

13 August 2023

Dear Residents,

I am writing on behalf of all 3 Sovereign Ward Councillors to inform you that we have now received the full meeting papers regarding the next Planning Committee meeting which will take place at **6pm on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023 at the Town Hall**. The paper acknowledges the SIGNIFICANT number of objections received following public consultation, but the **recommendation** is to “**Grant Planning Permission subject to conditions and legal agreement**”.

This is the development of site 7a which is in three parts as follows:

- i) Site 7a, Pacific Drive - Aldi Store Ltd (400 objections/25 supporting)
- ii) Site 7a, Pacific Drive - McCarthy and Stone Retirement (105 objections/10 supporting)
- iii) Site 7a, Pacific Drive LNT Care Developments Ltd (130 objections/7 supporting)

The recommendations of the Planning Officers are as follows: -

1. That the application be **delegated to the Head of Planning to secure agreement** to the scheme from the Council’s Air Quality officer, landscaping issues, affordable housing issues, and ecological translocation issues. *On reaching agreement to these issues...*
2. That the **Head of Planning be authorised to grant permission subject to conditions and S106 / S278 agreements for.....**Travel Plan audit fees, Other highway works, Late-stage review to establish affordable housing position (unless otherwise agreed), Local Labour Agreement, Ecological translocation controls and the Golden Brick’ clause to limit the trading of the food store until the schemes on the adjacent sites (Care Home & McCarthy and Stone) have reached a defined point in their construction.

In other words, the Lib Dem administration, who hold the **majority** vote on this committee, probably realises the strength of feeling that surrounds this joint application. By delegating authority to the Head of Planning they may be trying **to avoid** the harsh criticism that will ensue. This is entirely within the rules but is, in our view, an abrogation of the responsibilities that come with having authority.

The meeting agenda\* is now a public document and worth studying in its entirety; it is available to view online from the council’s website. Specifically on Aldi - we wish to draw your attention to **Section 8.2 (pages 22 to 26) which deals with the reasoning behind the planners’ decision and Section 8.10 (page 29) which deals with the lack of any objection from the officers at ESCC to the application and approves access from Pacific Drive (with only minor alteration to the location of bus stops etc)**.

On the second point i.e., that of access: we wish to reiterate that your Sovereign Ward Councillors have done their utmost and have challenged the developers at each stage of the process as well as imploring them to amend their plans, especially as regards to the access provisions, in line with the democratically and publicly expressed will of local residents – all to no avail it seems. We should make it clear that access was by far and away the biggest issue with residents, not the development itself.

Penny di Cara  
Nigel Goodyear  
Kshama Shore

\* Download the meeting agenda and reports from: <https://democracy.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=144&MIId=3843&Ver=4>