

MEMORANDUM



From: Chief Officer, Environment & Technical **To:** Chief Officer Planning & Regulatory
FAO: Sharon Holman

Our Ref: ET/DC/P/2019/0919 **Your Ref:** P/2019/0919

Date: 27th February 2020

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
TOWN AND COUNTRY (GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE) ORDER 1995

Location: O. S Grid Ref: 325 513 Land at Argos Car Park, Plas Coch Retail Park, Plas Coch, Wrexham.

Development: Erection of free standing restaurant with drive thru facility, car parking, landscaping and associated works including customer order displays.

I refer to your consultation / email dated 20/02/2020 and email / comments from Planware / ADL Traffic dated 13/02/2020 in respect of the above. My response to the comments from ADL are as follows:-

Parking Standards and Parking Layout

The applicant has indicated that planning application ref: P/2019/0237 restricts the level of food retail floor area within The Range store to 372m². Based on these figures the overall Range Store including Iceland Food element would require a maximum of 331 spaces. This would equate to a maximum 50% shortfall in parking provision compared with LPGN 16 requirements.

The applicant has carried out a car parking survey on Friday 17/05/2019 (between 16:00 – 18:45) and Saturday 18/05/2019 (between 11:00 – 14:45). This survey indicated that the peak occupancy was 68 vehicles on Friday (29% occupied) and 138 vehicles on a Saturday (58% occupied). The proposed development would appear to provide a total of 165 spaces. Based on this survey the proposed level of parking provision would in theory result in 84% occupancy.

I would have thought that any parking survey would be carried out in the first few weeks of December leading up to Christmas on a Saturday and Sunday when the car park is likely to experience peak occupation or even during the Easter holidays.

I would suggest that the applicant also carries out a parking survey at the McDonalds drive-thru in Chirk during the week and on a Saturday and Sunday to assess / compare parking demand with the proposed development site. It is not considered that the proposed Plas Coch drive thru will be any less popular than the drive thru at Halton given its proximity to the A483 and the significant catchment area of Wrexham.

Based on the submitted plans, the proposed two storey drive-thru McDonalds comprises a total public floor space of approximately 159m², which is significantly different from the value previously quoted in Table 4A ie/ 97m². However, the applicant has since amended the proposed public floor area to 118 m². The applicant has questioned the inclusion of the toilets and stairs area despite these facilities being for public use.

Class A3 use requires a maximum of 1 car space per 4m² public floor space which would equate to the maximum requirement for 40 spaces. The applicant has indicated the provision of 29 spaces. Based on the provision of 29 spaces for the proposed development would represent a maximum shortfall of 28% compared with LPGN 16 maximum standards.

Any proposed standard parking spaces shall be 2.4 x 4.8m in accordance with LPGN 16 requirements. Could you please ask the applicant to annotate this detail on a revised layout plan.

Proposed Traffic Generation and McDonald's Halton, Chirk.

The applicant has suggested that the existing McDonalds at Halton is simply not comparable to the proposed development in Wrexham. In our opinion, it is not considered that the proposed Plas Coch drive thru will be any less popular than the drive thru at Halton given its proximity to the A483 and the significant catchment area of Wrexham.

The applicant has indicated that the location of the proposed McDonalds will facilitate linked trips given the existing units on the Plas Coch Retail Park. The Plas Coch site will obviously result in some linked trips but it is anticipated that a significant number of trips will be non-linked trips.

The applicant has indicated that the proposed restaurant will not be visible from the A483 and the level of trade will only be about 50% of that at Chirk. The applicant suggests that they don't expect the restaurant to attract traffic off the A483 unless it is coming into / out of Wrexham in any event. Given the technology that is available to most people, it will become obvious that there is a McDonalds restaurant located just off the A483 at Plas Coch retail park. No doubt McDonalds are proposing this site given its likely customer base and accessibility.

The applicant has referred to the Costa Coffee application which used McDonalds / KFC / burger King TRICS data in their submission. They used these figures as they advised that Costa Coffee figures were not available. The Highway Authority were aware of this data but considered that a Costa Coffee would generate significantly less non-linked vehicle movements than a potential McDonalds restaurant. A condition limiting the site specifically to this class A3 use was imposed for this reason.

Glare from Headlight Vehicles / Retaining Wall

I understand that the retaining wall along the eastern boundary is being kept as existing. The dense hedge which surrounds the site is also being retained. The applicant has indicated that there would be no headlight glare which would affect the highway. The applicant will prepare a plan to demonstrate this to include in the revised TA.

Car Parking Survey

The applicant has carried out a car parking survey on Friday 17/05/2019 (between 16:00 – 18:45) and Saturday 18/05/2019 (between 11:00 – 14:45). This survey indicated that the peak occupancy was 68 vehicles on Friday (29% occupied) and 138 vehicles on a Saturday (58% occupied). The proposed development would appear to provide a total of 165 spaces. Based on this survey the proposed level of parking provision would in theory result in 84% occupancy.

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Servicing

I understand that deliveries would be undertaken by a 16.5m artic delivery vehicle 3 times per week and would be scheduled for quiet trading periods.

I understand that refuse is collected by a private contractor using a 9.6m refuse vehicle and would also occur off peak. The submitted swept paths of such a refuse vehicle as indicated on Drg. No. 4171/TR/10 are considered acceptable.

A Service Delivery Management Plan will need to be submitted for further approval.

Committed / Parallel Developments and Off Site Junctions

The figures indicated in Table C summarize the predicted increased levels of traffic flows at Junction 5 and the A541 Mold Road roundabout. I assume that the AM and PM peak flows are incorrect as have identical values.

The cumulative impact of all committed or proposed development compared to the 2019 base flows equates to more than 8% at the A483 Junction 5 and more than 9% at the A541 Mold Road. Whilst the McDonalds itself may not equate to more than the 5% figure considered to be material by Welsh Government, the cumulative impact of all these developments causes an incremental rise in traffic generation. It is considered that the Mold Road (B & Q) roundabout is already at capacity and we are concerned that continuing to allow small percentage increases will only exacerbate existing capacity issues.

Revised Transport Assessment

The Arcady figures produced are theoretical figures based on existing traffic figures and predicted traffic generator increases. The figures do not accurately represent what is evident on site at peak hours / weekends when significant traffic queues are common place at the roundabout

I assume that the roundabouts have not been visually assessed as well as being theoretically assessed. A comparison of the traffic seen on site should be compared to the theory. I would recommend that the submitted Transport Models are validated against the observed traffic queues at these roundabouts.

Pedestrian Crossing Facilities

The proposed development is likely to attract a significant number of pedestrian movements particularly given the proximity of the Glyndwr University and existing residential estates within a reasonable walking distance from the site.

The applicant has referred to the previous application for 410 residential apartments at the campus with the committee report specifically promoting the proximity of the retail park as a benefit in reducing car use and encouraging walking. Future occupants of these flats are likely to use the existing splitter island located north east of the Plas Coch roundabout if they were walking to the retail park. Any local residents walking to the McDonalds restaurant from the Mold Road area are likely to cross Plas Coch Road at the junction with the B and Q roundabout. This pedestrian crossing only has a pedestrian crossing phase on its southern approach.

I would therefore recommend that the applicant reviews the adequacy of the existing pedestrian crossing facilities including a Stage 1 Safety Audit in order to demonstrate the adequacy of existing facilities in this area to serve such a development.

Accident Analysis

The submitted accident analysis only appears to have reviewed a small study area which includes 6 personal injury accidents occurring between 2014 – 2018. However, I would recommend that the accident analysis extends up to and including the A541 B & Q Roundabout and section of Plas Coch Road between.

Construction Traffic Management Plan

Comments from Traffic Section as follows:-

para 9.1 *"The site is accessed from the Asda Car Park"* – I assume that this is a typing error.

Please ask the applicant to amend this detail.

In conclusion, I would raise significant concerns in respect of the proposed development given the existing capacity issues on the local highway network in the vicinity of the site. Any existing additional vehicle movements from the proposed development will only exacerbate the existing congestion / queuing experienced in this location.

Proposed parking provision at the development site is also a concern. Any shortfall in parking provision is likely to impact on adjoining businesses in the vicinity of the site.

Could you please ask the applicant to address the issues raised above.



Chief Officer, Environment & Technical

