



Statement of Community Involvement

Hostmoor Avenue, March, Cambridgeshire



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Report Reference:

Executive Summary

- 1.1. This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared on behalf of Aldi, to accompany a planning application for a new store on the March Trading Park along Hostmoor Avenue, March, Cambridgeshire.
- 1.2. Prior to the preparation and submission of a planning application, Communications Potential (part of Planning Potential) undertook a programme of consultation and engagement which included:
 - Engagement with key stakeholders, including locally elected representatives and the March Society. This provided local community representatives with an opportunity to view the proposals and provide Aldi with feedback.
 - Distribution of a six-page community leaflet to 10,749 households, outlining the proposals and providing members of the public the chance to provide feedback via the hardcopy feedback form provided or online.
 - A consultation website https://aldiconsultation.co.uk/march/ to share the proposals and allow the community to provide feedback online.
 - Ongoing engagement with residents and key stakeholders.
- 1.3. All those who engaged in the process were encouraged to provide feedback via the hardcopy feedback form, consultation website, by email, or on the telephone.
- 1.4. Over 1,660 people chose to participate in the consultation exercise and the feedback received helped inform the evolution of the proposals.

a fantastic 95% of residents told us they support the proposals during our consultation.



1.5. Through engagement and consultation with Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council officers, elected representatives and members of the local community, Aldi has refined and improved the original proposals.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared on behalf of ALDI, in support of a planning application to deliver a new Aldi store in March.
- 2.2. The application site is located on the corner of Hostmoor Avenue and Martin Avenue, on the March Trading Park. The proposal would regenerate a prominent brownfield site, replacing the three existing warehouse units with a new, purpose-built Aldi food store.
- 2.3. The new Aldi would provide greater food shopping choice for the residents of March, improving accessibility to low-cost, high-quality produce.
- 2.4. The project team is committed to working closely with local stakeholders, political representatives, and residents. Therefore, before preparing the planning application, ALDI established a consultation programme to give local stakeholders the opportunity to provide their feedback on proposals.
- 2.5. The project team's overall objectives are for the local community and key stakeholders to:
 - · have access to information, and clarity on the development proposals and the planning system;
 - put forward their ideas and feel confident that there is a process for considering these;
 - obtain ongoing feedback on the progress of an application.
- 2.6. In response to the national restrictions associated with the Covid 19 pandemic, the consultation programme was adapted so that it allowed for ease of access to information on the proposals, whilst maintaining safety. Any meetings were therefore held virtually and feedback gathering undertaken online, as well as providing traditional methods of communications should residents be unable to use the online service.
- 2.7. In summary, our consultation involved:
 - A community leaflet;
 - · Dedicated website with online feedback facility; and
 - The offer of virtual meetings.
- 2.8. At all stages in the process, the team has been, and will continue to be, open to responding to ideas and comments and will use these ideas and comments to help shape the proposals where possible.
- 2.9. The SCI provides details on the public consultation activities which were used to communicate the development proposals and seek feedback, as well as summarising that feedback.

3. Development Proposals

- 3.1. Full details of the application proposals are set out in the Planning Statement and the Design and Access Statement submitted with the planning application.
- 3.2. Planning permission is sought for a new ALDI store along Hostmoor Avenue, March. Aldi has been looking for a suitable site to deliver a store in March for some time. The brownfield site is located on March Trading Park, alongside other retail outlets, and therefore makes it an ideal location for a new food store for the town.
- 3.3. The proposals will:
 - Regenerate a prominent local brownfield site on March Trading Park
 - Provide a modern 1,315 square metre food store (sales floor area)
 - Generate up to 50 new local jobs
 - Provide 106 car parking spaces including 6 accessible, 10 family, four active electric charging spaces, and 20 passive electric charging spaces for future use

CGI of the proposed store



4. Consultation Approach

- 4.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 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 development proposals. Specifically, the NPPF states that:
 - "Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality preapplication discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community."
- 4.2. The NPPF also recognises that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive and safe communities.
- 4.3. Section 122 of the Localism Act introduced a new duty for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain planning applications above a certain size.
- 4.4. 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 in the vicinity of the application site.
- 4.5. 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 taken into account by the Local Planning Authority in determining the planning application.
- 4.6. This document sets out the details of the consultation exercise undertaken by Aldi in engaging with the community, in line with local and national planning policy guidelines.

Local Policy

- 4.7. The consultation sought to also adhere to the requirements for consultation, as set out in Fenland District Council's Statement of Community Involvement, published in 2018.
- 4.8. The Council has not updated this document in light of COVID-19. However, in response to the national restrictions set in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, our consultation was designed to be held virtually, without any face-to-face meetings.

Consultation Objectives

- 4.9. Having prepared the draft development proposals for the new Aldi store, the project team devised a consultation programme to achieve key consultation objectives for the local community and key stakeholders so that they:
 - had access to information, and clarity on the development proposals and the planning system
 - put forward their ideas and feel confident that there is a process for considering these
 - could obtain ongoing feedback on the progress of an application
- 4.10. A consultation strategy was also developed to:
 - Identify local groups and individuals who were likely to have an interest in the redevelopment of the site.
 - Ensure that all those who were likely to have an interest in the proposals were fully informed and given an opportunity to ask questions and share their views.
 - Maximise the availability of information about the proposed scheme and present this information to the local community as clearly
 and accurately as possible.
 - Ensure that local people were given the opportunity to put forward their ideas and felt confident that there was a process for considering these.
 - Use a variety of communication channels and engagement methods to maximise consultee participation and encourage meaningful feedback.

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	deavour to identify issu					
4.11. At all s	tages in the process, t	the project team has b	peen, and will continu	ue to be, open to resp	oonding to feedback on	the proposals

5. Key Consultation Activity

Early engagement with elected representatives

5.1. The project team were keen to ensure that local elected representatives and community leaders were aware of the proposals and the project team's consultation plan. This included the local councillors representing the site at town and district level.

District ward councillors

- 5.2. An introductory email was sent to the three councillors representing the March North ward: Councillor Mike Cornwell, Councillor Steve Count and Councillor Miss Kim French, offering a meeting with Aldi to share the proposals and answer any questions.
- 5.3. A follow up email was also issued to share the community leaflet (see below) with the councillors prior to its distribution to local residents.
- 5.4. To date, a meeting has not been held; however, the project team remain committed to continuing to liaise with the ward councillors on the progress of an application and feedback from the local community.
- 5.5. An update email was issued to councillors ahead of the submission of the planning application to inform them of the submission, as well as outlining changes made regarding highways improvements.

Town council

- 5.6. An email was sent to March Town Council to offer a virtual meeting to share Aldi's proposals and answer any questions.
- 5.7. To date, a meeting has yet to be arranged; however, the project team remain committed to continuing to liaise with the Town Council.
- 5.8. An update email was issued to the Town Council, by way of a follow up to enquiries received, ahead of the submission of the planning application to outlining changes made regarding highways improvements.

Other stakeholders

5.9. A copy of the community leaflet (see below) was also sent to the March Society, with the offer to meet to discuss the proposals. To date, a meeting has not been held, but the offer to meet remains.

Community leaflet

- 5.10. A six-page community leaflet (see appendix 2) was distributed to all households within March, which equated to 10,749 properties (see distribution area in appendix 1). The leaflet introduced Aldi and their proposals, as well of details of how to provide feedback via:
 - An online feedback form on the consultation website
 - A hardcopy feedback form with Freepost envelope provided
 - A dedicated email address
 - A dedicated telephone number
- 5.11. Residents were able to contact Communications Potential via the methods above, to ask questions or seek further information on the proposals, if required.

Website feedback

5.12. A consultation website was established for members of the public to easily provide feedback on proposals by completing an online feedback form (see appendix 3). The website address is www.aldiconsultation.co.uk/March.

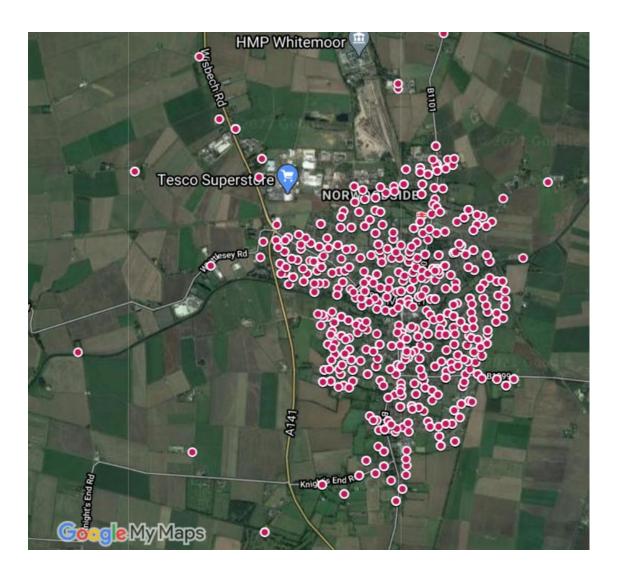
6. Feedback

Overview of the results

- 6.1. Across the various consultation activities, we received an excellent level of helpful feedback from across March with a total of 1,669 completed feedback forms submitted. A more detailed overview of the feedback is provided below.
- 6.2. Overall, there was a significant majority of respondents in favour of the proposed new store, with 95% supporting the proposal.
- 6.3. There were some concerns raised during the consultation process, predominately concerning the potential transport impact, with the team responding directly to these. Responses have been set out in Section 7 of this statement.

Feedback forms

- 6.4. The project team took the decision to distribute leaflets to all residents in March which totalled 10,749 households. A total of 1,669 completed feedback forms were received both via hardcopy and online. As demonstrated by the below, the overwhelming majority were in favour of the proposal for an Aldi in March.
- 6.5. The map below provides an overview of from where the majority of feedback forms were received, based on those who provided their postcode.

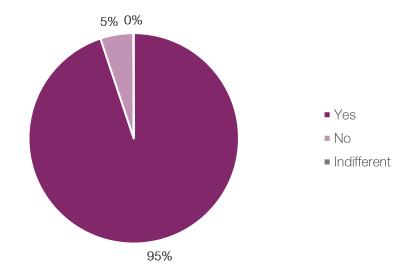


Feedback forms responses overview

Q1. Do you support the proposal in principle?

Yes	1,579
No	84
Indifferent	1
Total	1,664

^{*}Please note, not every submitted form responded to this question, hence the different total number of responses compared to the total number of forms submitted.



Q2. What do you think about the proposals? And Q3. Any general comments.

6.6. An overview of the qualitative feedback has been set out in the table below, grouped into key themes raised.

Theme N	Number of times raised
Aldi will provide more jobs	165
The new store will be closer than existing Aldi's which are in other towns / no longer need to shop outside March	136
Aldi will bring more choice to March	128
It will be a good addition to the area and for the people in March	111
The new store will bring more competition, which is good	104
Aldi is affordable, good value and high-quality	95
Concerned about the increase in traffic on Hostmoor Avenue	87
The proposal is a good idea in general	86
Concerned about the location of the proposed entrance / exit off Hostmoor Avenue, should be on Martin Avenue	84
Do not need another store / need clothes shops not food stores	55
The proposed site is a good location	42
Will improve a brownfield site	35
Aldi will be good for a growing town	21
The site is more accessible for those that do not own a car / local buses can easily access the store	19
The site is in the wrong location	13
Concerned that the proposed store is too small	11
There is not enough parking proposed	10
Will reduce need to travel to other stores, therefore reducing pollution and save money	10
Proposal will boost the local economy	9
Glad to see electric car charging spaces	9
May take customers away from other local shops	8
March needs more shops	7
There is limited pedestrian, cycle and bus access to the store	9
Will bring people to the area	6
Good for disabled people	5
Good for the elderly	4
Not enough disabled parking proposed	4
Plenty of parking proposed	1_
Aldi look after their staff	1
Need a separate entrance for deliveries	1
Need more electric car charging points	1

Below are examples of feedback submitted:

6.7. In relation to the new store being more convenient than existing Aldi's in other towns, respondents said:

"We like the Aldi in Chatteris so one closer to home would be good."

"Be great to have an Aldi store closer to home as currently traveling to Chatteris. Therefore, saving the environment and reducing our carbon footprint as well as saving money."

"Well yes there is an Aldi at Wisbech and another in Chatteris but there are an awful lot of people who haven't a car. So I would be very happy to have our own Aldi store here in March. I do drive but would not go out of town if Aldi was here."

6.8. Many respondents felt as though the proposal would be a positive addition to the local area and beneficial to the people of March. Respondents said:

"This would be a very good addition to March shops I use this shop a lot."

"Excellent to have additional choice in this town as the population increases."

"This could well be an additional draw that could bring more people to the town from further afield. This would help support the town even further."

"As a medium/long term resident and homeowner in March, I would welcome the proposal for a new Aldi Store in the town. Any additional investment in the town would undoubtedly prove beneficial both in terms of the overall prosperity of the area and providing additional shopping options for the consumer. Moreover, the creation of circa 50 new jobs would provide an additional boost to the town and overall, the proposed new store may well impact favourably on local house prices."

6.9. Many recognised the good location of the new store:

"Well thought out and proposed site is an ideal location."

"The location you propose is very good for access and due to the location and responses from friends in March you will have a roaring success."

"Aldi will be a great addition to the town and in a good location with all the new houses being built in March (1200 Houses) we'll need another supermarket."

6.10. There were residents who had concerns regarding the location of the proposed entrance and exit for the store. For the majority, this was presented as a suggestion for the overall improvement of proposals, rather than an objecting comment:

"It will be a welcome addition to the town and is in a good location. However, I believe the proposed entrance needs to be reconsidered. That part of Hostmoor becomes very congested and adding to that would be irresponsible. The entrance would be better suited to Martin Avenue."

"A good location, Entrance and Exit might be better off coming out in Martin Ave as the traffic queues down Hostmoor Ave which will make it hard to pull out Causing congestion in the car park."

"Good idea, good location, but think would be better if entrance to car park where proposed, but exit into Martin Ave."

"Would be helpful to enter off Hostmoor Ave and exit via Martin Ave. Safety reasons!"

"Only concern is traffic congestion entering A141, also exiting the new Aldi carpark onto Hostmoor Ave with HGV vehicles using the road to where houses and Factories as well as other traffic."

Email and phone call feedback

6.11. In addition to the feedback form, we accepted feedback from over the phone and via email. In total, 7 people contacted us via these methods to ask questions and provide feedback, 6 of which supported the proposal. One respondent supported all elements of the proposal apart from the proposed access arrangements.

- 7. Responses to issues raised and changes made to the proposal
- 7.1. The table below provides an overview of the key themes raised by stakeholders and the community during the consultation process and includes a response from the team to those issues.

Key theme / Issue raised	Team Response
Proposals in general	
Do not need another food store in this location.	We believe that healthy competition is beneficial for the residents as it enhances the choices on offer. Many respondents to our consultation noted that they need to trave some distance to access an Aldi, with 33% of the 1,644 residents who responded to the question of where the currently shop, confirming that they currently travel to a number of Aldi stores to complete their shopping needs. With existing retail provision, and other employment offers, Hostmoor Avenue is the ideal location to bring the Aldi offer to the residents of March.
	Aldi would not want to invest in a new store if we did not think there was the demand for one locally.
Transport impact	
Concerned about the increase in traffic on Hostmoor Avenue.	A full Transport Assessment has been undertaken and submitted as part of the planning application. The Assessment considered projected traffic impact associated with the store, as well as taking into consideration nearby consented developments that are yet to come forward. Aldi's business model is that it is not a one stop shop, often resulting in people linking their trip to Aldi with other nearby stores. As such, a number of people visiting the new Aldi store will already be making car trips in the area.
	The results of the Transport Assessment demonstrate that the impact of trips associated with the store on Hostmoor Avenue will be minor to moderate.
Design / layout	
Concerned about the location of the proposed entrance / exit directly onto Hostmoor Avenue. The entrance / exit should be on Martin Avenue,	The location of the proposed new entrance and exit to the site has been chosen as the most appropriate, due to the need to locate the store along the eastern boundary with Martin Avenue.
or a one-way system with the entrance off Hostmoor Avenue and exit onto Martin Avenue.	Following concerns raised during our consultation about the potential impact the entrance will have on the flow of traffic on Hostmoor Avenue, the project team has investigated how the access can be improved to maintain the traffic flow. As a result, the proposals have been amended so that when exiting the store, it will only be possible to

Following concerns raised during our consultation about the potential impact the entrance will have on the flow of traffic on Hostmoor Avenue, the project team has investigated how the access can be improved to maintain the traffic flow. As a result, the proposals have been amended so that when exiting the store, it will only be possible to turn left onto Hostmoor Avenue and then use the roundabout on the junction with Martin Avenue. A raised kerb island is proposed along the centreline on Hostmoor Avenue opposite the access to deter right-turn exit movements. By making the exit left-out only, it prevents traffic crossing the lane to turn right and therefore slowing the traffic flow.

In addition, Aldi has agreed with the Highways Authority to upgrade the A141/Hostmoor Avenue junction to make it a signal-controlled junction, as an interim improvement prior to the delivery of a new roundabout as part of the expected Westry Retail Park development. This will again help control the flow of traffic.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. Aldi is grateful to all those who chose to participate in the consultation process and provide feedback, and is pleased with the high level of support from the local community.
- 8.2. Feedback from Council officers and consultees has helped to inform and shape the proposals as submitted within the planning application.
- 8.3. Engagement is an ongoing process, and the project team is committed to continuing the dialogue with stakeholders and the local community. In line with this, Planning Potential will continue to maintain open lines of communication for local stakeholders throughout the duration of the planning application and arrange meetings as required.
- 8.4. Aldi would be proud to make this investment in March 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 the delivery of this much-needed store.

Appendix 1: Community Leaflet Distribution



11 May 2021

Appendix 2: Community Leaflet





Aldi has long wanted to bring its amazing value and choice to March and the March Trading Park along Hostmoor Avenue is an ideal location.

Award winning Aldi is preparing a planning application to develop the site, located on the corner of Hostmoor Avenue and Martin Avenue.

We are excited to share the proposals with the local community and would love for you to let us know your thoughts about bringing Aldi to March, prior to submitting a planning application to Fenland District Council.











The Proposals will:

- Regenerate a prominent local brownfield site
- Bring more food choice to the residents of March
- Provide a modern 1,804 sqm food store
- Generate up to 50 new jobs Aldi always seek to recruit locally
- Provide 109 car parking spaces, including six accessible, ten family and four electric charging spaces

New store, new jobs, more choice

Aldi has wanted to open a new store in March for some time and is delighted to have found a suitable brownfield site, in an existing retail area.

The site, located opposite the Tesco superstore, currently has three warehouse units which it is proposed to demolish and replace with a new, purpose-built Aldi food store. The store will be accessed via a new pedestrian and vehicle access off Hostmoor Avenue.

The new Aldi will provide greater food shopping choice for the residents of March, with access to our high-quality, low-priced produce.

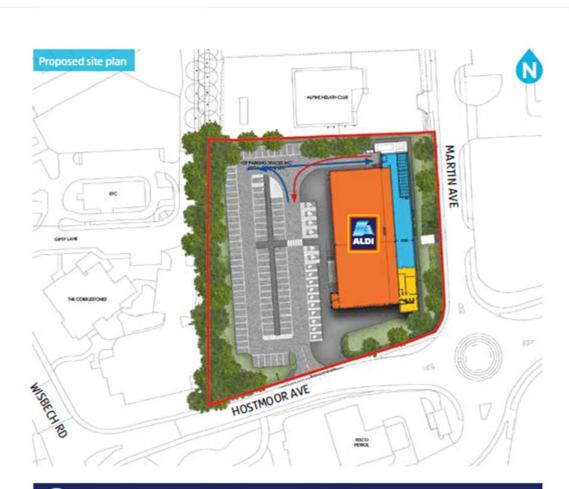
Aldi stores carry a limited product line, which means that, unlike a large supermarket format, shoppers will often visit other local retailers to complete their weekly shop, benefiting existing local businesses.

Our offer complements rather than competes with existing local shops and services.

Aldi also leads the way on supporting British farmers. 100% of its fresh everyday meat and poultry in the UK is from British, Red Tractor approved farms and more than 40% of the fresh fruit and vegetables it sells in the UK are also British.

With each new store providing up to 50 jobs, and Aldi's rates of pay being significantly higher than the Government's National Living Wage, the new store will complement the Council's aspiration to encourage employment use at the March Trading Park.





Feedback - Visit our Website

Your feedback is important to us. We would really appreciate you taking the time to fill out a quick feedback form on our dedicated website: www.aldiconsultation.co.uk/March

If you prefer, you can also provide feedback by returning the feedback form overleaf using the Freepost envelope provided.



020 7139 5010



aldiMarch@planningpotential.co.uk

Having local support for the proposals will really make a difference.

MARCH

Your feedback is important

Thank you for taking the time to read this leaflet. We value your feedback and welcome any comments you might have on our proposals for a new Aldi store in March. We only store your personal data if you want to be kept informed about these proposals. If you would like to provide feedback, please complete the form below and return it in the FREEPOST envelope provided.

Name:			
Address:			
		Postcode:	
Phone:	Email:		
☐ Please tick here if you wis	h to receive updates from Ald	i about this proposed	d development
Do you support the pro	posal in principle?	□ Yes	□ No
What do you think abo	ut the proposals?		
Are there any general (Please continue on a separa	comments you wish to make sheet if necessary)	nake?	
Please tell us the retail	er(s) and locations of wh	nere you currently	y shop.

By completing this questionnaire, you are acknowledging that the information you provide can be used by Planning Potential Ltd for the purposes of the Aidi consultation exercise. Your comments may be shared with Aidi and Sutton Borough Council, but please be assured that your personal 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 aidiMarch@planningpotential.co.uk or call 0207357 8000.

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

FEARALONG THIS DOTTED LINE

There's a lot to like...



Quality products at low prices



Employing between 30 - 50 staff per store



Paying staff above the National Living Wage



No zero hour contracts



Driving footfall to nearby businesses



Redistributing surplus food



Over 2 million meals are donated each year



100% recyclable or compostable packaging by 2025

Next Steps

Thank you for taking the time to read this leaflet, we hope you found it helpful. We really do appreciate your feedback on the proposed new store.

As noted, you can provide your feedback by completing our quick online feedback form at www.aldiconsultation.co.uk/March.

We will consider the comments of local people before finalising and submitting a planning application to Fenland District Council. If the application is approved, Aldi proposes to open as soon as possible.

If you have any questions regarding the proposals, please contact us using the details below.



020 7139 5010



aldiMarch@planningpotential.co.uk

By contacting us directly with your feedback, you are acknowledging that the information you provide can be used by Planning Potential Ltd for the purposes of the Aidi consultation exercise. Your comments may be shared with Aidi and Fenland District Council, but please be assured that your personal 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@ptanningpotential.co.uk or call 020 7357 8000.

11 May 2021

Appendix 3: Consultation Website







Aldi, the award-winning discount food retailer, is proposing to develop a new discount food store in March.

The proposals would see land at Hostmoor Avenue, developed into a new Aldi store.

The plans would introduce a brand-new discount store to March, reducing the need for customers to travel to other Aldi stores in the district to complete their grocery shopping.

The proposals are at an early stage and no planning application has yet been submitted to Fenland District Council. Aldi would like to hear your views regarding thier ambitions for a new store in March, which could be open as early as 2022.





Our awards















VIEW MORE

Have Your Say

Your comments matter!

HAVE YOUR SAY

Your comments matter! Have your say!



Privacy Statement

By filling-in this online form you are agreeing that we can hold and process your personal data in relation to this public consultation exercise.

- We will only share your personal data with the Aldi planning team for planning evaluation purposes only.
- Your identifiable, personal data will not be used for any other purposes without your consent.

We will use your data to:

- Send you updates about the project (where you provide us with your contact details).
- Develop a Statement of Community Consultation (or similar document) about
 this public consultation that will be submitted to the planning authority or
 similar body; this will be a publicly available document. Your comments will be
 anonymous, and we will only identify you in these reports with your express
 permission.

If you provide us with your contact details, we might also contact you to ask you more about the comments you've made.

Name *		
Prefix	First	Last
Postcode *		
Age group *		
O Under 13	O 13 - 17	O 18 - 24
<u>25 - 34</u>	O 35 - 44	O 45 - 54
<u> 55 - 64</u>	<u> 65 - 74</u>	O 75 - 84
○ 85+		
Register for Upd	lates	
☐ I wish to be ke	pt updated with news abou	t this development. Your

details will be used solely for the purpose of this application and

will be only be shared with the Aldi planning team.

Data Protection

NEXT

We hold all personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679 and your personal data will not be transferred outside of the European Economic Area. You can see our full Privacy Statement, Data Protection Policy, Data Retention Policy and find out how to make a Subject Access Request at the following website address becg.com/dp or by contacting us on 01962 893 893 / dataprotection@becg.com.

Get in touch by phone or email

If you would prefer to submit your feedback via phone, or email please:

- Call: 020 7139 5010
- Email: aldimarch@planningpotential.co.uk