

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE – 20 APRIL 2009

**REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MANAGER
(Author: Chris Raine, Senior Development Control Officer)**

**ATTLEBOROUGH: SAINSBURY'S SUPERMARKET: EXTENSION TO
EXISTING SUPERMARKET, RECONFIGURATION OF CAR PARK/
ACCESS/ EGRESS & DEMOLITION OF EXISTING PETROL STATION
REFERENCES: 3PL/2009/0089/F & 3PL/2009/0090/CA
APPLICANT: SAINSBURY'S SUPERMARKET LTD**

Summary: The application seeks full planning permission for extensions to the existing Sainsbury's Supermarket to increase the sales area and back-up areas. The rear extension provides a mezzanine level which provides staff facilities. The car-park, access and internal roadways are to be re-configured and as a consequence the existing petrol-filling station is to be removed from the front of the site.

Given that the front part of the site is within the Attleborough Conservation Area, Conservation Area consent for the demolition of the petrol-filling station is required (3PL/2009/0090/CA).

Introduction

The site is located within the centre of Attleborough and at present consists of the Sainsbury's Supermarket with accompanying customer car parking located to the front of the site, Petrol-filling station to the front of the site and a service yard to the rear. The site is accessed via the High Street which is located to the south-east of the site. There is also a pedestrian access to Wayland Court to the north of the site. To the east of the site is the post office and telephone exchange, to the north are residential units (Wayland Court and Bramley Court) and to the west are residential dwellings (Yew Tree Road). There are preserved trees on the northern perimeter of the site.

Key Issues

1. Impact upon the Conservation Area
2. Highway safety and traffic movements
3. Impact upon Trees
4. Contamination issues
5. Neighbour amenity
6. Demolition/loss of Petrol Filling Station

Planning History

3PL/2007/2033/F - Single storey extension to existing A1 retail store, covered loading bay, amendment to car park and associated works. Approved.

3PL/2007/1640/F - Single storey extension to store, covered unloading bay, amendments to car park and associated works. Approved.

3PL/2007/1983/A - non-illuminated and illuminated signage. Approved.

3PL/2005/1693/A - Internally illuminated ATM wall advert. Approved.

3PL/2003/0111/A - Three free standing illuminated panels. Approved.

Policy Considerations

The following National Planning Guidance and/or Saved Policies of the Breckland Local Plan have been taken into consideration in the determination of this application:

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS6: Planning for Town Centres

PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment

TRA.5 Where development would endanger transport safety, generate traffic that would be detrimental to the transport network, require highway improvements that would conflict with conservation considerations or attract traffic that would have an adverse effect on residential amenity, it will not be permitted.

ENG1: Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Energy Performance

Consultations

Council's Contaminated Land Officer - No objection subject to conditions.

Environment Agency - comments awaited.

Highway Authority - comments awaited.

Council's Tree Officer - Confirmation of the method of foundation for the rear extension to be submitted along with details of the surfacing for the driveway and service yard and details of landscaping to be agreed.

Council's Historic Buildings Officer - No objection

Council's Planning Policy Officer - Clarification of how 10% of their energy requirements can be met through renewable energy sources in accordance with Policy ENG1.

Representations

Objections have been received including a petition, the concerns are summarised as follows:

Attleborough WI submitted a signed petition with objections on the grounds of there will only be one petrol filling station left in the town which is on a narrow road. This will result in congestion and manoeuvring problems, on-street parking problems would be exacerbated, the enlarged supermarket could compromise the viability of shops in the town.

Only one petrol-filling station would be left in the town, this will contribute towards traffic related problems, the access path to Waylands Court should not be lost, unclear what boundary treatments will be used on the site frontage as this could impact upon light levels to adjacent premises and impact upon the appearance of the locality, lighting provision is not specified, how will construction and demolition works be controlled, concerns over delivery hours, traffic flow/congestion, detrimental to pedestrian safety, insufficient additional parking would be provided, the current streetscape would be compromised, the proposal could hinder the emergency services, no re-cycling facilities are provided and the loss of the petrol-filling station would be detrimental to the aesthetics of the locality.

Assessment

The application is referred to Development Control Committee as it is a major application.

This application proposes the extension of the existing store with an additional 1,104m² retail floor space, including a mezzanine. The site is located within the town centre and partly within the Conservation Area. In light of the location of the site within the town centre, having regard to the provisions of PPS6, the principal issues for consideration in this instance are ensuring a scale of development that is appropriate to the centre and accessibility of the site by a choice of means of transport.

In respect of securing the appropriate scale of development, it is considered that the floor space increase proposed (1142 sq m) is acceptable given its position within the town centre.

In terms of accessibility, it is noted that the site is within the town centre, local accessibility within the application site itself should be carefully considered. This should include suitable provision for pedestrians to access the store, as well as cyclists. The accompanying travel plan states cycle parking will be provided, however further details of the precise form proposed should be secured through a planning condition.

Policy ENG.1 of the adopted East of England Plan requires developments of over 1,000m² floor space to provide 10% of their energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources. An accompanying renewable energy and energy efficiency statement has been submitted and a subsequent condition to secure the exact mechanism for securing the use of a suitable decentralised and renewable or low-carbon source is required.

Significant objection has been received with regard to the traffic-flow and highway safety implications of the proposal. With this in mind the Highway Authority are in discussions with the applicant to agree a suitable access arrangement. These discussions are ongoing, however, they have confirmed that it is envisaged that a suitable arrangement will be agreed in the near future. This will be reported verbally to members.

There are TPO trees adjacent to the northern boundary of the site and as such confirmation of the method of surfacing to be used on the relevant part of the driveway and service yard area and the foundation method for the rear extension are to be agreed in conjunction with the tree officer so as to avoid significant harm being caused to the trees. A suitably worded condition will be required to agree these and ensure the trees are protected throughout construction works.

In terms of neighbour amenity, it is considered that the physical implications of the extension with regard to light, outlook and privacy are such that no significant harm would occur by virtue of the separation distances between the proposal and the dwellings coupled with the orientation of the extensions.

The issue of the potential loss of the pedestrian link through Wayland Court has been raised, the applicant has subsequently confirmed that they wish for the link to be retained.

In design terms the extensions are consistent with the existing supermarket in terms of scale, mass and height, with appropriate external materials proposed so as to ensure an effective integration with the current building.

The proposal would also result in the demolition of the existing petrol filling-station which at present is a prominent feature within the streetscene, this also forms part of the Conservation Area. A number of objections have been received which express concern at the loss this would have on the impact upon the Conservation Area. The removal of the filling station and the position of significant parking across the entire High Street frontage immediately adjacent to the public footpath means that it is crucial to secure an appropriate means of integrating the development into the High Street. For this reason negotiations are currently ongoing to secure appropriate screening, landscaping and other measures that will enable the proposal to make a positive contribution to the character and setting of the Conservation Area. However, it should be stressed that in the absence of a suitable scheme for this being secured prior to the Development Control Committee Meeting then the application should be refused as in its current form the site frontage will fail to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area.

Significant concern has been expressed at the loss of the petrol filling station not only on visual grounds as addressed in the previous paragraph but on the loss of it as an important facility within the town. The Local Planning Authority cannot reasonably prevent the closure/demolition on these grounds as part of a planning decision.

Given the proposed demolition of the Petrol filling station, a contamination desk study was commissioned and has been assessed by the Council's Contaminated Land Officer who has confirmed that they have no objections subject to conditions. The views of the Environment Agency are awaited and will be reported verbally.

Recommendation

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposal is consistent with the relevant planning policies subject to the successful completion of negotiations in relation to the treatment of the site frontage and as such the applications are recommended for approval. In the absence of a suitable scheme for the site frontage being secured before the meeting, then the applications will be recommended for refusal.