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Cc: Cllr Paul Buckley

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Date: 4 December, 2013

Dear Mrs Wright,

Re: APP/13/00893 – BAE Systems, Elettra Avenue, Waterloooville

I am writing in my capacity as Property Director for Lidl UK GmbH Southern Property Office to express my serious concerns with the current planning application at the BAE Systems site on Elettra Avenue, Waterloooville.

As you are aware, the proposals include a 1,532sqm supermarket for Aldi stores and a drive thru restaurant, presumably for KFC given that McDonalds have ceased trading in Waterloooville precinct, due to a lack of viable trade after opening in an out of centre location at Bedhampton/Leigh Park. The assumption of KFC, who currently trade in Cowplain is well supported given they have a long standing requirement for a drive thru restaurant in the area. This would undoubtedly lead to the closure of the food outlet in Cowplain.

It is only these two elements of the application that concern Lidl, with the inward investment from the leisure proposals providing a much needed boost to the borough.

Cowplain District Centre is anchored at either end by Lidl and the Co-operative Group, with both parties investing heavily in modernising their premises in recent years to maintain and enhance the vitality of the centre. The centre consists of approximately 35 retail premises with free car parking being provided by both anchor tenants, albeit that the Lidl car park, with 84 spaces, currently acts as the district centre's main car park.

The applicants for the BAE site have accepted that the proposed Aldi will have a 20% impact on the Lidl supermarket, however this is a best case scenario and not worst case scenario assumption with the statement that Lidl currently overtrades by 46% of its company average being factually incorrect.

Should the out of centre Aldi be consented, Lidl will be forced to review its trading position at Cowplain and review relocation opportunities within the borough to enable us to compete with the larger Aldi store. If we were to relocate or close, both the foodstore and car park would be secured with hoarding to prevent unauthorised access to minimise any health and safety liability.

I also note that the predicted employee numbers for the proposed Aldi, at 58 full time employees, is either incorrect or the sales density for the proposed store is completely misleading as a quick search of Aldi store openings gives an average employee count of c.15 – 20 staff per store opening.

With the Blue Star site in Waterloooville being available, viable and suitable to accommodate an Aldi store, I completely fail to see how this application can accord with the sequential test.

I also note that no planning condition or separate legal agreement is required from the applicant to ensure the leisure element of the proposal is built out prior to first occupation of the foodstore.

This is essential given the statement that the Aldi scheme would be refused in isolation at the proposed location.

In addition to the above restriction, I would strongly urge that a further unilateral undertaking is sought to restrict the operator of the foodstore to a Hard Discounter as defined by Verdict, otherwise nothing will prevent another operator from trading, potentially with a much higher sales density, further exacerbating the impact on all surrounding centres and particularly supermarket and convenience store operators.

Finally, having discussed the aforementioned on the telephone with you, I am absolutely stunned that the Local Planning Authority fully accept that the Aldi store may be built in isolation even if the leisure scheme never comes to fruition.

I trust members will be updated with Lidl's objection to this application.

Yours sincerely,



Jason Gratton
Property Director
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