

Land off Home Farm, Gresford, Llay

Welsh Language Statement

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Introduction

- 1.1 This Welsh Language Statement has been prepared on behalf of Aldi Stores Limited in support of their planning application for the *Erection of a foodstore (Use Class A1), car park, access and landscaping* at Land at Home Farm, Llay. The assessment should be read alongside the supporting documents submitted with the full planning application.
- 1.2 Both national and local planning policy recognises the importance of the Welsh Language as a planning matter stating that;
- ‘The Welsh language is part of the social and cultural fabric and its future well-being will depend upon a wide range of factors, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities and places. The land use planning system should take account of the conditions which are essential to the Welsh language and in so doing contribute to its, use and the Thriving Welsh Language well-being goal¹’*
- 1.3 The Welsh language is part of the social and cultural fabric of Wales. It is spoken by 19% of the population, and many others have some knowledge of the language or are in the process of learning it. There are substantial variations between the proportions of Welsh speakers in different communities, ranging from less than 8% in Blaenau Gwent to more than 85% in some parts of Gwynedd².
- 1.4 As detailed in this document, local planning policy requires that a Community Statement be provided in support of an application for development of the scale proposed.

¹ Paragraph 3.25 of PPW10

² Paragraph 1.7.1 of TAN 20

2.1 This Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the advice contained within the following policies and key advisory documents:

- Planning Policy Wales (December 2010);
- Technical Advice Note 20 (October 2017) – Planning and the Welsh Language;
- Wrexham County Borough Council Unitary Development Plan (2005); and
- Local Planning Guidance Note No.31 – The Welsh Language and Welsh Communities.

Planning Policy Wales

- 2.2 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies for the Welsh Assembly Government and is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notices (TANs) of which TAN20 specifically refers to planning and the Welsh Language.
- 2.3 Paragraph 3.25 of the PPW states that: ‘The Welsh Language is part of the social and cultural fabric and its future well-being will depend upon a wide range of factors, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities and places’.
- 2.4 Paragraph 3.28 goes on to state that considerations relating to the use of the Welsh language may be taken into account by decision makers so far as they are material to applications for planning permission. Policies and decisions must not introduce any element of discrimination between individuals on the basis of their linguistic ability.

Technical Advice Note 20 – Planning and the Welsh Language

- 2.5 The Technical Advice Note (TAN 20) provides guidance on how the Welsh language may be given appropriate consideration in the planning system and on compliance with the requirements of planning and other relevant legislation.
- 2.6 The well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 seeks to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It contains seven well-being goals which certain public bodies (including local authorities and National Park authorities) must seek to achieve in order to improve well-being both now and in the future. One of the well-being goals is a Wales of vibrant culture and a thriving Welsh language.
- 2.7 The land use planning system should, where feasible and relevant, contribute to the future well-being of the Welsh language by establishing the conditions to allow sustainable communities to thrive.
- 2.8 Development plan policies that consider the Welsh language are material consideration. The TAN confirms that LPAs should determine planning applications in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In determining individual planning applications and appeals, considerations relating to the use of the Welsh language may be taken into account so far as they are material. The Planning Act does not give any additional weight to the Welsh language above any other material consideration and decision on all applications for planning permission must be based on planning grounds only and be reasonable.

Wrexham County Borough Council Local Development Plan

- 2.9 Section 2.1 of Wrexham County Borough Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) sets out the Council's visions to improve quality of life for its residents with an emphasis on promoting the Welsh language to encourage a bilingual society.
- 2.10 Section 2.9 sets out that the Welsh language is an important element of the character of many local areas and policies within the UDP should ensure that development in these villages, in scale and location, respects and supports the Welsh culture.
- 2.11 Policy GDP1 (part j) sets out that all new development should have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity to from development that could harm this identity.
- 2.12 Section 4.3 notes that the unique character of parts of the County Borough is derived from its Welsh culture and landscape. The Welsh language is therefore considered to be an important part of the daily lives of many local inhabitants and a key determinant of the social fabric of the communities (...). Thus, the safeguarding and nurturing of this cultural and linguistic identity cannot occur in isolation from the development of the local economy and conservation of the landscape.

Planning Guidance Note No.31 – The Welsh Language and Welsh Communities

- 2.13 In addition to the development plan, the Planning Guidance Note No.31 – The Welsh Language and Welsh Communities provides guidance on how the Council will assess the likely future impact of relevant developments, individually or cumulatively, on the wellbeing of the Welsh language and Welsh Communities and states that the Note will form a material consideration in the determination of all relevant planning applications for development.
- 2.14 Section 3.3 of the Planning Guidance Note sets out that the purpose of the Welsh Language and Welsh Communities Impact Statement is to allow the Council to screen the development for likely significant linguistic and community impacts. This will help to decide what measures could be put in place to reduce the impact (planning conditions or section 106 legal agreements) on the language and the community. It will also allow the Council to decide if the proposal would have such an impact on the language and community of the area to warrant a refusal of permission.
- 2.15 The Council have set out a requirement for a Welsh Language Statement to be submitted alongside the wider submission. It is understood that the 'Welsh Language and Community Impact Statement' referred to within the Planning Guidance Note equates to the 'Welsh Language Statement'. As such, this Statement has been undertaken.

Summary

- 2.16 The policy review indicates that land use planning and the location of new development has a role to play in the future of the Welsh Language although a range of other factors are more likely to have a greater impact.

- 2.17 In line with the PPW and TAN20 policies, there is a need to understand the impact of new development on the existing Welsh language and culture within the area.
- 2.18 As such, the adopted Planning Guidance Note acknowledges that the Welsh Language Statement will screen the development for likely significant linguistic and community impact and will help the Council decide what measures could be put in place to reduce the impact on the language and the community.

Description of the Site and Surrounding Area

Site Location and Description

- 3.1 The planning application site extends to approximately 1.14 ha (2.82 acres) and is located off the B5102 (Straight Mile Road) and the B5373 (Gresford Road), approximately 6.8km (4.2 miles) North of Wrexham Town Centre. The Site and surrounding context are illustrated on the 'Site Location Plan', which have been submitted to accompany the planning application.
- 3.2 The application site is located within the administrative boundary of Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) and situated to the North of Wrexham Town Centre on the B5102 (Straight Mile Road) which connects with Llay New Road, which extends into Wrexham Town Centre.
- 3.3 The site is currently greenfield and benefits from a wider outline planning permission.
- 3.4 The application site is located outside the Llay development boundary and outside the defined town centre and main retail area as defined in the Development Plan. The site is however, identified as falling within the proposed extension to the settlement limit within the Emerging Local Plan proposals map.

Description of Surrounding Area

- 3.5 Straight Mile bounds the site to the north east and Gresford Road bounds the site to the south west. To the east of the site extends greenfield land associated with Home Farm. This land has planning permission for 362 dwellings, with development underway (as at March 2019). To the east, the site abuts the side garden of dwellings associated with Home Farm.
- 3.6 A large residential estate lies immediately south of the site, across Gresford Road. A local pub ('The Crown') is located to the south west, and beyond this lies Llay Industrial Estate. Open agricultural land is present to the north of the site.
- 3.7 Overall, the site is within a mixed-use area of residential, agricultural and employment/industrial, with uses such as Magellan Aerospace, GT Auto Sport, UK Engineering Ltd and Carlton Garden Centre all within close proximity to the site.
- 3.8 There are bus stops available on both sides of Llay Road (approximately 100m south west of the site) and are served by bus routes; 34, PC1 and PC2 which provides services to Caego, Southsea and Llay. Cefn-y-Bedd Train Station is located 2.6km (1.6miles) (5 minute drive away) to the west and provides regular services to Bidston and Wrexham Central Train Station. Wrexham General Train Station is located 7.2km (4.2 miles) south, and provides regular services to Wrexham Central, Bidston, Cardiff, Holyhead and Birmingham International.

The Proposal

- 4.1 This Welsh Language Statement is submitted to support a full planning application comprising the following:
- *A food store (Use Class A1) (1,921 sq. m Gross External Area; 1,840 sq. m Gross Internal Area; 1,315 sq. m net sales area) to be operated by Aldi Stores UK Limited;*
 - *Associated car parking facilities comprising 120 dedicated spaces for the proposed foodstore. The car park will include 8no. disabled spaces, 9no. parent and child spaces and 5no. Motorcycle spaces; and*
 - *New site access – off Gresford Road; and*
 - *New pedestrian access routes – off Gresford Road and Straight Mile Road; and*
 - *Low maintenance landscaping.*
- 4.2 The proposed development is described on the application form as follows:
- ‘Erection of a foodstore (Use Class A1), car park, access and landscaping’
- 4.3 The development of the proposed store is expanded upon in the supporting Planning Statement prepared separately by JLL.
- 4.4 All new Aldi stores within Wales include bi-lingual signs inside the store (such as signage of produce and customer and staff facilities) and within the wider site (such as directional signal and store opening hours).

Assessment Methodology

- 5.1 This section of the Statement will examine the impact of the proposed development in accordance with the criteria contained within the Local Planning Guidance Note No.31 – The Welsh Language and Welsh Communities. The assessment methodology comprises a series of questions to allow the developer and Local Planning Authority to make an assessment of the likely impact of a development proposal against 6 key areas.

Explain with evidence how the development impacts on the Population with reference to the following:

Attracting non Welsh speakers in the locality

- 5.2 Given the nature of the proposed development, which is intended to serve the everyday shopping needs of local residents, it is not anticipated that the proposed development will attract many newcomers to the local area. Employees who work on the nearby industrial estate may not live locally, however, they are existing Welsh and non Welsh speakers.

Migration of Welsh Speakers from the Community

- 5.3 Given the nature of the proposed development, which is intended to serve the everyday shopping needs of local residents, it is not anticipated that the proposed development will contribute to migration from the area. Indeed, the proposed development is expected to create additional jobs which will improve the local economy and therefore increase the likelihood that local residents will want to remain in the area.

Social integration into the Welsh Community

- 5.4 Many staff in Aldi's stores in North Wales speak Welsh. As a community store, staff will typically engage with local residents in the new store, encouraging social integration with all age and social groups.

Change in community population age structure leading to movement of Welsh speakers into or out of the area

- 5.5 Given the nature of the proposed development, which is intended to serve the everyday shopping needs of local residents, it is not anticipated that the proposed development will change the community population age structure. Moreover, as a new local facility, it will provide an essential service which could encourage residents to remain in the area who may otherwise have considered leaving due to limited local choice.

Explain with evidence how the development impacts on Housing for local people with reference to the following:

Local housing need including the amount and type of affordable housing

- 5.6 This issue is not applicable to the proposed development.

Past rate of residential growth in the area

- 5.7 This issue is not applicable to the proposed development.

Increase the cost of local housing forcing local or Welsh speakers to leave the community or lead to an increase in homelessness amongst local or Welsh speaking households;

- 5.8 This issue is not applicable to the proposed development.

Explain with evidence how the development impacts on the Economics of the locality with reference to the following:

The labour skills of local people

- 5.9 The proposed development is expected to create 40 new jobs for the local workforce. A range of roles are required in Aldi's stores including store managers, store assistants, caretakers and warehouse staff. The majority of the staff at the existing store live locally and it is anticipated that the skills required for the additional jobs created will be available in the local area. All stores also include an apprentice and graduate, thus providing valued training opportunities for these employees. Both full time and part time jobs are available, thus providing flexible working for different sections of the community.

Impact on any Welsh speaking or local businesses

- 5.10 There is no direct local competition to that proposed by Aldi in the immediate area. The proposed development will provide choice and opportunity for local businesses to buy quality produce at low prices, including during lunch breaks.

Job opportunities for local or Welsh speakers

- 5.11 As set out above, the proposed Aldi store is expected to create xx new jobs for the local workforce. A range of roles are required in Aldi's stores including store managers, store assistants, caretakers and warehouse staff.

Creating economic diversity in the locality

- 5.12 Aldi provides a successful and highly regarded apprenticeship scheme and graduate scheme which provide extensive opportunities. As more stores open, Aldi is required to recruit and train additional area managers and distribution staff including delivery drivers and logistics staff.
- 5.13 Additional employment opportunities will also be created for the local area through employment of local contractors and labour during the construction stage, plus further employment opportunities for ongoing maintenance of the site and landscaping.

Explain with evidence how the development impacts on Education in the locality with reference to the following:

School capacity in the locality

- 5.14 This issue is not applicable to the proposed development.

Loss or enhancement of education facilities due to an increase/decrease of students

- 5.15 This issue is not applicable to the proposed development.

Altering the balance between Welsh speaking and non-speaking students

- 5.16 This issue is not applicable to the proposed development.

Explain with evidence how the development impacts on the Infrastructure of the locality with reference to the following:

Local services – shops, schools, leisure and health services etc.

- 5.17 The proposed development will provide a main food shopping offer. Currently, residents have to travel out of the local area. The proposal will mean that customers can continue to use existing services and also shop locally. Aldi customers will continue to use other local shops as Aldi stores do not include other services, such as pharmacy, post office, bakery etc as explained in JLL's supporting Planning Statement. The proposal will create more sustainable shopping patterns and will not negatively affect other services in the area.

Making services more or less accessible to local people

- 5.18 The Application site is approximately 100 metres walk from bus stops on Gresford Road, which are served by services to Wrexham, Caego, Southsea and Llay. The site is also within the immediate setting of residential properties and within close range of the Llay industrial estate. Accordingly, the Application Site is easily accessible by public transport and is well located to encourage walking and cycling. Therefore, it is a sustainable location.
- 5.19 Moreover, residents currently have to travel outside of the local area to larger supermarkets in Wrexham, including Aldi and Sainsbury's at Plas Coch Retail Park, Asda and Tesco at Wrexham and Lidl in Gwersyllt. The proposal will provide the community with a new main food supermarket is significantly more accessible than the stores at Wrexham, providing a clear benefit for residents.

Adequacy of existing services to serve the new development

- 5.20 This issue is not applicable to the proposed development.

Other General considerations (with evidence)

How will the proposal create new opportunities to promote the Welsh language and local initiatives within the community?

- 5.21 The proposed development will assist people wishing to speak Welsh in their local community, with employment opportunities for Welsh speakers within the store and the addition of signage written in Welsh at the site as well as the increase in local trade there will be greater opportunities to speak the Welsh language if the site is redeveloped.

What mitigation measures including phasing are being proposed to alleviate any likely harmful impacts caused by the development?

- 5.22 Finally, the Note requires consideration of whether any of the negative effects identified through the above assessment could be alleviated through the use of mitigation measures.
- 5.23 Given there are no anticipated negative impacts on the Welsh language, no mitigation measures are required.

Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 This Statement assesses the proposed development against the requirement of Policy GDP1 of the Wrexham County Borough Unitary Development Plan and specifically within the Planning Guidance Note No. 31 – The Welsh Language and Welsh Communities which was adopted in February 2011. The Statement also has due regard to national policies and guidance on the consideration of the Welsh Language within the planning system, set out in PPW 10 and TAN 20.
- 6.2 The Statement assesses the proposed development against a total of 19 questions, which form the Process Guide within the Planning Guidance Note. The assessment sets out evidence to back up how the proposals meet each of the requirements set out within the Note.
- 6.3 Having regard to the assessment carried out in this Statement, it is concluded that the proposed development will have a positive impact upon the Welsh Language in the local area. As such, it is considered that the proposed development accords with PPW, TAN20 and Policy GDP 1 of the Wrexham County Borough Unitary Development Plan and the guidance set out in the Local Planning Guidance Note No.31 ‘The Welsh Language and Welsh Communities’.



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