

RAPLEYS

Statement of Community Involvement for
Lidl UK GmbH (Lidl)

**FULL PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR THE DEMOLITION OF THE
FORMER WATTS TRUCK
CENTRE AND THE ERECTION
OF A LIDL FOOD STORE AT
MERCIA ROAD, GLOUCESTER
GL1 2SQ**

14 July 2017
Our Ref: 17-02445



#LidlSurprises

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Appendix 1 Site Location Plan

THIS REPORT HAS BEEN PREPARED WITHIN THE QUALITY SYSTEM OPERATED AT
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| Statement of Community Involvement (Version 2) | | |

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF RAPLEYS LLP

14 /07/2017

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared by Rapleys LLP, on behalf of Lidl UK GmbH (Lidl) (the applicant) to support the full planning application for the demolition of the Former Watts Truck Centre (Use Class Sui Generis) and the erection of a Lidl food store (Use Class A1) at Mercia Road, Gloucester GL1 2SQ. A Site Location Plan is found at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 The proposed development will include the demolition of the former vehicle hire depot within the application site to allow the construction of a new Lidl food store with associated vehicle parking, landscaping and access arrangements. The store will positively contribute to the surrounding facilities, services and employment opportunities, as well as enhancing the existing retail offer in Gloucester.
- 1.3 The application site extends to approximately 1.04 hectares and is located to the north east of Mercia Road, at the Mercia Road / Oswald's Road roundabout. The proposed store will be located to the east of the site of the site, with customer parking provided within the western and southern areas of the site.
- 1.4 The new store would result in a total store area of 2,125 square metres with a total sales area of 1, 325 square metres. The store will be supported by 152 car parking spaces, including 8 disabled parking spaces and 7 parent and child spaces near to the store entrance. Secure cycle storage will also be provided.
- 1.5 The existing primary vehicle access into the site is from Mercia Road and this will be retained. A separate pedestrian access is proposed to the south of this to allow safe access and egress. Existing public transport routes in the form of a local bus service operates on the adjacent highways.
- 1.6 The Lidl food store will provide the following benefits to the surrounding local area:
- A purpose built store which provides a clean and fresh shopping experience to meet the needs of customers;
 - A dedicated in-store bakery;
 - Improved shopping choice and provision of a new mainstream discount operator for Gloucester and the surrounding area;
 - A contemporary building design that will complement the surrounding area along with development of currently vacant land;
 - Employment opportunities, including up to 40 new jobs for local residents;
 - Landscaping will improve the visual amenity of the site including soft landscaping around the boundary of the site.
- 1.7 This SCI sets out the national and local policy context relevant to community engagement and the consultation strategy to be undertaken by Lidl to engage with local residents, Gloucester City Council and other Statutory Consultees.
- 1.8 The consultation strategy adopted is informed by and accords with the requirements as set out in the Gloucester City Council Statement of Community Involvement (July 2015).
- 1.9 The SCI should be read alongside the Retail Statement, the Design and Access Statement and other supporting application documentation.

2 RELEVANT PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1 The section sets out the relevant planning context in relation to the requirements for public consultation and community involvement.

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

2.2 Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced the requirement for each local authority to prepare a SCI. The SCI sets out how communities should be engaged not only for the preparation and revision of local development documents but also for the consideration of planning applications.

2.3 As part of the Government's reform of the planning system, Section 122 of the Localism Act 2011 sets out the requirements to carry out pre-application consultation where an applicant proposes to submit a planning application for the development of land in England. It also identifies a duty to take account of all consultation responses during the preparation and determination of the planning application.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012) sets out the national requirements relating to pre-application engagement.

2.5 In decision taking, and specifically pre-application engagement, paragraph 188 of the NPPF states that early engagement has the significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better co-ordination between public and private resources and can result in improved outcomes for the community.

2.6 Paragraph 190 further advises that there is a greater benefit of resolving planning issues at the pre-application, rather than during the determination period. Statutory consultees are also encouraged to adopt an early, pro-active approach and to provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. In addition, paragraph 191 recommends the participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions to enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to the principle of development.

2.7 In order to avoid delay, the NPPF advises that applicants are encouraged to discuss what information is required with the local planning authority and expert bodies as early as possible (paragraph 192).

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL'S STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (JULY 2015)

2.8 Gloucester City Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the Council's strategy for community engagement. Chapter 4 of the SCI sets out the Council's expectations of applicants when submitting a planning application.

2.9 When submitting an application, Gloucester City Council encourages applicants to:

- Submit a brief statement as part of the application submission outlining how the results of the Pre-application Consultation Exercise have been taken into account in the final application documentation.
- Attend meetings with local groups that are likely to have an interest in the application proposal.

2.10 Gloucester City Council aims to encourage discussions to take place before any major application is submitted in order to try and achieve a degree of consensus and/or at least a clearer understanding of what the proposal is trying to achieve. The City Council has introduced a pre-application service to provide applicants with guidance prior to the submission of an application.

2.11 In light of the above, the following section outlines the public consultation to be carried out for the proposed scheme.

3 CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 This section sets out the strategy the applicant will take in relation to pre-application engagement with the local community to inform them of the proposals and obtain feedback. Due to the timescales surrounding the submission of the planning application, public consultation will be undertaken alongside the consideration of the application and the findings of the consultation process submitted as a supplementary statement.

ENGAGEMENT WITH GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

3.2 Prior to the submission of a planning application, Lidl undertook pre-application consultation with Gloucester City Council in relation to the proposed development.

3.3 A pre-application enquiry was submitted to Gloucester City Council on 24th May 2017 and included relevant plans and documents. A formal pre-application response (17/00568/PREAPP) was received from Case Officer Caroline Townley on 11th July 2017.

3.4 The Council provided advice on matters such as Retail Impact, Flood Risk, Archaeology, Highways Impact and Design. This advice was considered prior to the submission of the application.

ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL COUNCILLORS

3.5 In accordance with the recommendations set out in Gloucester City Council's SCI, local ward councillors will be contacted via post with information relating to the planning application and an invitation to the upcoming Public Consultation Event on 10th August 2017.

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

3.6 In accordance with Gloucester City Council's recommendations, Lidl intends to undertake a significant amount of community engagement to obtain local opinions.

3.7 As such, consultation leaflets will be sent out to properties within the site's locality advertising both the planning application proposals and an invitation to the upcoming public exhibition event. The consultation leaflets will also include the location of the new store and the venue of the Public Consultation Event highlighted on an aerial map. A response card will be included with the leaflet, encouraging residents to provide their opinions on the proposed development by postage-paid return envelope.

3.8 As the leaflets can reach a wide distribution of addresses within the local area, this is the preferred method of informing residents of the proposals and maximise the effectiveness of the exhibition. The leaflet distribution will encourage an inclusive approach to engaging with the general public and local stakeholders and is considered appropriate for the nature and scale of the proposals.

3.9 The leaflet also set out the details of the website (<http://www.gloucestermenciaroad.lidl.co.uk>) which will be created to advertise the proposed development. The website will provide further detail on the new store, and will provide the option of viewing the consultation boards for those who cannot attend the Public Consultation Event. There will also be the option to download the planning application plans and documents once submitted. This will ensure that anyone who cannot attend the upcoming Public Exhibition Event has the ability to view and comment on the proposed development. The website will also provide a link to an online petition (<https://gopetition.com/petitions/support-lidl-in-goucester/signatures.html>) which will allow residents to note their support of the scheme, if desired.

3.10 The Public Consultation Event is scheduled to be held at the nearby Gloucester Rugby Club on Thursday 10th August, between 3pm and 7pm. The location will ensure that it is accessible to residents and businesses immediately affected by the proposals. The timing of

the exhibition will ensure that residents can attend either during the day or after working hours. The event will allow residents and other interested parties to view the proposed plans and ask members of the development team questions.

- 3.11 In accordance with Gloucester City Council's SCI, the above methods of consultation are considered appropriate given the nature and scale of the proposal. The range of methods used will ensure an inclusive approach to community engagement, the findings of which will be presented in a supplementary statement.
- 3.12 Lidl continues to welcome comments on the proposals now that the application has been submitted, demonstrating a willingness to maintain an open dialogue with the local community and local planning authority.

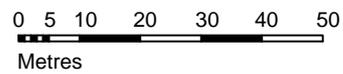
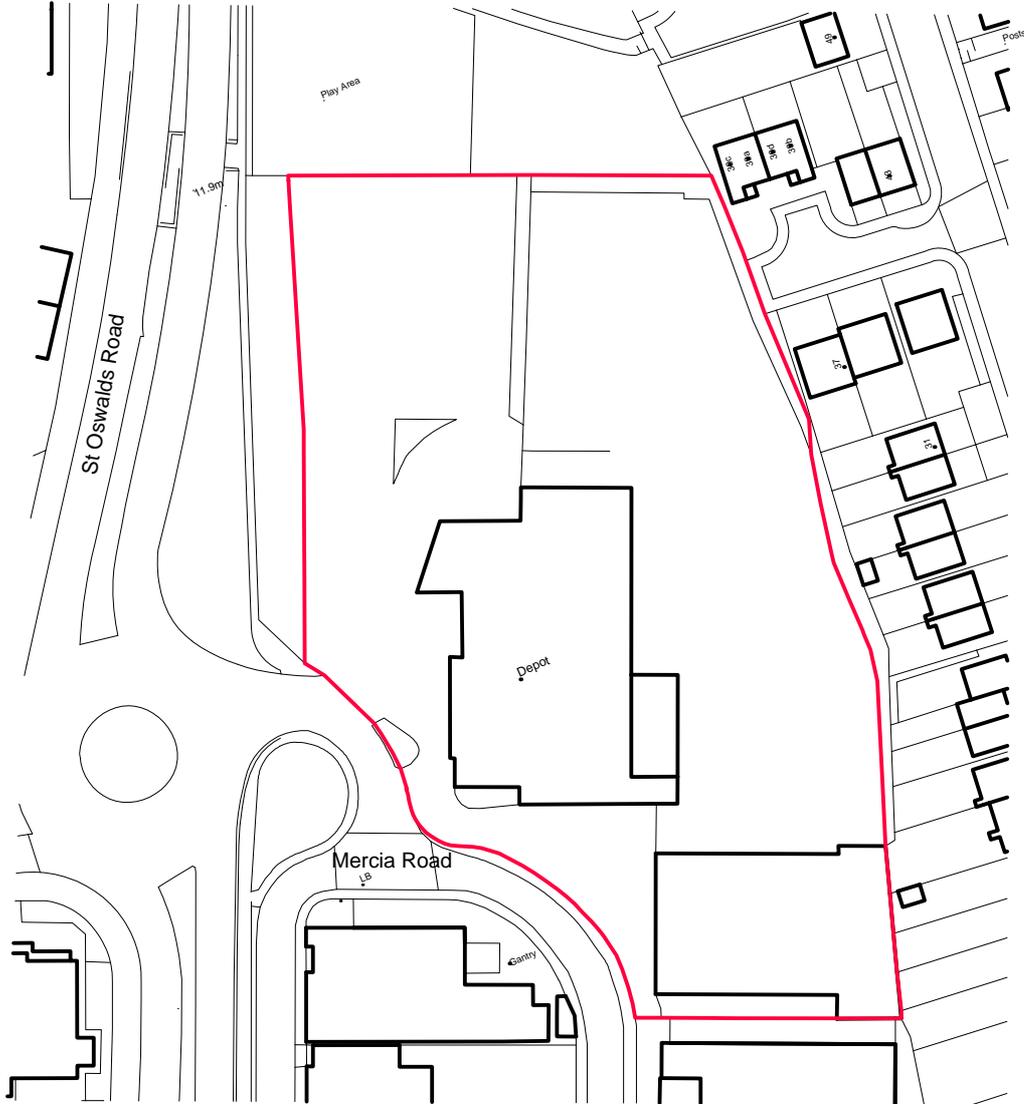
4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 This SCI has set out the approach to be taken for the pre-application consultation in respect of the redevelopment proposals at Mercia Road, Gloucester. In accordance with legislation, national planning policy and Gloucester City Council's SCI the applicant has engaged with Gloucester City Council to inform them of the application proposals.
- 4.2 Given the nature of the proposed redevelopment proposals, public consultation will be undertaken alongside the consideration of the planning application and it is considered that the strategy is inclusive and will engage with a significant amount of the local community.
- 4.3 Lidl and their project team will continue to engage with the local community throughout the application process.

Appendix 1

SITE LOCATION PLAN

Application site



Drawing: 1237 001
Site Location Plan
Scale: 1:1250

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PLANNING

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