

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT STATEMENT

SITE:

131-133, Crockhamwell Road,
Woodley,
RG5 3JP

Proposal:

External alterations to the existing commercial building,
including the installation of a new
aluminium framed glazed shopfront with
integrated roller shutter housing,
formation of a semi-covered entrance area,
and associated external works.

PREPARED BY:

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1. Introduction

This Community Involvement Statement has been prepared in support of a Full Planning Application for external alterations to the commercial premises at 131–133 Crockhamwell Road, Woodley, RG5 3JP.

The proposal seeks planning permission for:

- Installation of a new aluminium framed glazed shopfront;
- Installation of integrated roller shutter housing;
- Formation of a semi-covered entrance area;
- Associated alterations to the front and side elevations.

The proposal relates to premises that have already benefited from planning permission under Planning Application Reference 260165 for:

Subdivision of the existing former bank (Class E) to create five commercial units (Class E), including installation of new shopfronts, external shutters, access ramp and metal railings.

Accordingly, the principle of the commercial redevelopment, subdivision and continued Class E use has already been accepted by Wokingham Borough Council.

The current application represents a minor design refinement to improve the quality, appearance and functionality of the approved development.

2. Planning Background

Planning permission has previously been granted for the comprehensive redevelopment of the former bank premises under Application Reference 260165.

The approved development included:

- subdivision into five Class E commercial units;
- replacement shopfronts;
- security shutters;
- access ramp;
- metal railings;
- associated external alterations.

The current proposal does not seek to revisit the approved principle of development.

Instead, the application focuses solely upon improving the detailed design of one part of the approved external frontage through the introduction of:

- contemporary aluminium glazing;
- integrated concealed shutter housing;
- improved customer entrance;
- semi-covered entrance canopy.

No additional commercial floorspace is created.

No new use is proposed.

No alterations are proposed to the approved subdivision.

No changes are proposed to servicing or parking arrangements.

3. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

This statement has been prepared having regard to the Wokingham Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

The SCI promotes early engagement where proposals are likely to generate significant impacts upon neighbouring occupiers or the wider community.

The current proposal represents:

- minor external alterations;
- no change of land use;
- no increase in floorspace;
- no increase in commercial intensity;
- no additional traffic generation;
- no increase in customer numbers beyond those already approved.

The proposal is therefore considered proportionate to the scale of development.

Formal public consultation prior to submission has not been undertaken because the proposal falls well within the type of minor commercial development where consultation is normally undertaken through the statutory planning process.

4. Community Considerations

Although formal consultation has not been carried out, the proposal has been designed having regard to the surrounding community.

The proposal provides several public benefits including:

- enhancement of the visual appearance of the building;
- improved quality shopfront design;
- better integration with the surrounding shopping parade;
- improved accessibility and customer experience;
- increased passive surveillance through larger glazed frontage;
- improved security through integrated shutter housing;
- continued investment within Woodley District Centre.

The proposal will assist in maintaining an attractive active commercial frontage.

5. Design Improvements

Compared with the approved development, the proposal provides several improvements.

These include:

- contemporary aluminium framed glazing;
- improved proportions;
- larger active glazed frontage;
- concealed shutter housing;
- reduced visual clutter;
- improved architectural appearance;
- semi-covered entrance providing weather protection;
- high-quality modern commercial frontage.

The proposed alterations will positively enhance the appearance of the building.

6. Impact on Neighbouring Properties

The proposal has been carefully designed to ensure there will be no unacceptable impacts upon neighbouring occupiers.

The proposal:

- does not increase the building footprint;
- does not increase building height;
- does not increase floorspace;
- does not reduce parking provision;
- does not alter servicing arrangements;
- does not generate additional overlooking;
- does not create additional noise;
- does not affect residential amenity.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to have negligible planning impacts.

7. Planning Policy Considerations

The proposal is consistent with the objectives of:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- Wokingham Borough Local Plan;
- Wokingham Borough Design SPD;
- Wokingham Borough Statement of Community Involvement.

The proposal supports Government objectives by:

- improving the quality of existing commercial premises;
 - supporting investment in town centres;
 - improving design quality;
 - promoting sustainable re-use of existing buildings;
 - maintaining active commercial frontages.
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8. Ongoing Engagement

The Applicant remains committed to engaging positively with:

- Wokingham Borough Council;
- neighbouring occupiers;
- statutory consultees;
- local stakeholders,

throughout the determination of the planning application.

Any comments received during the statutory consultation period will be carefully considered, and where appropriate, amendments will be made to address planning concerns.

9. Conclusion

This Community Involvement Statement has been prepared in accordance with the Wokingham Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement. The proposal represents a modest external alteration to a development that has already received planning permission under Planning Application Reference 260165.

The proposal does not alter the approved use, subdivision, scale or intensity of development.

Instead, it seeks to deliver a higher-quality commercial frontage through improved architectural detailing, modern glazing, integrated security measures and a more attractive customer entrance.

The proposal will enhance the appearance of the building, support the vitality of the local shopping area, and contribute positively to the character of Crockhamwell Road.

For these reasons, the proposal is considered to represent sustainable development and is respectfully recommended for approval.