

Lidl Planning Application – Dura Street - 16/0029/FULL

Stobswell Forum objected to the parking proposals in Lidl's previous application and suggested that a more suitable plan could be devised. While Lidl's current application does seek to address the concerns previously expressed, and despite significant improvements in design, we must also object to the new proposal in its current form.

We take issue with a number of the claims in the application's supporting documents in relation to traffic congestion on Harriet Street and adequacy of car parking at the store.

In the 'Road Safety Review', although no traffic flow information had been provided and without the benefit of a site visit, the design team (for LIDL) state that Harriet Street is lightly trafficked and there are no congestion and delay issues. We contest this assertion vigorously. It is certainly not the case around morning and evening peak times which are extended due to busy schooltimes at 9am and 3pm. There is also a significant but lesser peak at lunchtime.

It is also the case that although the existing service access road may only be used by Lidl once a day, the barriers are left open and private vehicles do make use of this route as a rat-run at busy times.

In the Planning Statement we are told that the current car park is full to capacity the majority of the time. In reality the car park is never full. The location of the store in a highly urban area promotes high levels of pedestrian journeys and excessive parking provision is neither necessary nor desirable.

Much of the store's catchment is within what would be described as "an area of deprivation" where there is a high dependency on public transport compared to the car. This would offset any perceived diminution of parking provision compared to other stores. The Scottish Office parking standards quoted are maxima, they are not minima that must be achieved. This offers the flexibility to provide parking in line with local conditions, and the current application does significantly reduce staff parking spaces to give an overall parking ratio in line with the 'Dundee Streets Ahead' provisions.

The developer suggests that waiting restrictions, by which they mean a total ban on kerbside parking on the south side of Harriet Street, are required to protect sight lines at the proposed exit. Clearly the developer does not control either the footway or the carriageway upon which waiting restrictions must be placed. The developer cannot impose waiting restrictions; that is a statutory process involving legal orders and extensive public consultation to be undertaken by the Council. Significantly the traffic consultant concludes that unless waiting restrictions are placed on the south side of Harriet Street there would be a road traffic hazard at the proposed exit. Since the developer cannot provide these restrictions the proposal in its current form must be refused.

However, having said that, there is only a modest change in level between the existing service access and the ground on which it is proposed to construct the car park. If the submitted layout was to be turned through 90 degrees and access taken from the present service road then the various traffic issues, identified by the developer's consultant, would be resolved, traffic would use the existing adequate sight lines and the trees on site would be protected.

The planning consultant declares that the present trees are afforded no protection in the Local Plan but that is on the misconceived grounds that the trees are not mature, when they clearly are. They may not be quite fully mature but they are mature and must be protected in any development.

The applicants do express a willingness to replace the trees which would be lost, possibly utilising the land previously suggested as further car parking. Given the above suggested solution this would not be necessary. However the Forum welcomes the spirit of this suggestion and would be willing to work with Lidl towards the creation of a community garden on this part of their site. The site could also incorporate relevant local historical information given its location within yards of the original

Stobs Well. Should Lidl adopt our suggested layout the Forum would also be willing to incorporate the trees and associated verge into the community garden.

We would therefore support a modified application amended as outlined above with the following conditions;

- a) all relevant provisions of the applicant's Road Safety Review are adhered to,
- b) the access barriers on the service access be closed when not in use to avoid use as a rat-run,
- c) a community garden (in conjunction with Stobswell Forum) be created in the northern part of the LIDL-owned land previously proposed as a further parking area, and
- d) all existing trees and associated root structures to be retained and protected during construction works.

Duncan McCabe
Chairperson,
Stobswell Forum
16 February