

Demolition of Former Cash and Carry and Erection of Proposed Foodstore

Welsh Language Statement

Bampton Property Group

Caernarfon Road, Bangor



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Welsh Language Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Bampton Property Group in support of their planning application for the Demolition of former cash and carry and erection of a foodstore (Use Class A1), car park, access and landscaping at former Blakemore Cash and Carry site; and reconfiguration of access and car park arrangements fronting the existing Dunelm store at Caernarfon Road, Bangor. 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;
- 1.3 ‘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.’
- 1.4 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 Paragraph 3.25 of PPW10

² Paragraph 1.7.1 of TAN 20

2 Policy Review

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;
- Anglesey & Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (July 2017); and
- Planning and the Welsh Language SPG (November 2009).

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 TAN 20 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 considerations. 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 decisions on all applications for planning permission must be based on planning grounds only and be reasonable.

Anglesey & Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan

- 2.9 Section 6.1 of the Development Plan states that The Welsh language plays an important role in the social, cultural and economic life of the Plan area’s residents and visitors. The 2011 Census revealed that 65% of Gwynedd’s population were Welsh speakers.
- 2.10 Paragraph 6.1.3 of the Development Plan states that Where development is proposed, consideration must be given to the enhancement and protection of the language and culture. Key to this is sustaining existing communities.
- 2.11 Strategic Policy PS 1 sets the context for the assessment of the potential impact of proposals upon the language and culture. The Policy requires the preparation of a Welsh Language Statement for various types of development. Of relevance to the proposed development is criterion a) retail, industrial or commercial development with an area of 1,000 sq.m. or more.
- 2.12 The Policy states that proposals should be refused where significant harm would be caused to the character and language balance of a community that cannot be avoided or suitable mitigated by appropriate planning mechanisms. Additionally, the Policy requires bilingual signage schemes to deal with all operational signage in the public domain within a development proposal.

Planning and the Welsh Language SPG

- 2.13 In addition to the Development Plan, the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) regarding Planning and the Welsh Language acknowledges that the planning system can assist sustainable communities to grow whilst preserving the Welsh Language and culture (paragraph 6).
- 2.14 With regard to determining applications, paragraph 18 of the SPG states that in the case of smaller developments, applicants are asked to submit a “Community and Linguistic Statement” to accompany their planning application. Where developments are on a larger scale and where they do not comply with national and local policies, the planning authority will ask for a more detailed assessment which will be submitted in the form of a “Community and Linguistic Impact Assessment.
- 2.15 It is understood that the “Community and Linguistic Statement” referred to in the SPG equates to the “Welsh Language Statement” required in Policy PS 1 of the Development Plan. As such, this Statement is undertaken on the basis of the guidance relating to Community and Linguistic Statements within the SPG and contained with Appendix A.

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 Although, in line with 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 SPG acknowledges that mitigation measures will be sought to address Welsh language and culture issues resulting from new development proposals.

3 Description of the Site and Surrounding Area

Site Location and Description

- 3.1 The planning application site extends to approximately 1.25 ha (3.09 acres) and is located off the A4087 Caernarfon Road, approximately 2.4km (1.5 miles) south of Bangor City 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 Gwynedd Council (GC) and situated to the south west of Bangor City Centre on the A4087 Caernarfon Road which connects with the A55 (Junction 10), an important strategic route within North Wales. The site comprises the former Blakemore Cash and Carry which comprises a floor space of 2,300 sqm and is set back from the road with 45 car parking spaces. It is considered that the building is in a dilapidated state and no longer fit for purpose.
- 3.3 The application site is located within the Bangor development boundary but is situated outside the defined town centre and main retail area as defined in the Development Plan. Caernarfon Road (A4087) bounds the site to the south of the proposed store, whilst on the opposite side of Caernarfon Road are several commercial properties.
- 3.4 Dunelm lies immediately to the east of the subject site. The application site includes the car park to the front of the Dunelm store to allow for the provision of a relocated access onto Caernarfon Road and the rationalisation of Dunelm's car park. A number of residential properties and a small retail park lie to the north and west.

Description of Surrounding Area

- 3.5 The site is within a mix use area of established retail development with uses such as MFI, Currys, B&Q, Next, Argos and Tesco all within close proximity to the site. The site is within an out-of-centre location in retail policy terms.
- 3.6 There are bus stops available on both sides of Caernarfon Road and are served by bus routes; X4, X5, 5, 53, 56, 58 and 85 which provide services to Bangor, Coed Mawr, llangoed Llanberis and Llanddona. Bangor Train Station is located 1.3 miles (5 min drive away) to the north east and provide regular services to Holyhead, Birmingham, Maesteg, Manchester, Cardiff and London.

4 The Proposal

- 4.1 This planning Statement is submitted to support a full planning application comprising the following:
- A food store (Use Class A1) (1,801 sq. m Gross External Area; 1,725 sq. m Gross Internal Area; 1,254 sq. m net sales area) to be operated by Aldi Stores UK Limited;
 - Associated car parking facilities comprising of 113 dedicated spaces for the proposed foodstore. The car park will include 6no. disabled spaces, 7 no. parent and child spaces, 14 no. cycle spaces (7 hoops) and within the Service Yard – 7 staff car parking spaces.
 - Reconfiguring existing site access, to include new main road roundabout.
 - Alteration to existing neighbouring Dunelm store car parking in association with new site access.
 - Alteration to existing Service access – off Toronnen.
 - New pedestrian access route -from Trehwfa Road.
 - Low maintenance landscaping.
- 4.2 The proposed development is described on the application form as follows:
- 4.3 Demolition of former cash and carry and erection of a foodstore (Use Class A1), car park, access and landscaping at former Blakemore Cash and Carry site; and reconfiguration of access and car park arrangements fronting the existing Dunelm store at Caernarfon Road, Bangor’.
- 4.4 The proposed site layout is informed by the design parameters of the site, such as a major road (Caernarfon Road), the no build zone over the culvert, additional access for servicing and proximity to the neighbouring store.
- 4.5 The proposed orientation of the building allows the service area of the store to be positioned to the south west of the site.
- 4.6 The proposed Aldi provides shop front glazing with an active façade treatment to the principal elevation. The store entrance is located along the south eastern facing elevation, featuring an internal lobby beneath the canopy. This arrangement takes advantage of the prominent view of the Aldi foodstore when travelling along Caernarfon Road and provides customers with direction in to the proposed store.
- 4.7 All new Aldi stores within Wales include bi-lingual signage within 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).

5 Welsh Language Assessment

Assessment Methodology

- 5.1 This section of the Statement will examine the impact of the proposed development in accordance with the criteria contained within Appendix A of the 'Planning and the Welsh Language' SPG. 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 four key areas:
- General (all types of development);
 - Population Characteristics (all types of development);
 - Employment; and
 - Mitigation Measures.
- 5.2 If a development is likely to be detrimental to any one of these aspects, it may also have an adverse impact on the Welsh language. However, if it is sensitive to the local context, then the impact is far more likely to be positive.
- 5.3 The assessment methodology comprises a series of questions across the four topics listed above. For each question, the development is scored as having either a positive impact, neutral impact or negative impact.
- 5.4 The overall impact will depend on the number of positive and negative scores and whether-or-not these remain so negative if mitigation measures are practical and can be successfully delivered. There will also be a need to consider other policies in the Development Plan and to balance the overall benefits of a proposal in contributing to the implementation of the Plan and its strategic objectives and vision.

General Considerations

- 5.5 The general section of the assessment requires the proposed development to be considered against a series of questions. Each of these questions are set out and considered below.

Consistent with Local and National Strategies and Plans

- 5.6 The submitted Planning and Retail Statement fully assesses the proposed development against the national strategies and policies set out in Planning Policy Wales and the accompanying Technical Advice Notes as well as the local policies set out in the Development Plan. The assessment concludes that the proposed development fully complies with those policies and strategies.

Score: Positive Impact

Likely to Satisfy Local and Community Needs

- 5.7 The relocation of the Aldi within Bangor will allow the local everyday needs of local residents to continue to be met. Furthermore, by improving the store and the range and choice of goods for sale, the proposed will deliver a positive impact.
- 5.8 The assessment of need undertaken as part of the Planning and Retail Statement identified that there is a local shopping need for the proposal in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Score: Positive Impact

Likely to Maintain or Add to Communal Facilities

- 5.9 The relocation of the Aldi within Bangor will allow the local everyday needs of local residents to continue to be met.

Score: Neutral Impact

Sustainable in the Long Term

- 5.10 The Application Site is previously developed land, which comprises the former Blackmore Cash and carry. As such, the development represents the efficient re-use of land, thus contributing to sustainable objectives.
- 5.11 The proposed Aldi store scheme compliments and integrates with surrounding land uses, which is predominantly a commercial area. As such, the development will not negatively impact on the surrounding setting and will reinforce the local economy.
- 5.12 The Application site is approximately 100 metres walk from bus stops on Caernarfon Road, which are served by services to Bangor, Coed Mawar, Llangoed, Llangoed and Llanddona. The site is also within the immediate setting of residential properties and within close range to local amenities and a variety of retail businesses. Accordingly, the Application Site is easily accessible by public transport and is well located to encourage walking, therefore, it is a sustainable location.
- 5.13 Based on the above, it is considered that the proposed development would support the main retail needs of the residents of Gwynedd and constitute positive economic investment, securing benefits across all dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being) as set out in the PPW. Accordingly, it is concluded that the proposed development comprises sustainable development.

Score: Positive Impact

Likely to be Supported by the Local Community

- 5.14 The application proposals will be subject of a public consultation exercise which will provide a clearer picture of the level of public support for the proposed development. Notwithstanding this, it is

anticipated that the relocation of Aldi to the application site to allow the provision of a new store offering Aldi's full product range will be supported by the local community.

Score: Positive Impact

Population Characteristics

- 5.15 With regard to population, the SPD requires consideration of whether the development will attract newcomers to the area and contribute to migration from the area.

Will the Development Attract Newcomers to the Area

- 5.16 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 newcomers to the local area.

Score: Neutral Impact

Will the Development Contribute to Migration From the Area

- 5.17 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.

Score: Neutral Impact

Employment

- 5.18 With regard to employment development, the SPD requires consideration of the proposed development against six key questions. Each of these questions are set out and considered below.

Call for Labour Skills Which are Available Locally

- 5.19 The Current Aldi store in Bangor employs 27 staff. The proposed store will protect those jobs and is expected to create a further 10 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.

Score: Positive Impact

Create Jobs for the Local Workforce

5.20 As set out above, the Current Aldi store in Bangor employs 27 staff. The proposed store will protect those jobs and is expected to create a further 10 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.

Score: Positive Impact

Attract Workers from Outside the Country

5.21 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 workers from outside the country.

Score: Neutral Impact

Create New Opportunities for the Workforce

5.22 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.

5.23 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.

Score: Positive Impact

Lead to Further Investment

5.24 The proposed development comprises a significant investment in its own right which will be a significant boost to the economy of Bangor, bringing a derelict site back into active economic use. The relocation of Aldi into the new unit will provide an opportunity for the existing store to be re-let to another town centre use once it becomes available, thus leading to further investment in Bangor.

Score: Positive Impact

Contribute to Increasing the Use of Welsh Language

5.25 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. At present the site contributes nothing to the promotion of the Welsh language, whereas the redevelopment of the site will provide economic and social benefits within the area.

Score: Positive Impact

Mitigation Measures

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

Score: Neutral Impact

6 Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 This Welsh Language Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Bampton Property Group Ltd in respect of their planning application for the demolition of former cash and carry and erection of a foodstore (Use Class A1), car park, access and landscaping at former Blakemore Cash and Carry site; and reconfiguration of access and car park arrangements fronting the existing Dunelm store at Caernarfon Road, Bangor.
- 6.2 This Statement assesses the proposed development against the requirement of Policy PS 1 of the Anglesey & Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan and specifically the guidance set out in the Planning and the Welsh Language SPG, which was adopted in November 2009. 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.
- 6.3 The Statement assesses the proposed development against a total of fourteen questions, which form the four key themes set out within Appendix A to the Planning and the Welsh Language SPG. The assessment scores the development against each question as having either a: positive impact; neutral impact; or negative impact.
- 6.4 Against these criteria, the proposed development was found to make nine positive impacts upon the Welsh Language in the local area. These positive impacts include:
- Consistent with Local and National Strategies and Plans;
 - Likely to Satisfy Local and Community Needs;
 - Sustainable in the Long Term;
 - Likely to be Supported by the Local Community;
 - Call for Labour Skills Which are Available Locally;
 - Create Jobs for the Local Workforce;
 - Create New Opportunities for the Workforce;
 - Lead to Further Investment; and
 - Contribute to Increasing the Use of Welsh Language.
- 6.5 The remaining five impacts are considered to be neutral.
- 6.6 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 Policy PS 1 of the Anglesey & Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan and the guidance set out in the Planning and the Welsh Language SPG.



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