

4th August 2025

FAO: Susan Dubberley
Mid Sussex District Council
Planning Department
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Dear Sue,

SUSSEX HOUSE, PERRYMOUNT ROAD, HAYWARDS HEATH, RH16 1DN

AMENDMENTS TO APPLICATION REF. DM/24/3077

We write on behalf of our client, Aldi Stores Limited ('the applicant'), in relation to the full planning application reference. DM/24/3077 which was validated by Mid Sussex District Council ('MSDC') on 17th December 2024.

The proposed amendments are made in response to comments received from consultees and include the proposed addition of a 'Copenhagen' crossing along the entrance to the Site on Perrymount Road and the construction of cricket nets along the border of Clair Park and Sussex House, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1DN.

In addition to this Planning Cover Letter, the submitted documents which accompany this addendum are as follows:

- Heritage Statement Addendum, prepared by Cogent Heritage;
- Transport Statement Addendum, prepared by Connect Consultants;
- Ecological Impact Assessment Addendum, prepared by ECOSA;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report, prepared by ECOSA;
- Statutory Metric Calculator Tool, prepared by ECOSA;
- CGI, prepared by The Harris Partnership;
- Montage Views, prepared by The Harris Partnership;
- Drawings/Plans:
 - Proposed Site Plan ref: 19971-THPK-XX-XX-DA-A-0120 PO5, prepared by The Harris Partnership
 - Landscape Plan, ref: 19971-SFW-XX-XX-DR-L-1001-P04, prepared by Smeeden Foreman

- General Assembly Elevation Plan, ref: 25083 SHT1A, prepared by Site One Ltd;
- Lattice Tower Detail Plan, ref: 25083 SHT2, prepared by Site One Ltd;
- Polypropylene 50mm Mesh netting image, prepared by Foresport Fencing Ltd; and
- Polypropylene 50mm Mesh netting specification, prepared by Foresport Fencing Ltd.

A 'Copenhagen' crossing was requested by Mid Sussex District Councils Urban Design Officer in order to protect visual qualities of the street and prioritise pedestrian movement.

Cricket nets have been requested by Haywards Heath Cricket Club to be constructed along the boundary of the proposed Aldi foodstore on the Sussex House Site (ref. DM/24/3077) to prevent stray cricket balls landing in the proposed car park.

Proposed Development

A 'Copenhagen' style raised pedestrian crossing will be added at the Site access along Perrymount Road. The crossing will be raised 7.5mm above the normal road level, and the footway will be lowered slightly to match.

Cricket Nets are also proposed to be constructed along the boundary of Clair Park, and Sussex House, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1DN, fully within land owned by Aldi Stores Limited. This net will be 28m wide, and 14m tall to ensure that there is maximum protection of the proposed Aldi car park from stray cricket balls.

Planning Assessment

Principle of Use

National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') paragraph 96 states that planning policies and decisions should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued social, recreational and cultural facilities and services and plan positively for the provision of such facilities.

Policy DP24 (Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities) supports the provision of additional sporting facilities and also to protect existing facilities. The Mid Sussex Playing Pitch Strategy (2015) also states that it is essential for existing facilities to be retained.

Due to the close proximity of the proposed Aldi foodstore to the Haywards Heath Cricket Club, nets are proposed to ensure that stray cricket balls do not enter Aldi's car park.

Therefore, the proposed cricket nets would protect an existing community facility and is fully in accordance with Local Plan Policy DP24.

Design

MSDC Policy DP1 outlines that all development should achieve a high quality of design and layout, and include appropriate landscaping, ecological protection and enhancement.

MSDC Policy DP26 states that all new development will be expected to be of high quality design and that development should respond effectively to its surroundings, reinforcing local distinctiveness and landscape characters.

Policy DP26 utilises 11 principles of good design that seek to secure the development of high quality design. These cover the efficient use of land and creation of a sense of place, responding

to the local character and context, ensuring the use of sustainable materials, providing definition between public and private land, allowing for effective permeability and access, facilitating inclusive design, ensuring the effective design of ancillary facilities, optimises development potential, and protected surrounding residential amenity.

The cricket nets will be similar in design to those previously approved within the context of the Site (ref. DM/19/1742) which provided nets along the northern boundary of Clair Park.

The proposed nets have been designed following discussions with the Haywards Heath Cricket Club and are proposed to be 28m long, consisting of two pylons which are 14 metres tall, with the netting starting three metres off the ground. The design of the nets has been agreed with the Club and designed with input from a specialist contractor (Foresport Fencing Ltd) to ensure that they appropriately reduce the risk of stray cricket balls impacting the proposed Aldi car park. The nets have been designed to reduce visual impact as far as possible, utilising black netting and designing them to sit within the existing treeline. They follow an existing context of cricket nets surrounding the cricket pitch and are considered to comply with policies DP1 and DP26.

Heritage and Conservation

Paragraphs 212–215 of the NPPF require great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, with any harm or loss needing clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm should be exceptional or wholly exceptional, depending on the asset's significance, and is only acceptable if outweighed by substantial public benefits or if strict criteria are met. Where harm is less than substantial, it must be balanced against the public benefits of the proposal.

NPPF paragraph 219 states that with Conservation Areas, proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset should be treated favourably.

Policy DP35 (Conservation Areas) of the Local Plan states that development shouldn't impact the views into and out of a conservation area. New development within a conservation area should conserve or protect its special character and appearance.

The Site is located within the Heath Conservation Area. The Heath Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) sets out that the Haywards Heath Cricket Club and cricket grounds forms an important part of the setting and character of the Heath Conservation Area.

The cricket grounds are located in the centre of Clair Park and form the centre piece of the amphitheatre-like setting which is formed within the park. The cricket nets are required for the continued use of the cricket grounds for sports which has a significant contribution to the special character of the conservation area.

The amendments are supported by a Heritage Statement Addendum, prepared by Cogent Heritage, which concludes that the views and setting of the nearby Church of St Richard will not be juxtaposed with or interfered with by the proposed Cricket Net. Notwithstanding, the Addendum concludes that the nets will have limited harm to the conservation area associated with the visual presence of the proposed net.

However, as per NPPF paragraph 212, the benefits in retaining the special character - through the protection and continuation of the use of the cricket ground by the club - of the conservation area through the proposed net outweighs the harm associated with it.

Therefore, the cricket nets are designed to have a minimal impact on the conservation area, with their benefits outweighing any harm in accordance with NPPF paragraphs 212-215 Local Plan Policy DP35.

Ecology

Local Plan Policy DP37 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows) states that states that trees, woodland and hedgerows should be protected in any new developments.

The proposed nets are located a sufficient away from the existing boundary between Clair Park and the proposed Aldi foodstore. No trees will be removed in the proposal, and the proposed nets are proposed outside of any root protection areas. The net will begin 3 metres off the ground to ensue that there are no impacts to the existing proposed landscaping.

The ecological conditions of the Site have also been assessed in the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment Addendum, prepared by ECOSA. The assessment concluded that with the addition of the addition of cricket nets, the Site still has suitability to support foraging and commuting bats, breeding birds and European hedgehog. Proposed mitigation measures of the proposed works include replacement native landscaping and planting, sensitive lighting schemes, sensitive timing of works and precautionary methods of work.

Therefore, the proposed development complies with Policy DP37 by ensuring that existing trees and habitats are protected, with no anticipated adverse ecological impacts, and incorporates appropriate mitigation measures to enhance and preserve local ecology.

Biodiversity

MSDC Policy DP38 required that developments take measures to enhance the biodiversity on Site, ensuring that there is an overall net gain. This includes measure to protect existing biodiversity and contributing to the creation of new habitats. These principles are reflected in MSDC Emerging Policy DPN1, Neighbourhood Plan Objective 6C and NPPF paragraph 180.

Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain ('BNG') requirements introduced as part of the Environment Act 2021 have come into force and require a net gain of 10% using the 'biodiversity metric' tool.

A revised Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report and Metric have been prepared by ECOSA to accompany this letter. The report concludes that with the proposed ecological enhancements, the amended Aldi scheme, results in a BNG score of 1.14 habitat units and 1.94 hedgerow units which means a 1169.78% biodiversity net gain for habitat units and 1,664.84% biodiversity net gain for hedgerows units which significantly exceeds policy requirements.

Therefore, the proposals are acceptable and can be strongly supported with regards to biodiversity.

Transport

In line with Policy DP21, development should support the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026 through attempts to minimise travel, facilitate alternative modes of transport including public transport, with the provision of secure cycle storage, adequate car parking, mitigate road network impacts to avoid traffic congestion, protects pedestrian and cyclist safety and does not result in harm to South Downs National Park or High Weald AONB.

Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan Policy B1 outlines that development should incorporate a highways design and layout that complies with highways standards and guidance and achieve a permeable highway layout, connecting with the existing highway network safely.

The Transport Assessment Addendum prepared by Connect Consultants concludes that the addition of the 'Copenhagen' crossing will not effect the layout, traffic, access arrangements that have already been considered by MSDC and WSCC.

Amenity

Local Plan Policy DP26 states that proposals should take into account the impact on privacy and outlook on existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings.

The proposed cricket nets will not have an adverse on the surrounding amenity of residential properties, including impact on privacy, outlook and noise, as they are not located adjacent to any sensitive uses.

Summary

The proposed amendments to application ref. DM/24/3077 will allow for the continuing operation of Haywards Heath Cricket Club in Clair Park and improve pedestrian connections and mobility along Perrymount Road.

We trust that the enclosed forms and documents are sufficient to enable you to validate and determine the planning application. Should you require any further details or have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleague Tom Roe (Tom.Roe@avisonyoung.com).

Yours sincerely



Samuel Freeze
Graduate Planner
+44 7748 180164
samuel.freeze@avisonyoung.com

For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited