

LOCATION: 30 CHERTSEY ROAD, CHOBHAM, WOKING, GU24 8PQ
PROPOSAL: Application for planning for installation of ATM to right hand side of the shop front. (Additional info recv'd 26/10/16)
TYPE: Full Planning Application
APPLICANT: Mrs Dadswell
Bank of Ireland
OFFICER: Michelle Fielder

This application would normally be determined under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, however, it has been reported to the Planning Applications Committee at the request of Cllr Tedder.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT subject to conditions

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the installation of an ATM in the frontage of a retail unit (use class A1) and is linked to application 16/0916 (for advertisement consent for the surround to the ATM) appearing elsewhere on the agenda. The report notes that wider concerns regarding the use of the lawful retail unit as a post office are beyond the scope of this application. Moreover, as both uses comprise A1 uses as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes Order) 1987 (as amended) an application for a change of use is not required and a post office can occupy the premises without further recourse to the Council acting as the Local Planning Authority. The post office is likely to relocate to the premises in January 2017.
- 1.2 This report assesses the impact of the proposal on the character of the area and the amenity of residents and concludes that no significant harm would arise. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application property is the most westerly of a parade of 5 retail units constructed in the 1960's. The units have retail uses at ground floor and residential above. The unit to which this application relates has been extended to the side and rear; however the building is predominately two storey and constructed of brick with tile hanging at first floor. The premises were, at the time of the officers' visit, in use as a Spar, however it is understood the ATM proposed is to facilitate the post office use of the unit.
- 2.2 The remaining units in this parade comprise a retail shop, a barbers, a takeaway and a restaurant.
- 2.3 To the front of the parade is a slip road historically called Watts Farm Parade but now noted as being part of the adopted highway and part of Chertsey Road. At the

time of the officer's site visit this circa 6m wide access had parking on both sides and could only be accessed in single file. The area was very congested.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 Planning permission for the parade of shops within which this unit sits was granted in 1960. This specific unit was altered in 1980 and has been extended in 1989 and again in 1992.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The proposal seeks to install an ATM in the shop front. This would be installed in the most westerly window pane on the shop frontage. The base of the ATM would be 0.6m above the ground level and would stand 1.1m high (standing 1.7m high overall). This would have a 0.2m – 0.7m surround which is the subject of advertisement consent (application 16/0916 refers and appears elsewhere on this agenda).
- 4.2. Information submitted with the application advises that The Post Office has offered financial services within local communities for over 150 years and that to ensure this continues into the future the installation of ATM in Post Offices in the UK is part of joint project between the Post Office and the Bank of Ireland. Additional information provided advises the ATM will improve the viability of the Post Office and help to secure its viability and future within the community, encouraging people to use not only their local post office but the other facilities nearby whilst they are there.
- 4.3 A further justification for the proposal appears to be that customers whom have their state pension, any benefits or tax credits paid into a Post Office card account can only use a Post Office ATM to access their account outside of the Post Office opening times. This is because the card is not accepted at any other ATM.
- 4.4 The application submission further advises that the ATM will be compliant with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA). [Officer comment: the DDA is repealed and now forms part of the Equality Act 2010].
- 4.5 Following the submission of this application officers have requested additional information to try and establish what need there is for the proposed development and whether this could be met by an internally sited ATM. This is addressed in section 7.3 of this report. The applicant's agent has also advised that the post office use will occupy approximately 10-15% of the existing shop floor area and that the post office use is intended to operate 0600-2100hrs Mondays to Saturdays and 0700hrs to 1700hrs on Sundays and, these will be the same hours of the occupier of the remainder of the unit.

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

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| 5.1 | Surrey County Council Highway Authority | No objection. |
| 5.2 | Chobham Parish Council | Objection :

External ATM likely to create out of hours disturbance in residential area (DM9).

Highway safety concern due to parking demand exacerbating existing traffic problems in this location and potential target for ram raid attack (DM11).

Internal ATM option preferred. |
| 5.3 | Crime Prevention Officer | No comments received. |

6.0 REPRESENTATION

- 6.1 At the time of preparation of this report 5 letters of objection have been received:
- ATM will increase traffic and pedestrians in the area and increase the already considerable congestion in the area *[Officer comment: section 7.6 refers]*
 - Will result in particular problems and danger for residents in Barnmead *[Officer comment: sections 7.5 and 7.6 refers]*
 - Personal safety concerns *[Officer comment: section 7.5 refers]*
 - Amenity issues - noise generation from out of hours use, engines running, conversations and road use and parking *[Officer comment: section 7.5 and 7.6 refers]*
 - Already a number of ATM's in the village / an internal machine would be sufficient *[Officer comment: section 7.3 refers]*
 - Moving post office to Jonelas will make the worse and the ATM will exacerbate this / a number of reviews are underway to consider this/ this is an overdevelopment of the site *[Officer comment: section 7.3 refers, and the application has to be considered on its own merits]*
 - Not all ATM users will use the shop and many will park inconveniently simply so they can come and go quickly *[Officer comment: section 7.6 refers]*
 - Photos submitted with the application are out of date *[Officer comment: this is not fatal to this application]*
 - Tesco's had a ATM refused *[Officer comment: please see section 7.7]*
 - No anti raise bollards proposed *[Officer comment: please see section 7.5]*

- There was an ATM at the previous post office site but this was removed after being the subject of a ram raid [*Officer comment: this is not material to this application*]

7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

- 7.1 The application site forms part of a local centre as defined by Policies CP9 and DM12 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012. The application site is also within the washed over Green Belt Settlement of Chobham and as such, and in light of the nature of the proposal Policies DM9 (amenity and character) and DM11 (highway impact) are also relevant as is the NPPF.
- 7.2 The main considerations in this application are therefore:
- Principle of the development;
 - Design and impact on the character of the surrounding area;
 - Impact on residential amenity; and,
 - Impact on highway safety and parking capacity.

7.3 Principle of the development

- 7.3.1 The application site is within the defined local centre as indicated by the inset map to the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 (CSDMP). Policy CP9 of the CSDMP sets the hierarchy for these areas with Chobham being defined as a local centre. Policy DM12 seeks to protect units in A1 retail use in these areas and prevent a proliferation of non-A1 uses with the overall objective being one of enhancing the vitality and viability of these areas. The proposal would not change the lawful use of the premises which would remain in A1 use. It is also noted that the installation of the ATM would not result in any meaningful loss of A1 retail space within the parade and nor is there any evidence to suggest that this facility would impact on the viability or vitality of the parade.
- 7.3.2 The applicant has been asked to consider whether an internally sited ATM could meet both the Post Office and the community needs. However, officers have been advised that while an internally sited ATM would help reduce queues during busy periods, it would not enable Post Office account card holder's to access their accounts when the store is closed. The Post Office account can only be accessed from a post office ATM as the card is not accepted at main stream ATM's. Accordingly, while it is noted that there are alternative ATM facilities in Chobham it is unlikely these will meet the needs of Post Office account card holders to access their money when the Post Office is closed. The principle of the development is therefore acceptable and no conflict with DM12 and CP9 of the CSDMP is found.

7.4 Design and impact on the character of the surrounding area

- 7.4.1 The NPPF requires good design as one of the ways of delivering sustainable development. Policy CP2 (iv) of the CSDMP requires new development to respect and enhance the quality of the urban environments; DM9 (Design Principles) of the CSDMP continues to promote high quality design that respects and enhances the local environment.
- 7.4.2 The proposal would result in a minor change to the shop front with the ATM being inserted in a glazed panel that is currently covered with a film advertisement. The proposed works are relatively minor in scale and the visual impact of these would not be materially harmful to the street scene or the character of this parade of shops. The proposal is not considered to conflict with any of the design and character considerations set out above and nor is the introduction of such a facility in this location considered out of character with the parade. It is therefore considered no objection should be raised in this regard and no conflict with Policy DM9 of the CSDMP 2012 is found.

7.5 Impact on residential amenity

- 7.5.1 The area is predominately residential in character save for this small parade of retail units and adjacent car sales unit. The closest residential properties to the proposed siting would be flats situated above this parade of shops. However, it is noted that the provision of ATM's in commercial premises is not uncommon, moreover given the range of uses in the parade, it is not considered the provision of an ATM in this location would give rise to a significant increase in noise and disturbance above the existing situation.
- 7.5.2 Concerns have been raised by other neighbouring properties and in the area. However, a simple assessment of the distances between the application property and its nearest detached neighbours - for example the front elevation of no .17 Barnmead is set some 26m away from the flank elevation of the application site, no.1 (to the rear) a little over 21m (measured flank to rear of the application property) and 31m between the front elevations of the application site and No 31 Chertsey) - can only reasonably lead to the conclusion that the ATM or its use will not result in a loss of privacy or give rise to unacceptable amenity impacts. Concerns regarding the movement of customers using the facility to and from the area by car and the impact this would have noise levels are noted; however, there is no tangible evidence to suggest that the use of the facility would be so intense and unsociable as to give rise to significant and demonstrable harm.
- 7.5.3 Concerns regarding personal safety are noted; however, there is no evidence to suggest that users of this ATM would be any more susceptible to be a victim of crime than any other facility in the Borough. Information submitted with the application advises that the Post Office has a number of standards to ensure ATMs have the required level of security as stated by the ATM Security Working Group. These standards are supplemented by information gathered for incidents within a 2km of the application site. This information includes any history of previous incidents and crime statistics based on the post code and is used to design out crime.

This site has not been flagged as being at high risk, but nevertheless it is to be fitted with an alarm and this will meet industry standards. An objection on this basis cannot therefore be sustained.

- 7.5.4 In light of the information above it is considered that no objection on the basis of harm to amenity can be raised and as a result the proposal is considered to be acceptable in respect of Policy DM9.

7.6 Impact on highway safety and parking capacity

- 7.6.1 Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should take account of whether safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people. Policy DM11 states that development which would adversely impact the safe and efficient flow of traffic movement on the highway network will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that measures to reduce such impacts to acceptable levels can be implemented. Policy CP2 states that development should be sustainable and have easy access to a range of high quality services and Policy CP11 states that new development that will generate a high number of trips will be directed towards previously developed land in sustainable locations and that all new development should be appropriately located in relation to public transport and the highway network and comply with the Council's car parking standards.
- 7.6.2 Information submitted with the application advises that the ATM is aimed at the existing customer base and will provide an additional teller terminal that customers can use rather queuing within the store. The applicant advises that this reduces the problems of long queues and improves the customer experience.
- 7.6.3 It is clear from the officer's site visit that objector concerns have not overestimated the level of parking and congestion in the area. Notwithstanding the applicant submission, it is considered there will be users of the ATM who do not undertake linked trips to the parade and as such there may be vehicular trips to the parade solely to use this facility. However, there is no evidence to robustly demonstrate that the installation of the ATM would, itself, significantly and demonstrably make the existing situation worse. Moreover, it would be unreasonable to refuse planning permission on highway grounds solely because the existing parking and activity.

7.7 Other Matters

- 7.7.1 The proposal has no CIL, SANG or SAMM liability.
- 7.7.2. Comments made in respect of the ATM proposed for the Tesco store in Station Road, Chobham are noted. However, that ATM was not refused planning permission; instead the application (reference 12/0192) was not progressed by the applicant and was finally disposed of due to this lack of activity. It should also be noted that, notwithstanding the outcome of any application for any ATM on any site in the Borough, this application must be assessed on its own merits.

8.0 ARTICLE 2(3) DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) ORDER 2012 WORKING IN A POSITIVE/PROACTIVE MANNER

In assessing this application, officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the NPPF. This included:

- a) Provided or made available pre application advice to seek to resolve problems before the application was submitted and to foster the delivery of sustainable development.
- b) Provided feedback through the validation process including information on the website, to correct identified problems to ensure that the application was correct and could be registered.
- c) have provided regular updates and advised of any problems affecting the applications determination.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 For the reasons outlined above it is considered the proposal would not result in harm to residential amenity, the character of the area, or the free flow of traffic and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted.

GRANT subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions and in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The proposed development shall be built in accordance with the following approved plans: FAD no.1409239-04, untitled floor plan, untitled elevation plan unless the prior written approval has been obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning and as advised in ID.17a of the Planning Practice Guidance.