

Future Wolverton is a Community Benefit Society which seeks to achieve the sustainable regeneration and improvement of Wolverton. Established in 2013, we have 250 members, made up of local residents and businesses.

Many of these members joined the organisation after we successfully led the development of the Wolverton Town Centre Neighbourhood Development Plan on behalf of Wolverton & Greenleys Town Council. The Neighbourhood Plan achieved a 90% yes vote at the Referendum in July 2015, and became part of the Development Plan for Milton Keynes in September 2015.

The Neighbourhood Plan and the planning policies it contains seek to facilitate the regeneration of Wolverton Town Centre, as the following vision statement outlines:  
*“The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that Wolverton’s centre, as the heart of the town, is a vibrant, attractive and distinctive neighbourhood with a variety of retail, commercial, cultural, and leisure uses that reflects the town’s rich and proud railway heritage and its diverse business and residential population.”*

Since the Neighbourhood Plan was ‘made’ by Milton Keynes Council in 2015 significant progress has been made in the long held community aspiration to regenerate one of the key Town Centre sites, the Agora site. A London based developer TOWN are currently working with Milton Keynes Council and local stakeholders to bring forward a development on the Agora site which meets community aspirations for new retail and housing development. We are sure the developer would be keen to talk to Aldi about the potential for accommodating a store within the Agora site.

### **Reasons for objection**

Future Wolverton objects to the proposal to develop an Aldi store on the Herald Snooker Club site for the following reasons:

- The application fails to comply with the aspirations and policy of the Wolverton Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks to concentrate retail development within the existing Town Centre. The Herald Snooker Club site is outside of the Town Centre boundary and will undermine efforts to regenerate Wolverton Town Centre, by drawing retail activity away from the Town Centre. In particular, the application will frustrate long standing attempts to bring forward the regeneration of the Agora site, which are at a critical stage in terms of committed and planned public and private investment.
- The application fails to meet paragraphs 23 to 27 of the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to ensure the vitality of town centres.
- The application fails to comply with Policy ER11 of Plan: MK which requires proposals for out of centre retail development to be subject to sequential testing which shows that the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. There is no evidence provided in the planning application that Aldi have followed the requirements for a sequential test – the only

previous site they considered back in 2014 was also outside of the Town Centre boundary and the planning application was rejected for this reason.

In addition to our policy objections, Future Wolverton are also concerned about the extent to which the development would be readily accessible by a choice of means of transport, including public transport, cycle and foot, and by people with disabilities.

The McConnell Drive junction has just undergone major public investment from Milton Keynes Council following a series of road traffic accidents. The improvements have gone some way to improving public safety, but it remains a junction that absorbs significant fast flowing traffic from the main H2 grid road, including HGV traffic to Electrolux, Tesco and (in the future) the Railway Works. McConnell Drive is also the main car access to the recently expanded Bushfield School, so absorbs significant school based traffic at the beginning and end of the school day.

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