

PLANNING STATEMENT
DESIGN AND ACCESS 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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Planning History

The site benefits from planning permission under Planning Application Reference 260165 for:

Full application for the proposed subdivision of the existing former bank (Class E) to create five commercial units (Class E), including installation of new shopfronts, external shutters, an access ramp and metal railings.

This application seeks approval only for revised external alterations to part of the previously approved development. The principle of the subdivision and continued Class E commercial use has already been established.

1. Introduction

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

The proposal comprises:

- Installation of a new aluminium framed glazed shopfront;
- Integrated roller shutter housing;
- Formation of a semi-covered entrance area; and
- Associated external works.

Planning permission has previously been granted under Application Reference 260165 for the subdivision of the former bank into five Class E commercial units together with associated external works.

The current application does not seek to amend the approved subdivision, approved Class E use, approved access arrangements or approved parking arrangements.

Instead, the proposal represents a modest refinement to the approved external appearance, providing a higher quality architectural solution that improves the visual appearance, functionality and customer experience.

2. Site Context and Existing Use

The application site comprises the former bank building situated within Woodley District Centre on Crockhamwell Road.

Planning permission has already been granted for the subdivision of the premises into five commercial units.

The building therefore already has an established planning permission for commercial redevelopment.

The current proposal relates solely to improvements to the approved external frontage and customer entrance.

No additional floorspace is proposed.

No additional commercial units are proposed.

No change of use is proposed.

This application therefore represents a minor amendment to the previously approved development.

3. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The proposal supports the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework by:

- improving the quality of an existing commercial building;
- promoting high quality design;
- encouraging investment within an established shopping centre;
- supporting sustainable economic growth;
- improving the visual appearance of the streetscape.

Since the principle of redevelopment has already been accepted through Planning Permission Ref. 260165, the current application should be considered on the basis of design quality and visual appearance.

Wokingham Borough Local Plan

The proposal complies with the objectives of the Local Plan by:

- maintaining an active commercial frontage;
- improving the quality of the public realm;
- enhancing the appearance of the existing building;
- supporting the vitality of Woodley District Centre;
- delivering high-quality commercial accommodation.

The proposal remains entirely within Use Class E.

No material change of use is proposed.

4. Planning Justification

The current application does not seek approval for additional development. Instead, it seeks permission for a revised architectural treatment to the frontage previously approved.

The revised design introduces:

- high-quality aluminium framed glazing;
- integrated roller shutter housing concealed within the façade;
- improved customer entrance;
- semi-covered external entrance area;
- improved architectural proportions;
- contemporary commercial appearance.

These improvements will create a significantly higher quality street frontage whilst retaining the approved commercial layout.

5. Design Statement

Design Principles

The revised design has been prepared using the following principles:

- improve the visual appearance of the building;
- create a stronger commercial frontage;
- maximise natural surveillance;
- provide greater transparency;
- reduce visual clutter;
- integrate security measures within the architectural design.

The proposal therefore represents an enhancement over the previously approved scheme.

Shopfront Design

The proposed aluminium framed glazed shopfront provides:

- improved architectural quality;
 - greater visual permeability;
 - modern commercial appearance;
 - active street frontage;
 - enhanced customer experience.
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Roller Shutter Housing

Rather than externally projecting shutter boxes, the proposal incorporates an integrated roller shutter housing within the building façade.

This significantly reduces visual impact whilst maintaining security.

Semi-Covered Entrance Area

The proposed semi-covered entrance provides:

- weather protection;
 - improved accessibility;
 - enhanced customer comfort;
 - improved visual definition of the entrance.
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6. Access Statement

The proposal does not alter the approved access arrangements.

Pedestrian access remains unchanged.

Vehicle access remains unchanged.

Parking remains unchanged.

The proposal therefore has no adverse impact on accessibility.

7. Impact Assessment

The proposal:

- does not increase the building footprint;
- does not increase the building height;
- does not create additional floorspace;
- does not alter the approved subdivision;
- does not increase customer numbers;
- does not affect neighbouring amenity;
- does not increase traffic generation.

Accordingly, the proposal has negligible planning impacts.

8. Conclusion

Planning permission has already been granted under Application Reference 260165 for the subdivision of the former bank into five Class E commercial units together with associated external works.

The current application represents a minor design refinement to that approved scheme and seeks permission only for improved external alterations, including a contemporary aluminium framed glazed shopfront, integrated roller shutter housing, a semi-covered entrance area and associated external works.

The proposal does not alter the approved use, subdivision, access, parking or scale of development. Instead, it enhances the architectural quality of the approved scheme and contributes positively to the character and appearance of Crockhamwell Road.

The proposal accords with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Wokingham Borough Local Plan and is therefore respectfully recommended for approval.