

Code No. and Date Received	Name and Address of Applicant	Description and Location of Proposed Development
10/0030/FULL 22.01.2010	Sainsburys Supermarkets Ltd C/o RPS Planning And Development Park House Greyfriars Road Cardiff CF10 3AF	Erect deck car-park, extension to existing Sainsbury's store to house a new cafe and carry out associated landscaping works Sainsburys Supermarkets Ltd Newbridge Road Industrial Estate Springfield Pontllanfraith Blackwood NP12 2AN

APPLICATION TYPE: Full Application

SITE AND DEVELOPMENT

Location: On the northern side of Newbridge Road between the entrance to Newbridge Road Industrial Estate and the elevated section of SEW.

Site description: The site comprises the external areas of the Sainsbury's (former CRS) store fronting Newbridge Road, comprising the parking and servicing areas, access roads and petrol filling station. The western end of the site (the petrol filling station) lies above the level of the adjoining highways and is separated from the highways by landscaped banking. The vegetation extends along the front and rear boundaries of the site, with an overgrown hedge providing a partial screen along the frontage. An elevated section of the Sirhowy Enterprise Way (SEW) crosses the eastern end of the site on pillars. The site is adjoined to the north (on the opposite side of the estate road) and to the east by industrial premises, to the west (on the opposite side of the estate access road) by an undeveloped landscaped site within the Industrial Estate, and to the south (on the opposite side of Newbridge Road) by dwellings within the Cwm Braenar development, a small bus depot and a residential care home.

Development: Permission is sought for the erection of an additional parking deck over the main parking area on the lower (western) side of the store and the erection of a cafe extension on the western side of the store.

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Dimensions: Parking deck - average dimensions 80m x 40m with a maximum height of 7m from adjoining ground level at the lower end of the car park to the top of the perimeter cladding. Cafe extension - 28m wide x 6.4m deep with a height of 4.2m.

Materials: Parking deck - cedar board cladding to front and side perimeters of the parking deck; mesh infills to rear perimeter. Cafe extension - white cladding panels.

Ancillary development, e.g. parking: The application is accompanied by a landscaping scheme indicating shrub and tree planting to the perimeters of the car park.

PLANNING HISTORY

2/2031 - Erection of Co-operative retail trading centre - Granted July 1973.

2/0962 - Conversion of basement car park to durable goods retail store - Granted 25/02/1977.

2/01711 - Amendments to include internal re-arrangement to basement level to increase retail trade area, canopy and covered way - Application Withdrawn - No Date.

2/02782 - 2 No. non-illuminated freestanding 12-sheet panels in 'V' shape - Refused 25/06/1979.

2/04583 - Covered way in the goods area only - Granted 02/04/1982.

2/07355 - Alterations and extension to existing building - Granted 13/12/1986.

2/07761 - 2 illuminated shop signs and 4 non-illuminated signs - Granted 09/10/1987.

2/07994 - Recladding the petrol filling station, kiosk roof and canopy and additional cladding to service area - Granted 11/03/1988.

2/08441 - Static shop sign - Refused 24/04/1989.

2/11892 - Shop Petrol Filling Station and Site Sign - Granted 13/06/1994.

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2/12092 - Installation of an A.T.M. - Granted 24/10/1994.

P/97/0803 - Construct car park, alter internal layout, construct new access off Newbridge Road, amend existing access, close existing access - Granted 05/02/1998.

P/97/0861 - Re-plan existing retail store internally, partially demolish external elevation and erect extensions - Granted 05/02/1998.

P/01/0946 - Install 1 metre diameter satellite antenna/wall mounted - Granted 29/10/2001.

P/05/0861 - Erect four Co-op logo/town name signs, two menu boards and various informative car park signs - Granted 05/08/2005.

P/05/1340 - Erect shop signs - Granted 18/11/2005.

09/0477/CLEU - Obtain Certificate of Lawfulness for Existing Retail Use without compliance with Condition 1 of Planning Permission No. 2/2031 - Granted 07/08/2009.

09/0537/ADV - Erect replacement/new external signage - Pending Consideration.

09/0554/FULL - Alter existing supermarket, new glazed extension to front of store and reconfigure adjoining car park, new covered trolley shelters, replace external plant and equipment - Pending Consideration.

09/0716/FULL - Create a temporary cafe for a period of up to 3 months - Granted 30/11/2009.

POLICY

Site Allocation

Development Plan: Adopted Islwyn Local Plan - the site lies outside the settlement envelope.

Council Approved UDP: The site lies within the settlement boundary.

Local Development Plan: The site lies within the settlement boundary.

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Policies

Development Plan: Adopted Islwyn Local Plan - Policies D1-D6 (design of the built environment) and S5 (out-of-centre retail developments).

Council Approved UDP: Policies DC1 (development criteria), 1R and R1 (retail hierarchy) and R5 (large retail proposals outside defined centres).

Local Development Plan: Policies CW3 (amenity), CW5 (general design considerations) and CW18 (locational constraints - retailing).

National Policy: Planning Policy Wales (2002) provides central government policy on the determination of planning applications whilst TAN12 provides advice about design.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Did the application have to be screened for an EIA? No.

Was an EIA required? Not applicable.

CONSULTATION

Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water - No comments.

Strategic Planning and Urban Renewal Manager - No objection in policy terms subject to the use of the store extension being restricted to an A3 use.

Group Manager (Transportation Planning) - No objection subject to condition requiring a construction method statement to ensure the protection of parking provision during construction.

Head Of Public Protection - Concerns expressed regarding the potential noise impact of the parking deck - a noise assessment is required before formal observations can be given.

Police Architectural Liaison Officer - Proffers advice with regard to the security of the scheme.

ADVERTISEMENT

Extent of advertisement: The occupiers of 24 neighbouring properties were notified by letter and site notices were displayed.

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Response: Four letters.

Summary of observations:

1. Sainsbury's 'community consultation' on the proposal was very limited.
2. The existing parking provision has never been fully occupied since the first few days after opening, thus there is not a need for additional provision.
3. Additional parking provision on this scale would increase the attractiveness of the retail outlet which would undermine planning policies seeking to protect the viability of town, district and local centres.
4. Additional parking provision could be achieved at ground level.
5. Adverse visual impact in street scene and on dwellings opposite - a lower retaining wall had been required for the existing ground level car park for visual amenity reasons.
6. Impact on the setting of the Grade II listed cottage opposite the site.
7. Loss of amenity for residential occupiers opposite the site by way of overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of light and views, noise nuisance and pollution.
8. The car park would attract anti-social behaviour.
9. Depreciation of property.
10. The cafe extension would release additional retail floorspace.

SECTION 17 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT

What is the likely effect of the determination of this application on the need for the Local Planning Authority to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area? The proposed parking deck has the potential to attract anti-social behaviour; Gwent Police has proffered advice on securing the external areas of the store and access to the car parks in particular.

EU HABITATS DIRECTIVE

Does the development affect any protected wildlife species? No.

ANALYSIS

Policies: The application relates to an out-of-town retail store fronting Newbridge Road and adjoining the SEW, constructed in accordance with a permission granted in 1973; permission was subsequently granted in 1977 to convert the basement car park to a durable goods retail store. The site was acquired by Sainsbury's during 2009 and permission was granted in October 2009 for alterations to the building, the construction of a glazed atrium to the front of the store and the reconfiguration of the parking areas (09/0554/FULL).

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The scheme approved under application 09/0554 incorporated engineering works to the 'lower' car park on the western side of the building, between the store and the associated petrol filling station. These works were designed to decrease the gradient of the parking area and resulted in a retaining wall at the western end decreasing in height towards the store. The works were commenced prior to the determination of the application and concerns were expressed by officers regarding the overall height of the retaining wall and parapet; this was subsequently reduced to achieve an acceptable design.

The current application seeks permission for the erection of an upper deck over this 'lower' car park. The application states that there are currently 216 parking spaces on site and that an additional 107 would be created. The supporting information states that the additional parking provision is required to resolve a deficiency of on-site parking and to alleviate off-site parking problems. The results of a public consultation exercise within the store are cited in support of the proposal.

While the existing parking provision for the store is considerably below that required by the Council's adopted parking guidelines, it is not evident that, apart from the initial opening period, there has been any problem with parking at the site. However, the need for the submitted scheme is not in itself considered to be a material planning consideration unless the existing on-site provision is causing impacts on highway safety, e.g. by the formation of vehicle queues on the public highway or by customer parking on the public highway. Since this does not appear to be the case, the proposed parking deck is to be assessed purely in terms of its impacts on visual and residential amenity.

The proposed parking deck would cover the area of the 'lower' car park, utilising the existing vehicular access to the car park at the western end of the store and ramping up at the rear of the site. It comprises a steel structure with cedar cladding to the perimeter on the more 'public' (southern and western) elevations, and trellis sections at intervals between the two levels on these elevations to support climbing plants. The height between the floor decks is some 4m, with the overall height of the structure from adjoining ground level at the 'lower' (western) end being 7m. While this has been reduced by 1m from the original pre-application scheme, the separation between the parking decks remains considerably greater than the minimum required. It is understood that this is dictated by the desire to achieve an access from the upper deck direct into the upper floor of the store.

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While the deck structure would be lower than the store building and only a little higher at its western end than the adjoining petrol filling station canopy, it would be forward of this canopy and some 15m back from the site frontage. It is considered that by filling a visual gap along the site frontage, the structure would result in a visually built-up frontage which would adversely impact on the street scene. There are hedgerow trees along the site frontage and a landscaping scheme is proposed, but it is not considered that these would adequately screen the parking deck from external view.

Further, while the development backs onto an industrial estate, it faces residential development on the opposite side of Newbridge Road; the dwellings are separated by some 32m at the nearest point and by the busy road, but it is considered that the outlook of a continuous built-up frontage would be detrimental to the residential amenity of those dwellings. The nearest dwelling is a Grade II listed cottage, but it is considered that the development would be sufficiently separated not to have an adverse impact on the setting of the listed building.

The Head of Public Protection has expressed concerns regarding potential noise impacts on nearby residential properties, and requires a noise assessment to be prepared before being able to assess whether mitigation measures or time restrictions on the use of the car park would be required. There is also the potential of light pollution from cars using the upper deck and from car park lighting.

The application also seeks permission for the erection of a small extension of some 185 sq. m. to the lower floor of the premises at its western end, adjoining the lower car park and proposed parking deck, to accommodate a customer cafe (a cafe facility is currently being provided in a temporary extension to the upper level at the eastern end of the store). Local plan policies and government guidance seek to protect town and local centres by limiting large 'out-of-town' retail stores, and it is likely that any proposal for additional retail floorspace would be resisted as being contrary to these policies and guidance. While it could be argued that the proposed cafe extension would 'free up' retail space within the store that might otherwise be used as a customer cafe, the proposed extension is of such a scale that it is not considered to represent a serious breach of policy subject to its use being restricted to an A3 use. The siting, scale and design of the extension are such that it would have minimal visual impacts whether or not the parking deck is constructed.

It is recommended that permission be refused on the grounds of the adverse impacts that the proposed parking deck would have on visual and residential amenity.

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Comments from Consultees: Group Manager (Transportation Planning) proffers no objection subject to a condition requiring a construction method statement in order to minimise loss of parking provision during construction.

Head of Public Protection - comments addressed above.

Gwent Police proffers advice with regard to the general security of the site.

Comments from public: The majority of the grounds of objection have been addressed in the analysis above.

The matter of ways of achieving additional parking provision within the site without the need to construct a parking deck is not in itself a material planning consideration with respect to the proposal, which must be judged on its own merits.

Loss of amenity for residential occupiers in terms of visual impact and potential noise nuisance has been addressed above. It is not considered that the parking deck would result in loss of light or privacy.

Potential depreciation of property values is not a material planning consideration.

Other material considerations: None.

RECOMMENDATION that Permission be REFUSED

The reason(s) for the Council's decision is/are

- 01) The proposed parking deck by virtue of its siting and massing would result in a built-up frontage to Newbridge Road that would be detrimental to visual amenities in terms of the street scene and the outlook from residential properties opposite the site. The proposal is, therefore, contrary to the provisions of Policies D1, D2, D3 and D5 of the Adopted Islwyn Local Plan and Policy DC1 of the Council Approved Unitary Development Plan.
 - 02) Insufficient information has been submitted by the applicant by way of a noise assessment and details of lighting to allow the Local Planning Authority to consider the impact of those aspects of the scheme on the neighbouring residential properties.
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