

Supplementary information in relation to Consultation Responses - P/2019 /0919

Site Address: LAND AT ARGOS CAR PARK PLAS COCH RETAIL PARK PLAS COCH WREXHAM

Development: **P/2019 /0919** - ERECTION OF FREE STANDING RESTAURANT WITH DRIVE THRU FACILITY, CAR PARKING, LANDSCAPING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS INCLUDING CUSTOMER ORDER DISPLAYS

Additional summary to address comments arising through the consultation period.

Highways and Parking

During the application process, there were a number of correspondences with Highways team and the formal response received, dated 22nd March 2021 confirms that all issues relating to the design of the site have been resolved and recommended conditions.

Site is too small and not located in the right area.

The Drive Thru is located in the best position to complement the existing tenants on the Retail Park and encourage linked trips. The proposed site has sufficient parking to serve the McDonalds operation, but with the added benefit of a legal right to share the neighbouring car park should it be required.

Anti-social behaviour

The restaurant shall maintain a strict protocol for ensuring noise and disturbance is kept to a minimum. All shift managers shall receive conflict resolution training sufficient to ensure they can deal effectively with noise or anti-social behaviour. Good management training and practices, in combination with appropriate physical security equipment, will reduce the risk of crime and disorder.

Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour is a key part of delivering the best possible customer experience and helping McDonald's to be the UK's best-loved restaurant company. Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour is also key in delivering their duty of care obligations to their people, providing a great place to work where employees feel energised, safe and valued.

External complaints are taken extremely seriously and in extreme cases the restaurant manager will liaise with the Council and Police to discuss noise and behavioural mitigation measures if the current proposal is not effective. The restaurant management is keen to work in partnership with the local Police in order to prevent crime and disorder in the local area, this will include such tasks as providing witness statements to the Police in the event of disorderly behaviour, as well as providing CCTV footage for evidence.

McDonald's succeeds in protecting customer and staff safety to the highest degree and has developed the best training in the industry, including accredited staff training to empower employees to deal effectively with issues they might face when operating at night. McDonald's is committed to supporting their communities to be safe at night, for all restaurants to have a positive impact on the area and to be a safe and welcoming place for all.

McDonald's understand that where they have a late-night trade, they have a responsibility to the local community and continue to go above and beyond industry practice to protect staff and customers from adverse consequences. There can be or there is a false perception by the local authorities and police forces that restaurants are hotspots for anti-social behaviour, nuisance, disorder and crime, and McDonald's takes a number of steps to manage any issues as effectively and proactively as possible, through robust and thorough systems and practices, together with partnership working with all responsible authorities.

McDonald's also work hard with the local community to achieve a good working relationship with their neighbours, coupled with their open and proactive approach to the introduction of voluntary and innovative measures to mitigate any issues that arise during licensable, minimises the need for a regulatory burden to be placed on restaurants that open at night.

The management team are trained to monitor the car park, to ensure that customers who cause any undue disruption or noise are asked to leave the premises immediately, or if necessary, the Police will be alerted. Further to this, the restaurant operates an extensive digital CCTV system with external cameras to monitor and deter anti-social behaviour.

The CCTV system can also be used to capture footage of customers' vehicle registration plates, in the event that they act in an anti-social manner or litter on the site. This footage can then be passed on to the Police or local council for further action. Incidents of anti-social behaviour are kept to an absolute minimum through strategies such as staff training in dealing with issues, liaison with community police officers and use of CCTV cameras where necessary.

Litter and Bins

McDonald's is committed to tackling litter in as many different ways as possible. It is company policy to conduct a minimum of three daily litter patrols, whereby employees pick up not only McDonald's packaging, but also any other litter that may have been discarded in a 150m vicinity of a restaurant. This may be expanded to suit local needs.

Litter bins are provided outside all restaurants, and packaging carries anti-littering symbols to encourage customers to dispose of litter responsibly. Anti-littering signage is displayed within restaurants and car parks, and support is given to Keep Britain Tidy, Keep Wales Tidy, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful and Capital Clean-up.

McDonald's also supports Keep Wales Tidy and their many anti – litter campaigns and locally in Wrexham have organised a number of clean ups.

Since 2011, McDonald's have carried out over 3,000 events across the country involving over 80,000 volunteers. Individual restaurants also undertake their own anti-littering initiatives, such as litter picking sessions in local parks and open spaces with local community groups. It is estimated that McDonald's employees across the UK walk almost 3,000 miles a week completing litter patrols, a total of 150,000 miles a year.

Proximity to residents/Noise/Air Pollution

The Public Protection Officer was consulted on the application and responded on 31st December 2019, with no issues with the development, with a recommendation of conditions in relation to installation of the approved Odour Extraction details; Control of the noise levels of the Air Handling Plant, Advisory notes on Construction Noise, Dust Management and Burning of Waste.

Proximity to schools

Comments were received during the consultation period in relation to the proximity of schools, in line with the Local Planning Guidance Note No 9 – Hot Food Take-Aways, adopted in 2011, which defines hot food takeaways as:

“Hot food takeaways are defined as establishments whose primary business is the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.”

The proposal relates to a mixed-use unit, which will include a restaurant, with takeaway facilities from the counter and the drive thru lane.

The proximity of schools was reviewed at the pre-application stage. Whilst we appreciate that the comments are the informal view of an Officer of the council and do not commit the Council in the determination of any formal planning application submitted, this approach was considered pragmatic to allow various parameters of the proposal to be viewed in context with policy.

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“LPGN No. 9 ‘Hot Food Takeaways’ advises that developments of this nature should not be located within 400 metres of a school or college. Whilst there is a school (Plas Coch) nearby, this is at primary education level where children will be accompanied by an adult to and from school. The other nearby residential institution is Glyndwr University, and universities are not mentioned within the guidance. I confirm therefore that I have no concerns in this regard.”

In line with the parameters of LPG 9, McDonald’s are striving to ensure that there is full access to healthy options and in line with the officer’s comments, the pupils who study at Plas Coch school are at primary level and thus accompanied by an adult to and from school, who will have access to this restaurant.

Healthy Eating

The guidance references the national research carried out in 2009, in relation to overweight and obese individuals and the efforts by the Council and its partners in supporting the Healthy Schools and Appetite for Life Programmes to ensure that young people have access to healthy options.

McDonald’s strongly believe that a business of their size has a responsibility to use its scale for good. As a consumer driven business, they work extremely hard to understand the lives of their customers, particularly families, and the role that food and drink plays for them. As a result, McDonald’s are uniquely placed to help customers make informed choices and think carefully about the nutritional information we provide.

McDonald’s customers are increasingly health conscious and careful about what they eat. Therefore, McDonald’s goal is to help them understand what they are consuming and to assure them that the ingredients have been sourced responsibly. When it comes to their food, they believe their role is to make it easier for customers to balance health, taste and value. That is why McDonald’s have built their strategy on three core principles: choice, information and improving the nutritional profile of existing products. That means:

- Providing people with a range of food that allows them to make a choice appropriate for any occasion, whether that is a treat or a healthy everyday option.
- Providing Information to help customers understand what they are eating.
- Reformulating their food products to reduce saturated fat, sugar and salt, while not compromising on flavour.

McDonald’s are proud of the impact they have already had in helping customers better understand their choices. McDonald’s have been providing customers with nutritional guidance for over 30 years and have

included calorie information on their menus since 2011, at the time becoming the largest company in the sector to ensure customers have access to visible calorie information.

Calorie information is clearly displayed under each item on the digital screens within McDonald's restaurants and on their website and click and collect app and this information allows customers to select an order that fits with their own dietary plans and nutritional requirements. The information also allows customers to personalise the items in their order, such as replacing a hash brown with a fruit bag at breakfast or fries with a salad at lunch.

Reformulating existing items on the menu has been another area of investment. 54% of McDonald's menu is classified as non-HFSS (not high in fat, salt or sugar) and 89% of items on their core food and drink menu contain under 500 calories.

The Happy Meal has also evolved. Today, 72% of items on the Happy Meals menu are non-HFSS, and in 2014, McDonald's trialled "Free Fruit Fridays" resulting in 3.7 million portions of fruit being handed out. As a result of that trial, discounted fruit is now available with every Happy Meal and in the last 12 months over 4 million Happy Meals were sold with a Fruit Bag or Carrot Sticks.

Recent years have also seen the introduction of new menu items. Porridge, salads and grilled chicken wraps now sit alongside menu items McDonald's has traditionally been famous for, such as Chicken McNuggets, the Big Mac and the Fillet-O-Fish.

Products classified as high in fat, salt or sugar - according to the UK Nutrient Profiling Model - are never marketed to children across any media channel, at any time of day. Since 2007, adverts featuring a Happy Meal have included food and drink such as carrot sticks, fruit bags, milk or water, and we restrict out-of-home advertising to avoid being within 200 metres of a school – double the industry standard. But McDonald's also believe that advertising and marketing can play an important part in driving behaviour change. It can increase information and transparency, nudge customers towards certain food choices, and support further reformulation by driving sales.

A recent initiative has highlighted this potential. In December 2017, McDonald's launched their 'Meals Under' 400 calories and 600 calories offer, and in the past 12 months have seen a 102% rise in the number of side salads being purchased with a meal instead of fries. In total, there are over 400 'Meals Under' bundle options for customers to choose from.

McDonald's investment in digital self-order screens has also supported their customers in making informed choices. Since their introduction, and a review of how they present their menu, they have seen 1.3 million

bottles of water purchased instead of a sugary drink and 1.4 million more Fruit Bags bought with a Happy Meal.

McDonald's have also changed their menu to reflect a growing desire from customers to see a greater number of vegetarian options. In 2019, they launched the Vegetarian Happy Meal Wrap and Spicy Veggie Wrap at 209 calories and 364 calories, respectively. Both items are not high in fat, sugar and salt and are Vegetarian Society Accredited. Their introduction means they are now better equipped to meet the requirements of this growing consumer trend.

Loss of the trees

Throughout the application, there has been many discussions working with the Tree Officer and Ecologist, which has led to the overall redesign of the whole site, to ensure that an acceptable scheme could progress. The tree officer's confirmed that the final scheme was acceptable and the revisions had addressed all the comments highlighted throughout the application.

The landscape scheme as per drawing reference 17229-VL-McD_L01/D is acceptable with the boundary planting and two rain gardens well considered. The choice of the Turkish hazel (Corylus colurna) for the hard surfaced area planting pit is agreeable and should provide a suitable level of amenity as a replacement for the protected sycamore. The Turkish hazel will automatically be subject to the TPO which affected the original sycamore. Should the scheme receive consent then all existing, retained trees and boundary features should, subject to planning condition, be afforded appropriate protection through the submission of both an approved AMS and on-site arboricultural supervision. The amended planting pit specification for the hazel (re: 17229-VLMcD_D01/Rev B) is also acceptable and should provide a suitable and protected growing environment conducive to healthy root development and the establishment of the tree overall. One final point is to ensure that any proposed below ground service routes do not come into conflict with the planting pit or any materials contained within it. A condition is required to ensure a suitable buffer zone around the tree put within which no below ground services will be permitted to run.