

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee

1st June 2005

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/0821/05/F - Bar Hill
Alterations to Front and Rear Elevations and Erection of 3 Bollards
Units 10-11, The Mall, for Tesco Stores Ltd

Recommendation: Approval
Date for Determination: 21/6/05

Site and Proposal

1. The site consists of two units located within a row of units collectively known as The Mall, sited at a right angle to the large Tesco superstore and adjacent to the associated car parking and infrastructure. The units in The Mall have frontages consisting largely of full height glazing with a ribbon of signage located above the entrances that serve the various units. Units 10-11 are currently occupied as a single retail sales area operated by a company called *More* and a Post Office is located within part of Unit 11.

This full application, registered on 21st April 2004, seeks permission to alter the front and rear elevations of Units 10 and 11, including the insertion of a set of doors in the front and rear elevations of Unit 10, and the erection of 3 free standing bollards located to the rear of Unit 10 in line with similar at the rear of Units 11, 12 and 13.

Planning History

2. Planning permission was granted under reference **S/1617/98/F** for the provision of a new food superstore, mall, a site for a public house, parking and landscaping. These works involved the demolition of the previous supermarket, mall and public house that existed on the site.
3. Planning permission was later granted under reference **S/1836/04/F** for the change of the use of Unit 10 from A1 (Retail) to A2 (Financial/Professional Service) on behalf of Cambridge Building Society. The permitted use of Unit 11 was unaffected by this application and remains as A1 (Retail). At the time of this application officers consulted with the applicants who confirmed that this change of use did not have a direct effect on the Post Office in Unit 11.

Planning Policy

4. **Policy SH8** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states that the District Council will not grant planning permission for new shop fronts and alterations to existing shop fronts which create a fascia and shop windows which is out of character with the building itself and the street scene.
5. **Policy CS1** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states that the Council will seek to negotiate planning obligations (or in appropriate cases to impose Grampian-style planning conditions) to ensure the provision of any matters that are necessary for planning purposes and so directly related to the proposed development and to the

use of land after its completion, that permission ought not otherwise to be granted. The subject matter of the obligation will be reasonably related to the proposed development in scale and kind.

6. **Policy CS9** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 states that planning permission will be refused for proposals which would result in the loss of a village service or recreational facility, including village pubs, where such loss would cause a significant reduction in the level of community or service provision in the locality. The following matters will be considered in determining the significance of the loss: the established use of the premises and its existing and potential contribution to the social amenity of the local population.

Consultation

7. **Bar Hill Parish Council** recommends approval of the application and makes no further comment.

Representations

8. **Cllr Roger Hall** has expressed concern that *More*, the current occupants of both Units 10-11 will close at the end of July. As a result Cllr Hall is concerned that the Post Office, which is located in Unit 11, might also close unless an alternative location is found or a new tenant agrees that it should remain *in situ*. Cllr Hall, citing Local Plan policy CS9, has stated that an important village facility may be lost and that the “planning application should not be approved unless provision for the Post Office in one of the two new units, or provision for its re-location elsewhere has been received from Tesco Stores in writing.”

Planning Comments - Key Issues

9. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application relate to:
 - The impact of the development upon the Post Office located within Unit 11
 - The visual impact of the development upon the character and setting of the building and street scene

Impact upon the Post Office in Unit 11

10. Units 10 and 11 are currently occupied as one single unit by a company called *More*. Part of the retail floor space within Unit 11 is occupied by a Post Office. The current application is for the alteration of the front and rear elevations of the two units in question and the erection of 3 bollards to the rear of Unit 10. It does not involve or propose any material change of use.
11. Planning permission has previously been granted for the change of use of Unit 10 to Class A2 (Financial/Professional Services) from A1 (Retail) for Cambridge Building Society under application S/1836/04/F, which was approved on the 27th October 2004. This did not have a direct effect on the Post Office in Unit 11. The subdivision of the combined Units 10/11 into two separate units does not in itself require planning permission, as it does not constitute development as defined by planning legislation.
12. In planning terms, a Post Office falls within Use Class A1 (shops). This means that if a Post Office closes and reverts to retail floorspace, no material change of use

requiring planning permission will have occurred. The Planning Authority would not be in a position to resist the change.

13. The Council, as outlined in Local Plan Policy CS1, can impose conditions of consent that meet the tests of DOE Circular 11/95, including being necessary for planning purposes and being related to the proposed development. As such the Authority would not be able to impose a condition which required the provision of the Post Office either within Units 10/11 or for its relocation to an alternative site as it would not reasonably relate to the proposed development. The use of the unit and the issue of the Post Office is not a material consideration in the determination of this current application.

Visual Impact

14. With regard to the visual impact of the development upon the character and setting of the building and street scene all of the existing units are similar in appearance. Each unit comprises of a largely glazed frontage, with a continuous ribbon of advertisements located at a height of approximately 2.4 metres above ground level. The existing entrances to the various units comprise of glazed doors, similar in appearance to those proposed. Furthermore, a number of units currently have service doors, louvres and security bollards located to the rear of the units designed in a similar appearance to those proposed.

Recommendation

15. Approval
 1. Standard time condition A - Reason A

Reasons for Approval

1. The development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:
 - **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:**
P1/2 (Environmental Restrictions on Development)
 - **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004:**
SH8 (Shop Fronts);

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning file Refs: S/0821/05/F; S/1836/04/F; S/1617/98/F

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