

**Application Number: F/YR13/0390/F**  
**Minor retail**  
**Parish/Ward: March West**  
**Date Received: 20 June 2013**  
**Expiry Date: 15 August 2013**  
**Applicant: Lidl UK GmbH**

**Proposal: Erection of a front extension and alterations to existing food store including enclosure of existing delivery bay and installation of air conditioning units**

**Location: Lidl, Dartford Road, March**

**Site Area: 0.45 ha**

**Reason before Committee: The proposal is before the Planning Committee due Councillor Skoulding having an interest in the ownership of the site**

## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION**

This application seeks full planning permission for works to the existing Lidl store at Dartford Road, March. The works involve the provision of a larger store and 'bake off' facility together with the refurbishment of the whole store to enhance the retail offering and availability of products.

The key issues relate to:

- Policy considerations
- Design and Layout
- Access and parking
- Other considerations

The site is located close to March town centre and is an existing foodstore with access off Dartford Road, March. The proposal involves the enlargement of the store by the creation of a front extension with an overall maximum dimension of 12 metres x 44 metres. An enclosed delivery bay is to be formed at the rear of the store together with the installation of air conditioning units. The proposal involves the loss of 26 parking spaces reducing the existing 100 spaces down to 74 spaces.

Policy CS6 of the emerging Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy seeks to encourage development that will maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres with the requirement that the nature and scale of any retail development should be appropriate to the role and function of the town centre in which it is situated.

The extension will up-date the existing store and enhance the shopping experience and whilst there is some loss of parking it is accepted that benefits the development will bring outweigh the parking issues, acknowledging that the scheme proposers are content that parking will not be issue on site.

## 2. HISTORY

F/93/0901/F                      Erection of supermarket                      Granted 1 May 1994

## 3. PLANNING POLICIES

### 3.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

Paragraph 2: Planning law requires that application for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan.

Paragraph 14: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Section 2: Ensuring the vitality of town centres.

### 3.2 Draft Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy:

CS1: A presumption in favour of sustainable development.

CS6: Employment, Tourism, Community Facilities and Retail

### 3.3 Fenland District Wide Local Plan:

S8: Establishment and extension of local shopping facilities

## 4. CONSULTATIONS

### 4.1 *Parish/Town Council:*

Recommend approval

### 4.2 *Local Highway Authority:*

Raises objection to the reduction in car parking spaces as no empirical evidence in this regard has been provided.

Additional cycle spaces are to be provided around the building.

With regards to shared rights of way, the deed plan indicates that the new parking to the east of the store will extend in to the commercial premises right of way. The implications of this is that the 12 parking spaces shown to the east of the building may not actually be deliverable further reducing the parking level to 62.

### 4.3 *Middle Level Commissioners:*

Comments awaited.

### 4.4 *Environmental Health (FDC):*

The Environmental Protection team note and accept the submitted information and have no objections to the proposed development as it is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on local air quality or the noise climate. The air conditioning unit specifications are noted and accepted.

### 4.5 *Local Residents:*

One letter of concern re: location of new air conditioning units and potential noise disturbance.

## 5. **SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 5.1 The site is located close to March town centre with access off Dartford Road. The site consists of an existing retail unit and associated car park. There are other commercial units to the east of the site with residential properties to the north and west. To the south of the site is the British Legion Club and properties that front onto West End.

## 6. **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

The key considerations are:

- Policy considerations
- Design
- Access and parking
- Other considerations

### Policy Considerations

Policy S8 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan 1993 seeks to support the establishment and extension of local shopping facilities within defined settlement areas except where such development would seriously prejudice local amenity or highway safety.

Policy CS6 of the emerging Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy encourages development that will maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres. The Council is committed to strengthening the role of market towns with a strong 'town centre first' message and an extension of an existing store to enable the continued presence of the store within the town centre is to be supported.

The NPPF seeks to ensure the vitality of town centres and promotes development that provides customer choice and a diverse retail offer. It should retain and enhance existing markets and seek to ensure the vitality and viability of town centres.

### Design

The extension is located on the front elevation and involves the whole width of the supermarket. The entrance to the store will be as existing and the maximum depth of the extension is 12 metres. The overall height of the building is to be increased from 7.3m to 7.8 m which is not considered excessive.

Materials to be used include white rendered walls with grey plinths. Full height glazing to the side and entrance of the store provides a good level of natural light into the store. A modern alucobond metal cladding in silver will be used around the top of the building which is a corporate design for Lidl stores.

## Access and Parking

Access to the site remains unchanged i.e. from Dartford Road with a new position into the car park off the service road. Works within the existing car park include new external lighting, new tarmac wearing course and new white lining to the parking bays. A new pedestrian foot link from Dartford Road is to be provided into the car park from the north west corner of the site.

A total of 74 car parking spaces are to be provided made up of 67 standard spaces, 4 disabled parking spaces and 3 parent/child parking spaces. 9 cycle racks are also to be provided.

The development involves the loss of 26 spaces and Highways has raised a concern regarding this loss. However Lidl considers that the car park is under utilised and generally has a maximum capacity of 70% of the existing spaces at peak times with much less occupancy at off peak times.

The Local Planning Authority considers that the development will enhance the existing store and the loss of parking is outweighed by the need to upgrade the store to modern standards and also to ensure that the store remains in the town.

## Additional Highway concerns

Following receipt of amended information relating to access and in particular right of access for both Lidl and the neighbouring Tyre Centre, an issue has been identified that has the potential to impact on the 12 parking spaces on the eastern side of the building. This would reduce the overall number of spaces down to 60 which is a major concern to the Local Planning Authority. Whilst wishing to support this proposal and accept the reduction in parking from 100 to 74, if the parking is reduced further then the LPA is unlikely to support the proposal for such a large extension.

An update to members will be provided at planning committee as this matter is being clarified with the agents for the scheme.

## Other considerations

New air conditioning units are to be located on the rear elevation. These units are close to the boundary of The British Legion Club and its car parking area and Environmental Protection considers that there will not be a noise nuisance. A nearby resident to the west of the site has also raised concerns about possible noise nuisance from the units however advice has been received from the Council's Environmental Protection team that the specification for the units does not give rise to concerns relating to residential amenity. However should the units prove to be a noise nuisance then legislation under Environmental Protection can be used to protect nearby residents.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposed extension will provide an enhanced shopping experience for customers and protect the long term future of this town centre store. The design of the extension will enhance the look of the building and the extension will not have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties.

The reduction in the number of parking spaces from 100 to 74, whilst regrettable, is acceptable given the known under utilisation of the existing spaces. However further consideration will have to be given to the proposal if the parking spaces along the eastern side of the shop cannot be delivered.

The extension and refurbishment will provide additional floor space including a 'bake off' to enhance an improved offer to customers and also to stimulate economic growth and job creation into the local economy.

The proposal accords with Policy S8 of the Fenland District Wide Local Plan (1993) and Policy CS6 of the emerging Fenland Local Plan Core Strategy Proposed submission February 2013. The development will help to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre and is therefore supported.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

**Grant subject to:**

- (i) satisfactory resolution of highway issues relating to car parking spaces;**
- (ii) suitable conditions.**

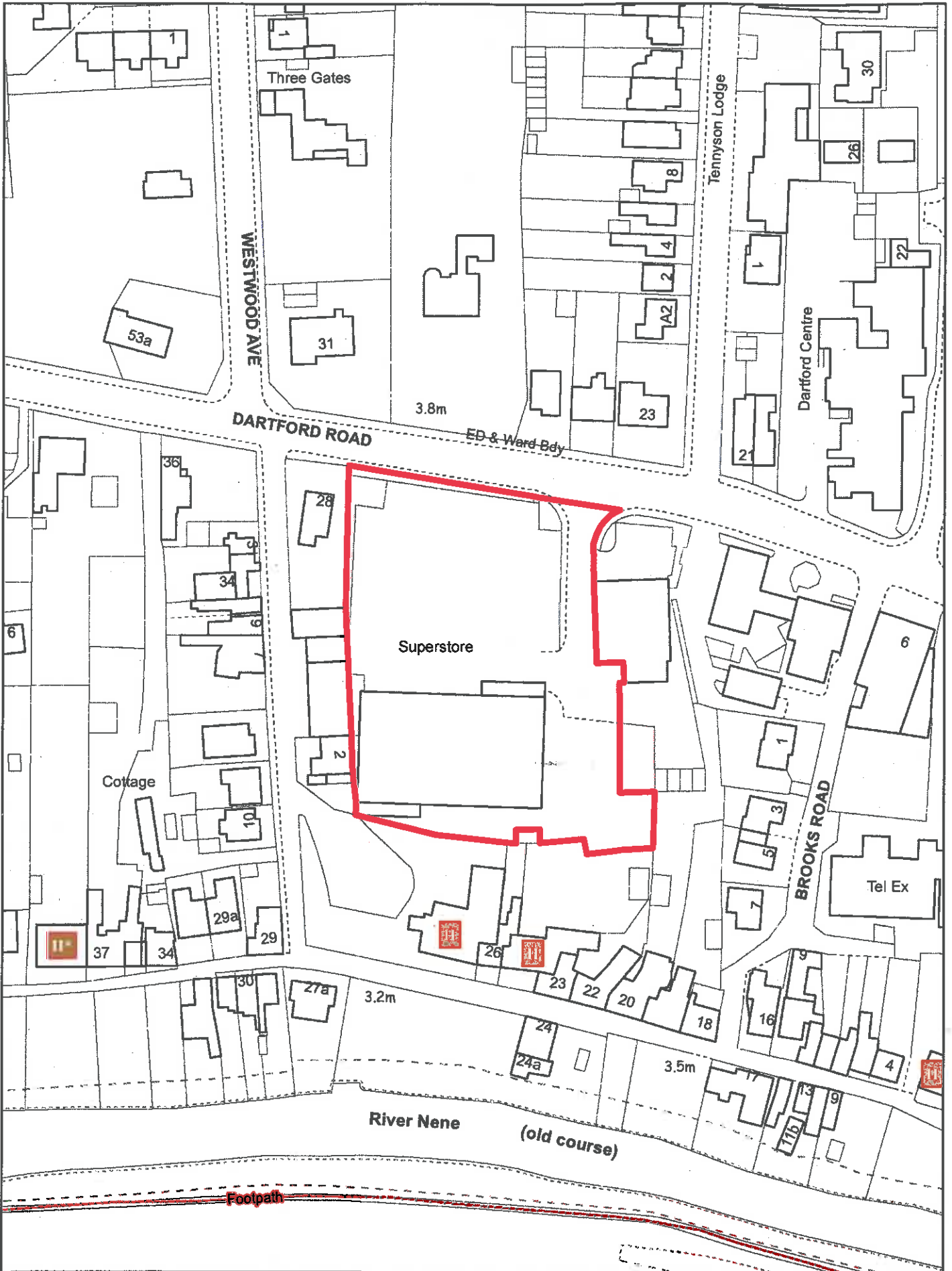
- 1. The development permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.**

**Reason - To ensure compliance with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.**

- 2. Prior to the commencement of development, a scheme for the provision of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such approved details shall be installed prior to commencement of use/occupation of any dwellings and retained thereafter in perpetuity.**

**Reason - In order to ensure that the site meets the crime prevention guidelines**

- 3. Approved plans**



Created on: 11/07/2013  
 © Crown Copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey 10023778

F/YR13/0390/F  
 Scale = 1:1,250


  
 Fenland District Council



