
APPLICATION NO.	P10/E0721
APPLICATION TYPE	Full
REGISTERED	19 May 2010
PARISH	Woodcote
WARD MEMBER(S)	Robin Pierce
APPLICANT	Cooperative Group
SITE	2 Bridle Path, Woodcote
PROPOSAL	Alterations to premises including new shop front with automatic sliding door and new closed in staircase to first floor on rear elevation and covered area to side with new entrance gates.
AMENDMENTS	None
OFFICER	Paul Lucas

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application is reported to the Planning Committee as a result of a conflict between the officer recommendation and the views of Woodcote Parish Council.
- 1.2 The application site is shown on the OS extract attached as **Appendix 1**. The application site consists of a part two-storey, part single-storey building in use as a shop in the centre of the village of Woodcote. It is situated in a corner location, with ancillary accommodation above and ground floor storage areas. External walls are red brick and white render with a tiled roof. There is a single storey flat roofed element at the side facing north-west towards the junction of Bridle Path, Beech Lane and Goring Road. The other single storey element forms the servicing/delivery area. The building is bordered to south and east by dwellings and more residential properties lie opposite to the north and west. In particular, the rear wall of the premises runs about 1.5 metres from the side boundary of the back garden of Fairway. There is an area of parking providing 13 spaces provided on a hardstanding in front of the premises. The Chilterns AONB washes over the settlement.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for alterations to the premises incorporating:
- Enclosed brick staircase on rear elevation with fire escape to replace the existing staircase in the centre of the shop;
 - New shop front with automatic sliding door;
 - Felt roof over open area at side between premises and eastern boundary fence; and
 - Modified entrance gates to area at eastern side of premises.

As a result of these changes the internal arrangements would be modified and this would give rise to an increase in the active retail floorspace by about 72 square metres to provide a total of 210 square metres.

- 2.2 The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. This can be viewed on the Council's website www.southoxon.gov.uk. The plans of the proposed development are **attached** as Appendix 2.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 **Woodcote Parish Council** – The application should be refused due to:
The staircase access at the back of the building will cause disturbance and noise. The plans indicate that this staircase will be the only staircase therefore the access to the upper floor will be via this staircase. Also the employees of the store are likely to use this staircase area to smoke a cigarette during their break periods causing intrusion to the neighbouring garden. Crime and safety issues are a concern, this area will have the potential to create an area for local youths to congregate as it is out of view. We strongly wish to represent these views at a Planning Committee meeting.
- 3.2 **OCC Highways** – No objection - The maximum parking standards as applied to the application are as follows:
Existing 138 sqm = 10 spaces
Proposed 210 sqm = 15 spaces
The resulting shortfall of 2 spaces based upon maximum parking standards is not considered to be a significant shortfall, in this particular location, which is relatively sustainable.
- 3.3 **Health and Housing Service (Environmental Protection)** – No objection – If the proposed development is built in line with drawing 1665.OB3 and associated floor plan 1665.O2D as long as the staircase is fully enclosed with the brick built facade and felt roofing (a self closing mechanism for the fire door at the bottom by condition) then it is very unlikely that the use of the staircase will be audible outside the premises. If the staircase is carpeted then this will reduce any noise from footfall further to absolute minimal.
- 3.4 **Crime Prevention Design Adviser** – No objections in principle, some concerns that the replacement gate should be constructed so that it is possible to see into the public area from the side of the warehouse in order to protect staff leaving the premises.
- 3.5 **Neighbours** – No representations received.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 P10/E0369 – Planning application for similar proposal to the application now being considered was withdrawn in May 2010, following officers expressing concern about the visual impact of the proposed staircase on the occupier of Fairway to the south.
- 4.2 P10/E0370 – Planning permission was granted for mechanical plant and acoustic screening on the western side of the building in May 2010.
- 4.3 P10/E0861/A – Advertisement consent was granted for externally-illuminated advertisements and non-illuminated advertisements in August 2010.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 Policies:
G2 – Protection of the Environment
G6 – Promoting Good Design
C2 – Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
EP2 – Noise and Vibrations
D1 – Good Design and Local Distinctiveness
D2 – Vehicle and Bicycle Parking
D4 – Privacy and Daylight

D6 – Design Against Crime

CF3 – Safeguarding the Vitality and Viability of Neighbourhood and Local Centres

T1 – Transport Requirements for New Developments

T2 – Transport Requirements for New Developments

5.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance:
South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2008 – Sections 3, 4 and 5.

5.3 Government Guidance:
PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG13 – Transport
PPG24 – Planning and Noise

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 The application premises forms an individual shop in the village centre, which serves a wider area than the immediate parish. Policy CF3 of the SOLP 2011 seeks to protect such premises and promotes their retention for retail purposes. The proposed development would rationalise the layout of the shop floor of the premises, which would help to achieve the aims of Policy CF3. The other planning issues that are relevant to this application are whether the development would:

- be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- compromise the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers and would provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers;
- result in an unacceptable deficiency of off-street parking spaces for the resultant dwellings or other conditions prejudicial to highway safety; and
- give rise to an increase in crime in and around the premises.

Character and Appearance

6.2 The shop front improvements would modernise the appearance of the front of the premises. The alterations at the side would be in keeping with the existing appearance of the premises and the staircase would be to the rear and would not be prominent in the street scene. There would be no impact on the wider Chilterns AONB landscape. In light of this assessment, the proposed development would satisfy this issue.

Living Conditions

6.3 Application P10/E0369 was considered to have an adverse impact on the occupier of Fairway, because the staircase was located 2 metres from the rear bedroom window of this adjoining bungalow. The staircase has been repositioned further to the east, so that although it would still be alongside the boundary, it would be at a distance of 11 metres from the bedroom window. The rear outlook from Fairway is already compromised by its relationship to the application premises and the addition of the staircase as now proposed should not significantly worsen the outlook or light enjoyed by the adjoining occupiers. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has commented that the internal staircase would not give rise to any noise nuisance. The applicant has confirmed that the configuration of the fire escape door at ground floor level would be such that it can only be opened from the inside, via panic bar or pad ironmongery. In line with the Coop's standard practice the door will be security tagged and alarmed to ensure that it would only be used in an emergency situation. The other elements of the proposal would not give rise to any loss of residential amenity.

Highways and Parking

- 6.4 Although there would be an increase in retail floorspace and a consequential shortfall in off-street parking of 2 spaces relative to the Council's maximum standards, the premises lies in a sustainable location. The Highway Liaison Officer has no objection to the proposal and has advised that the proposed development should not result in any conditions prejudicial to highway or pedestrian safety. The proposed development should not result in any conditions prejudicial to highway or pedestrian safety.

Crime Prevention

- 6.5 Policy D6 of the SOLP 2011 encourages development, which will reduce the opportunity for crime. The Crime Prevention Design Advisor has raised a concern with the proposed addition of wooden gates behind the existing gates, on the basis that staff leaving the shop would no longer be able to see out over the public forecourt area. On the other hand, the solid gates would prevent potential offenders from looking into the premises. A planning condition is recommended to require the submission of a revised scheme for security gates which can then be agreed with the CPDA. The Parish Council are concerned that the introduction of the staircase to the rear of the premises would increase the potential for crime to take place in this area. As stated in paragraph 6.3, the rear external access from the staircase would be used in emergency situations only. The applicant has also agreed to install a DVD-recordable CCTV system, the implementation of which could form another planning condition. Your officers have therefore concluded that the proposed development would accord with the thrust of Policy D6.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The application proposal would comply with the relevant Development Plan Policies, Supplementary Planning Guidance and Government Guidance and it is considered that, subject to the attached conditions, the proposed development would not materially harm the living conditions of nearby residents or the character and appearance of the area or result in conditions prejudicial to highway safety and would incorporate appropriate measures to reduce the risk of crime.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 **Grant Planning Permission subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Standard 3 year time limit**
2. **Materials for walls and roof to match**
3. **Fire escape door to be implemented with measures set out in application**
4. **Details of side access gates to be agreed with Crime Prevention Design Adviser prior to commencement**
5. **Details of CCTV system to be agreed with Crime Prevention Design Adviser prior to commencement**
6. **Details of cycle parking facilities prior to commencement**

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