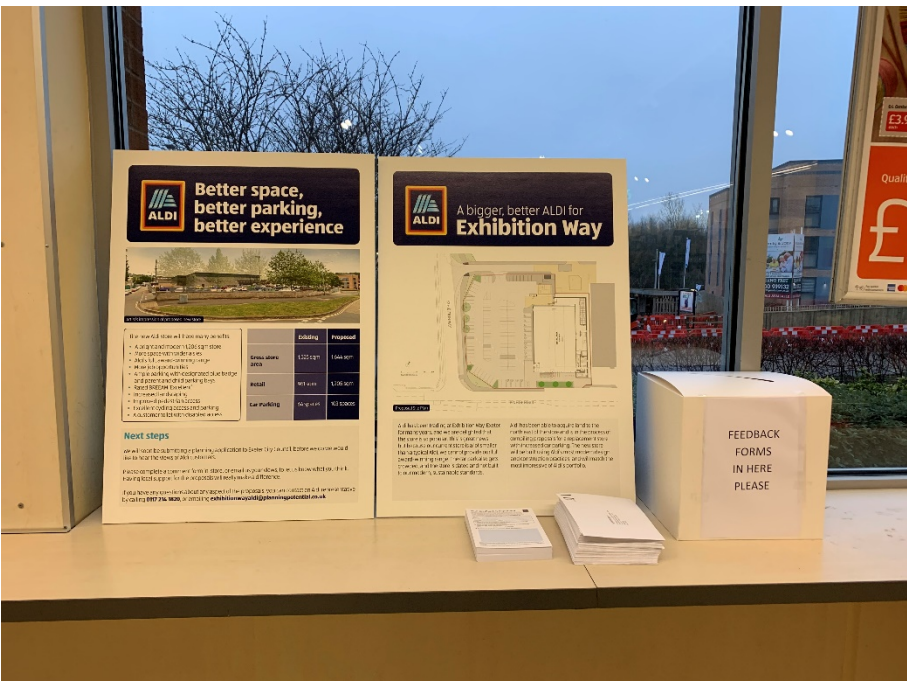
though is also the staff - they are all so kind and friendly and many people enjoy having time to chat with them which might not happen if store is bigger. Please, please don't bring in self service tills! I would also like to mention that over the years I have taken the car to Aldi at all times of day and have only once or twice had to wait or not be able to find a parking space. Again as its small, people are in and out quickly. I realise that you are doing this as have competition coming in next door but you don't need to be like them - be the same as now. Mind you a customer toilet would be a nice addition please! I am sure most of the plans have already been made but just felt to give my views which will be considered.

- The only good thing about Aldi, compared to the other supermarkets is that it is small enough to get around easily. A real plus!
- Don't want store to close.
- There is already enough development on Pinhoe Road. I regularly shop at this store, closing it would mean a round trip by car to my next nearest store of several miles.
- Should include self service checkouts or 10 items or less queue. Better cycle parking. Ideally Sheffield stands, covered from rain, near the shop's doors. Linked to above, should have access. Try to delay the work until Lidl opens so we have a cheap supermarket available.

5. Summary and Next Steps

- 5.1. Aldi is grateful for the supportive comments received to date, which recognise the many benefits to the store and area made possible by these proposals.
- 5.2. The project team have been contactable throughout the application process, and continue to be so, in order to ensure continued dialogue.
- 5.3. The project team will ensure that information continually flows through existing channels to interested parties.
- 5.4. Aldi would be proud to invest further in Exeter and is fully committed to the project. To this end, the project team looks forward to working with both Officers and the local community to progress these necessary proposals for a replacement store and car park extension.

Appendix 1: Exhibition Way In-store Display



Appendix 2: Exhibition Way In-store Boards



A bigger, better ALDI for
Exhibition Way



Proposed Site Plan

Aldi has been trading at Exhibition Way, Exeter, for many years, and we are delighted that the store is so popular. This is great news but because our current store is a lot smaller than a typical Aldi, we cannot provide our full award-winning range. The car park also gets crowded, and the store is dated and not built to our modern, sustainable standards.

Aldi has been able to acquire land to the north east of the store and is in the process of compiling proposals for a replacement store with increased car parking. The new store will be built using Aldi's most modern design and construction practices, and will match the most impressive of Aldi's portfolio.



Better space, better parking, better experience



Artist's impression of proposed new store

The new Aldi store will have many benefits:

- A bright and modern 1,206 sqm store
- More space with wider aisles
- Aldi's full, award-winning range
- More job opportunities
- Ample parking with designated blue badge and parent and child parking bays
- Rated BREEAM 'Excellent'
- Increased landscaping
- Improved pedestrian access
- Excellent cycling access and parking
- A customer toilet with disabled access

	Existing	Proposed
Gross store area	1,325 sqm	1,644 sqm
Retail	961 sqm	1,205 sqm
Car Parking	64 spaces	103 spaces

Next steps

We will soon be submitting a planning application to Exeter City Council, before we do we would like to hear the views of Aldi customers.

Please complete a comment form in-store, or email us your views, to let us know what you think. Having local support for the proposals will really make a difference.

If you have any questions about any aspect of the proposals, you can contact an Aldi representative by calling **0117 214 1820**, or emailing exhibitionwayaldi@planningpotential.co.uk.

Appendix 3: Exhibition Way Proposals Feedback Form

Your feedback is important



We value your feedback and welcome any comments you might have on the proposed store and car park extension at the Exhibition Way Aldi. Please complete the form below and post it in the ballot box in-store, or return using one of the FREEPOST envelopes provided. You can also email your comments to **exhibitionwayaldi@planningpotential.co.uk**.

Name:	<input type="text"/>
Address:	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>
Postcode:	<input type="text"/>
Phone:	<input type="text"/>
Email:	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Please tick here if you wish to receive further information from ALDI relating to this proposed development.	

- Would you like to see the site developed to provide an extended and improved Aldi store and car park?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

- Do you have any further comments about the proposals?

By completing the comment form, you are acknowledging that the information you provide can be used by Planning Potential Ltd. for the purposes of the Aldi Exhibition Way consultation exercise. Your comments may be shared with Aldi and Exeter City Council, but please be assured that your details will not be passed on to any third parties.

If you wish to do so, you have the right to withdraw consent for your data to be used. Please email info@communicationspotential.co.uk or call 0117 214 1820.

☐ Please tick here if you **DO NOT** wish to receive further updates from the project partners.