

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

7 November 2012

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

S/0798/12/FL – BAR HILL

Installation of a Storage Pod and Canopy occupying 10 parking spaces within Store Car Park at 15 Viking Way, Bar Hill for Tesco's Stores Ltd

Recommendation: Approval

Date for Determination: 8 June 2012

This application has been reported to the planning Committee for determination as the Parish Council recommendation of refusal differs from the officer recommendation.

To be presented to the Committee by Saffron Garner

Site and Proposal

1. The site comprises of a Tesco Superstore, which is a major developed site within Bar Hill. The site is accessed via Saxon Way with car parking fronting the store and surrounded on all boundaries by further, commercial, industrial and residential development.
2. The application submitted April 2012 seeks planning permission for the erection of a storage pod and canopy for customer collection of pre-paid shopping. The proposed pod was originally located in the southwest corner of the parking area taking up 10 existing parking spaces. This was later amended and relocated to the north east corner of the car park close to the existing recycling area. The application was submitted with a Design and Access Statement.

Planning History

3. The site benefits from an extensive planning history, however the most relevant to this application are as follows:

S/1404/08/F saw the approval of a hand car valeting service following the approval of a temporary consent that was granted under **S/0659/07** to monitor the impact on car parking. The use took up only 9 spaces; only 1 customer space was truly lost to area for the associated equipment. The other spaces were for the cars of those in store. Temporary planning permission was granted for 3 years to prevent the container sited on the site from becoming a permanent feature.

S/1613/08 allowed for the addition of 13 car parking space approved 2008.

There is a current application for a proposed hand car wash under planning reference **S/2036/12** - this is undetermined at present but proposes to take up 9 parking spaces. This is to replace the one granted in 2008 that is no longer extant.

Planning Policy

4. **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** the thrust of this document suggests a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. Local Planning Authorities are directed to plan positively for new development and approve development proposals that accord with the development plan (paragraph 14).
5. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007**

DP/1 Sustainable Development
DP/2 Design of New Development
DP/3 Development Criteria
ET/5 Development for the Expansion of Firms
TR/2 Car and Cycle Parking Standards
TR/3 Mitigating Travel Impact
6. Circular 11/95 (The use of Conditions in Planning Permissions) advises that planning conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

Consultations

7. **Bar Hill Parish Council** recommended refusal for the original location for following reasons:
 - The storage pod is too close to the school and disruption would be caused by the unnecessary noise during the summer months
 - The loss of 10 parking bays is unacceptable, as 9 parking bays have already been lost through the car wash franchise and this was in breach of conditions when the application for the development of the store took place in 2001.
 - The increase of traffic around the car park making it dangerous for pedestrians accessing the store and village
 - However, it is agreed that a more suitable location for the storage pod would be close to the recycling centre at the far end of the car park
8. After amending the scheme with the above comments in mind the Parish Council were re-consulted for further comment. The Parish Council recommended refusal due to loss of parking provision.

Representations

9. Two representations were received from the residents of Foxhollow, located approximately 250 metres from the application site. Concern has been raised with regard to the following:
 - Loss of parking provision
 - Area is heavily pedestrianized by users of the neighbouring library and primary school and a potential danger to these users.
 - Transporting goods from store to this location will increase heavy goods vehicles

- Car park is not appropriately lit
- Submitted information is contradictory
- Would be better located elsewhere on site – i.e. near the recycling centre
- Impact on other businesses on site
- No noise assessment
- The new pod does not cater for pedestrians
- No traffic assessment has been provided
- Hours of operation are unclear

Material Planning Considerations

10. The key issues to consider in this instance are whether the proposal is sustainable having regard to the parking provision and the impact the proposal would have upon the character and appearance of the area and neighbour amenity.

Sustainability and Impact on Parking Provision

11. Bar Hill is categorised as a Minor Rural Centre in the South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy and is thus considered a sustainable location for new employment development in terms of the Council's settlement hierarchy. In more specific terms the site is well served by transport links and other forms of sustainable transport methods such as cycling and walking. Parking provision on site is currently adequate; however the loss of parking with the potential to increase journeys may have an adverse impact on sustainability.
12. The actual pod measures 8.1 x 3.6m. However, the area that is taken up by the development as a whole comprises 12m x 9.6m using up 10 car parking spaces in total. In 2007, Tesco's applied for an additional 19 car parking spaces. This was submitted with a full transport assessment from Pinnacle Transportation stating that the parking provision was inadequate. Detailed submissions provided evidence that the peak shopping times on Friday and Saturday showed that the car park operated at above 90% of its capacity making the then car park provision increasingly inefficient and therefore increased car circulation. This was further proven at times such as Easter and Christmas.
13. Earlier applications boasted of free parking provision for the neighbouring town hall, local shops and neighbourhood facilities however, the application does not advise how these will be impacted through the loss of parking provision that was once needed or how the proposal will have an impact on the neighbouring uses.
14. However, whilst there is no specific evidence provided with the application to suggest that the proposal will reduce the impact of traffic at the store and neighbouring locations, the main aim of the pod is to provide an additional service for its existing customers, thus not increasing traffic overall. The pod will allow those customers with busy lifestyles to order and pay online and agree a time to suit them to pick their goods up from the store. This is another branch to the online services that already exist.
15. The application car park also serves other non food retail outlets such as Next, Choice as well as an estate agent. It allows some free parking for those not using the store and is open to anyone who wishes to use the store and

the other uses around it. The use of this space is always going to increase significantly at peak times of the year and in previous applications it would appear that the applicants used this to prove parking provision could be limited. However, many users of the car park will not always specifically be using the Tesco store. Restricting how Tesco's uses its spaces in order to develop shopping strategies that could enhance business and potentially reduce long term parking provision would seem unreasonable.

16. The Design and Access Statement states that the proposed pod will be located in the least busy part of the car park. Now relocated to the area predominately used for recycling it will have even less impact on pedestrians or the users of the neighbouring school, including any noise impact. This relocation occurred due to the request from the Parish Council which was taken on board by the applicants and agreeable to officers also given the original concerns raised by the Parish Council. Whilst there is no evidence to support the claim that the application will not increase customer visits it is clear to see that the proposal is designed to assist the existing market. The reduction of 10 parking spaces on the site is considered to be minimal when weighed against the positive impact this scheme could have on reducing longer stays in the car park and potentially freeing up more parking spaces than the number it has taken up as part of the development. It may not significantly reduce the number of visits by car, but it does have the potential to reduce the length of stays.

Character and Appearance

17. The structure comprises a small factory made container and is proposed to sit close to the existing recycling area, located close to the vehicle entrance/exit of the store. The structure is small scale and such that it will not appear visually prominent and hence is not considered to substantially harm the prevailing character or appearance of the area.

Further considerations

18. With regard to the other matters raised the hours of operation are not included in the submissions however it is likely the pod will operate under the same opening hours of the store. Members will be updated accordingly.

Conclusion

19. In light of how other applications at Tesco's have been assessed it is considered that the proposed pod should be granted for a period of three years to monitor the additional impact on parking provision.

Recommendation

20. Approve subject to the following conditions
 1. The use hereby permitted shall be discontinued and the land restored to its former condition on or before 7th November 2015.
(Reason - To ensure that the pod and associated works does not become a permanent feature on site which would have an adverse impact on the provision of parking in the long term in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans: P001A, P002A and P003A franked 17th September 2012.
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPDs
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning file reference S/0798/12/FL, S/2036/12, S/1613/08, S/1404/08 and S/0659/07

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