

Comments for Planning Application MC/25/0753

Application Summary

Application Number: MC/25/0753

Address: St John Fisher School 79 Maidstone Road Chatham Medway ME4 6DP

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings and structures and construction of a new food retail store (Use Class E(a)), with access, car and cycle parking, landscaping and associated works.

Case Officer: Mary Smith

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Katherine Sneed

Address: Jigsaw Planning, PO Box 2844,, Glasgow, Glasgow G61 9DG

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: We write on behalf of Asda Stores Limited to object to the above application submitted to Medway Council.

Our objection focusses on the concern that the application is not supported by an effective retail impact assessment leaving the Council unable to determine whether there will be a significant adverse impact from the proposal.

As the Council will be well aware, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is very clear at paragraphs 90 to 94 that retail impact assessments are required for proposals which exceed a locally defined threshold for impact testing. The applicant's consultant simply refer to the default threshold set out in NPPF of 2,500sqm which would mean that a retail impact assessment is not required as the proposed development is 1912sqm.

However the emerging Local Plan Policy T17 Table A notes that the local threshold proposed for Chatham is 280 sqm for convenience goods. The 280sqm stems from a recommendation with the Medway Retail and Town Centres Study (2025). The supporting text to section 8.6 of the policy confirms that "proposals to date have relied upon the national threshold, in absence of a locally defined threshold. 2,500sqm represents a large scale and quantity of floorspace compared to the typical size of units in each centre and would therefore have a significant impact. It is therefore too large to reflect the local context. In addition, the cumulative impact of out of centre proposals will also have a resounding impact on the health of centres in Medway."

NPPF does not require that a locally set threshold has to be from an 'adopted' policy. Given the Council's endorsement of the lower threshold through the publication of it in the emerging policy

means that it should be afforded significant weight.

The applicant has not provided a compliant retail impact assessment and therefore the Council cannot be in a position to fully assess the proposal and its impact on defined centres. The Council cannot therefore be certain that there will not be a significant adverse impact from the proposal.