

24 September 2019

6E PLAN/2019/0708

WARD: C

LOCATION: 31-33 Commercial Way, Woking, Surrey, GU21 6XR

PROPOSAL: Retrospective application for a change of shopfront

APPLICANT: Mr Ian Tomes - Woking Borough Council

OFFICER: Claire Bater

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The applicant is Woking Borough Council and therefore falls outside of the scheme of delegated powers.

PLANNING STATUS

- Urban Area
- Primary Shopping Area
- Town Centre
- Primary Shopping Frontage
- Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA) Zone B (400m-5km)

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT planning permission subject to conditions.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a retail unit (previously Maplins) situated on the northern side of Commercial Way within Woking Town Centre.

PLANNING HISTORY

PLAN/2019/0141 – Display of 1no. internally illuminated projecting sign, 3no. non-illuminated bottom of window brand signs, 1no. non-illuminated above entrance door main larger brand sign, and 1no. internally illuminated brand sign set back from the shopfront. – Permitted 10.04.2019

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This is a full planning application for retrospective changes to the shopfront.

CONSULTATIONS

County Highway Authority: No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Woking Core Strategy (2012)

CS2 - Woking Town Centre

CS21 - Design

Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DMP DPD) (2016)

DM19 - Shopfronts

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)

Design (2015)

PLANNING ISSUES

Impact on Character of the Area

1. Policy DM19 of the *Development Management Policies DPD (2016)* states that *“proposals for new and replacement shopfronts will be permitted where they pay regard to the guidance set out in the Woking Design SPD on shopfronts in terms of character, proportion, materiality, lighting and security and*
 - (i) *they do not adversely affect pedestrian or highway safety;*
 - (ii) *they would preserve or enhance heritage assets having regard to design and materials of the building and adjoining shops, including any tradition or original features that should be retained;*
 - (iii) *they are designed to allow equal access for all users; and*
 - (iv) *they do not detrimentally affect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers”.*
2. The Woking Design SPD (2015) states that *“shopfronts form an integral part of the whole building and should have a strong design relationship with the overall architectural composition”.* It further states that *“removing vertical glazing divisions and replacing them with large areas of plate glass on traditional shopfronts should be avoided”.*
3. In this instance, the retail unit is situated on the external frontage of the Wolsley Place Shopping Centre in Commercial Way where the use of large areas of glass is considered acceptable. The previous two sets of double doors have been replaced with a single double door which matches that on the adjacent unit (Bayfield Opticians).
3. It is considered that the proposal would be in keeping with the character of the host unit and the street scene. It is therefore considered that it would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, there would be no neighbouring properties affected by the shop front.

Highway issues

4. The County Highway Authority raises no objection in relation to highway safety. Furthermore the shop front would not affect pedestrian safety.

Local Finance Considerations:

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5. The Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1 April 2015. The proposed development relates to a retail unit and accordingly is not liable for a financial contribution to CIL.

Conclusion

6. For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character of the area. The proposal therefore accords with policies CS2 and CS21 of the *Woking Core Strategy* (2012), policy DM19 of the *Development Management Policies Development Plan Document* (2016), Supplementary Planning Document *Woking Design* (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). The application is therefore recommended for approval.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Site visit photographs (taken 23.08.2019)
Consultation responses

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1. The change to shopfront hereby approved shall be retained in accordance with the following plans:

Location Plan and Drawing No: 02 Rev L received 24.07.2019

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is completed in accordance with the approved plans.

Informatives

1. The Council confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).