

Torquay Commerce and Tourism Inc
ABN 23 769 138 253
PO Box 270, Torquay 3228.

President	Barrie Sutherland	0424 445 363
Treasurer	Bob Bailey	5261 3441

5 June 2015

Surf Coast Shire Councilors

By email

Dear Councilors

Re: Proposed development of Aldi Store in Torquay

We write to you in relation to the proposed development of an Aldi Store in Torquay. Torquay Commerce & Tourism (TCT) recently attended a presentation given by representatives of Aldi regarding the proposed development of a store in Torquay.

We understand that pre-approval of the development will be considered at the Council meeting on 26 May 2015. As the representative body for businesses in Torquay, we take this opportunity to provide you with our view on the proposal.

TCT strongly supports the location of the proposed development as it satisfies our desire that all retail development should be in the commercial center of Torquay. These developments assist to increase the competitiveness of Torquay as a town.

TCT welcomes the development as consistent with the State Policy "Planning is to contribute to the economic wellbeing of communities so that each district may build on its strengths". If approved, this development will increase shoppers and visitors to Bell Street (which is part of the retail centre of Torquay) keep local expenditure within Torquay, and create new jobs in town.

TCT does not support retail development in "out of retail core sites". Overseas research and evidence indicates that the location of larger retail outlets situated away from the retail core causes substantial damage to the social and cultural fabric of communities. Similar concerns were expressed locally, in Castlemaine where movement away from the town centre has resulted in vacant shops in the town centre.

It is of upmost importance to TCT that any development is consistent with our vision as set out in the attached document [Torquay Town for Tomorrow](#). In light of this, we make the following points specific to the Aldi development:

1. Sensitivity to building heights. We appreciate Aldi's proposed use of the natural fall of the land to minimize the building height. TCT supports the erection of two story buildings in so far as they do not impede ocean views, and are consistent with the immediate surrounding area. We understand that the Aldi model includes a 'tower' which will exceed this height. While TCT supports the development overall, it is our view that the tower (and accompanying branding) would be more appropriately placed on the Rudd Street entrance, away from the Great Ocean Road.
2. Underground parking. We appreciate the proposed development contains 76 underground car parks, which is in line with the TCT vision for Torquay.
3. External Façade. TCT is sensitive to the fact that the proposed development includes a frontage on the Surf Coast Highway. In addition, the frontage will essentially be at the start of the Great Ocean Road. We reiterate our preference stated in (1) above, that the 'tower' and 'branding' be as far away from the Great Ocean Road as possible.
4. TCT supports the development on the condition that the frontage is consistent with the uniqueness and livability of Torquay and has connectivity with the culture and natural beauty of this town. We believe that if done well, this is an opportunity to further promote the surf history of Torquay, and reinforce our position as the start of the Great Ocean Road.
5. Traffic management. We note that traffic flows in and around the Bell Street roundabout can be significant, especially at peak times. We also note that having an entrance and exit on to Rudd Street is likely to significantly increase traffic flows. We see the potential for traffic delays to arise with vehicles that want to turn right from Rudd Street, on to Bell Street. We note that traffic management is an ongoing matter for Council to consider.

We were advised by the Aldi representatives that they had considered our 'Torquay A Town for Tomorrow' document, which we attach for your reference and our discussions indicated that they appreciated our areas of concern and are willing to work with the local community in this regard.

We would be pleased to discuss this further with you, should you require.

Yours faithfully



Barrie Sutherland

President

Cc: Keith Baillie, CEO, Surf Coast Shire