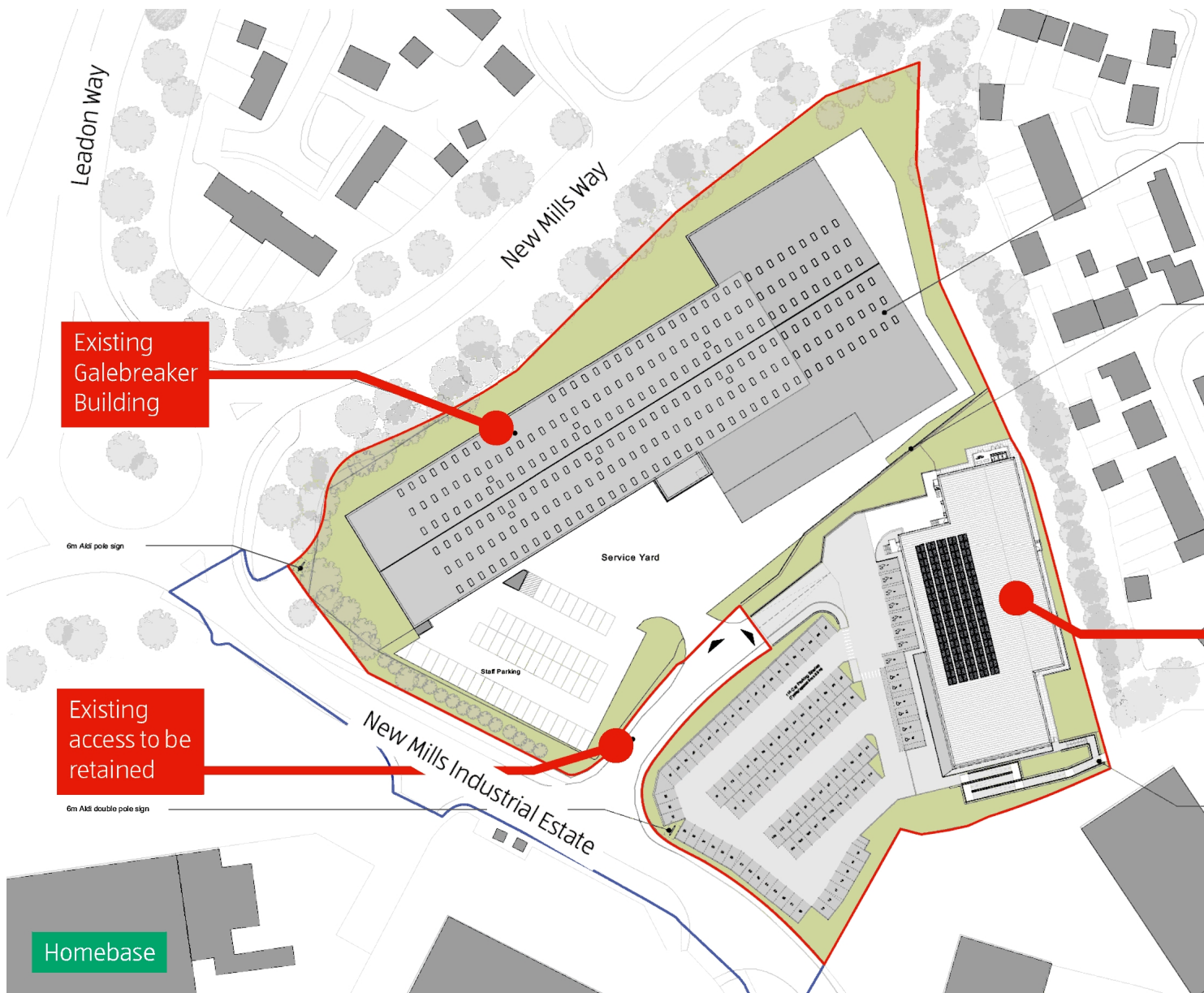


Now it's Aldi's turn

Written by Steve Glennie-Smith
Wednesday, 07 October 2015 19:57 -

Discounter Aldi has revealed plans to build a supermarket on unoccupied land next to Galebreaker on the Lower Road industrial estate. Letters outlining their proposals from agents Remarkable Group were received by most Ledbury residents this morning.



(See a larger version of this image [here](#).)

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At 1227 sq. m. (11400 sq ft) with 114 car parking spaces, this would be similar in size to the Tesco store off Orchard Lane, ie. quite a bit smaller than those in plans previously submitted by Tesco and Sainsbury's for nearby sites in this estate.

There will be a public exhibition on **23rd October, between 3pm and 7pm in the Burgage Hall, Church Lane**

The Tesco plan (application number DMN/111554/F) was submitted in 2011 and was withdrawn 24 hours before the application was due to be heard, in November 2011. It was for a store area of 3084 sq. m. (28700 sq. ft.) with 291 car parking spaces.

The Sainsbury's plan (application number DMN/113052/F) was for a store area of 5143 sq. m. (47800 sq. ft.) with 272 car parking spaces, plus a petrol station. It was refused in February 2012.

For reference, these former planning applications were visible on [UK Planning's website](#) , though it no longer appears to find **anything** in Ledbury now!

The proposed Aldi store would be 40% of the floor area proposed by Tesco in 2011 and 24% of that proposed by Sainsbury. Aldi have said their stores do not include bakeries, butchers or fishmongers, and they do not sell tobacco.

Planning officer Roland Close said in 2012 the nine reasons why the Sainsbury plan was rejected were:

1. Planners considered that alternate sites in or near the town centre had not been appropriately assessed.
2. Impact assessment reports conducted by Sainsbury's were not "robust" and failed to demonstrate that the proposal would not have "a significant adverse impact upon the viability and vitality of Ledbury Town Centre".
3. Given this, the proposed development was considered likely to adversely affect the

character of the Ledbury Conservation Area.

4. The inclusion of a petrol station would result in the loss of high-quality employment land.
5. The location would increase reliance upon the use of motor vehicles and was therefore considered unsustainable.

These first five were "non-negotiable" and the following four were "negotiable":

6. A flood risk assessment did not provide enough information to convince planners there would be no increased risk.
7. The presence of the protected slow worm species. Although Sainsbury's proposed moving them to a suitable "receptor" site, one was not identified in the application.
8. The development would require a "planning obligation" payment towards sustainable transport infrastructure, including enhanced pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre. However a completed planning obligation had not been deposited with the council.
9. Concerns that proposed landscaping fell outside the application site and as such could not be guaranteed.

Clearly planning decisions by councils must be dispassionate, ie. the fact that the applicant is Aldi (whom many would welcome because their generally lower prices) should make no difference. Although 4. in the first list above does not apply in Aldi's case, it is difficult to see how Herefordshire Council could come to a different decision regarding any application by Aldi from the one they made about Sainsbury's unless Aldi come up with convincing answers to the other concerns raised above.

Aldi's press release follows:

JOBS AND INVESTMENT: RESIDENTS INVITED TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT PROPOSED ALDI STORE IN LEDBURY

Aldi, the award-winning discount food retailer, is unveiling plans for a new neighbourhood food store at New Mills Industrial Estate, Leadon Way in Ledbury. A public exhibition is being held for residents to come along and meet the Aldi team to find out more about the proposed food store. The exhibition will take place on 23 October, between 3pm and 7pm at the Burgage Hall, Ledbury.

The new food store would provide a modern shopping environment, which will enhance the local area by offering a contemporary design which has been carefully developed to ensure it fits in with nearby existing homes and businesses. The proposal would offer increased choice

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for residents when completing their food shopping. The introduction of a new Aldi food store on this site would also deliver up to 40 full and part time jobs for the local community.

The opportunity to redevelop this site, which is currently a vacant parcel of scrubland adjacent to the existing Galebreaker Group factory, will bring enhanced benefits to the whole community by providing a brand new, custom built store designed to complement existing offerings and provide more choice for local residents.

Furthermore, the scheme will also facilitate the expansion of the Galebreaker factory adjacent to the proposed site of the Aldi store. This will help to preserve existing local jobs, create new ones and secure the future of this business in Ledbury.

A spokesperson for Aldi commented:

"We are excited about the prospect of delivering a new Aldi store to Ledbury which would offer the local community additional choice when completing their shopping, and also retain spending within the town.

We are keen to ensure that the views of the local community are heard. We have sent a community newsletter with a feedback card to over 4,000 households to better understand local views and we look forward to welcoming people to our public exhibition on the 23rd October. If people have any questions they should call the project's freephone information line on 0800 298 7040."

Aldi has a unique offering and does not act as a one-stop shop. Aldi does not have a butcher or fishmonger, nor does it sell, for example, tobacco. Instead Aldi is known for encouraging linked trips between its stores and other businesses in the local area. The proposed store would offer a complementary facility to the existing pattern of trading in Ledbury, adding to the vitality and viability of the High Street.

In the meantime, anyone wanting further information about the proposal can contact a member of the project team on Aldi's Freephone information line on 0800 298 7040 or visit the dedicated

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project website at www.aldiconsultation.co.uk/ledbury

Information Ends