



## Portobello Community Council

---

Lesley Carus  
Planning and Building Standards  
Services for Communities  
City of Edinburgh Council

Portobello Community Council  
c/o Sean Watters  
52 Brighton Place  
Edinburgh  
EH15 1LX

30/10/2014

Dear Lesley,

**Planning Application: 14/03736/PPP**

Please find our following comments on the above application.

To ascertain local views on the proposals we undertook an extensive survey and the results of that are attached in a separate document. As can be seen the exercise enjoyed a high level of response with over 400 individual submissions. The overall results indicate around 50% support for the proposals, 40% opposition, with 10% neutral. As the balance between support and opposition is reasonably close we feel it more appropriate for the Community Council to comment rather than take a position on the application ourselves. However, we do feel the result accurately reflects more support than opposition to the proposals locally.

Many people welcomed the development of what has been a blighted brownfield site for some time. The housing aspect met with considerable support and many welcomed affordable housing in particular. The specific proposal for an Aldi supermarket also met with more support than opposition, with many welcoming the choice offered by another convenience retailer locally. Many felt the proposals would benefit the area, the supermarket complementing rather than undermining the High Street, with trade likely to be diverted from existing supermarkets rather than independent local traders.

However, the sizeable number of responses in opposition has to be acknowledged, and it should be noted that some concerns raised by objectors were also echoed in the comments of people in support of the proposals. There are widespread concerns about the traffic impacts of such a development. Many concerns were also expressed that the housing would strain local infrastructure and services, in particular regarding the capacity at schools and the effect on doctor's surgeries. Amongst the many opposed to the supermarket there is concern about the effect on local shops and the vitality of the High Street. A number of respondents were also concerned about the loss of the music and artists' studios and wished to see the accommodation re-provisioned in some way as part of the development. As these are serious concerns we hope they are fully addressed in the evaluation of the planning application.

As part of the survey we invited comments, again attached, and received many varied suggestions for possible improvements to the proposals. As a community, and a Community Council, we clearly wish to see the best possible development on the site with the maximum benefit locally. As such we would welcome further engagement between the developers and the community in an effort to resolve concerns and explore ways the development might be enhanced. Such continued dialogue would be the best way to ensure a high quality design that met local needs and enriched Portobello as a community.

On a final note we'd like to thank yourself and the Planning Department for your assistance, and also thank the developers who kindly offered to help with the costs incurred by our survey. This is the first time Portobello Community Council has undertaken such a consultation exercise in response to a major planning application and whilst there may be lessons to learn, overall we feel the exercise has been a great success, engaging a large section of the community in responding to what is an important issue.

Regards

Sean Watters, Joint Secretary, Portobello Community Council

CC: Cllr Ian Perry, Cllr Michael Bridgman, Cllr Maureen Child, Cllr David Walker