

REF:R01241AA/DB/MR

Development Management
Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices, Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

22nd October 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

**APPLICATION FOR RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF
PLANT AND AC UNITS SURROUNDED BY TIMBER FENCE ENCLOSURE
TESCO EXPRESS, SHOP UNIT 7, LODDON VALE CENTRE, WOODLEY, RG5 4UL**

I write on behalf of our client, Tesco Stores Ltd (the applicant) to submit an application for retrospective planning permission for the replacement of plant and AC units surrounded by timber fence enclosure serving the existing Tesco Express at Shop Unit 7, Loddon Vale Centre, Woodley, RG5 4UL (the Site).

The application is detailed in full within this letter.

Background to Application

The Site consists of an existing Tesco Express convenience store located at Shop Unit 7 within the Loddon Vale Centre, Woodley, RG5 7UL. The location is a local retail centre serving the wider residential neighbourhood within Woodley town. The convenience store forms part of a shopping centre which also provides other commercial uses, including a Pizza Hut, the Jalpari of Woodley and Day Lewis Pharmacy. A replacement plant and AC units are required to facilitate the viable operation of the convenience store.

Full planning application ref. 251639 was refused on the 19th September 2025 for:

“Full application for the proposed installation of 2 no. remote gas cooler units and 3 no. floor-mounted AC units with protective railings, plus erection of a 2.4m high timber fence enclosure and access gate with associated barriers, following removal of existing plant and enclosure.”

The reasons for refusal have been acknowledged and design amendments have been made to the proposal.

Proposed Works

Retrospective planning permission is sought for the replacement of plant comprising 2 no. remote gas cooler units and 3 no. floor-mounted AC units with protective railings alongside the installation of 2 no. 2.4m high timber fence enclosures and 2 no. access gates.

Due to the nature of this proposal, a Noise Impact Assessment prepared by KR Associates (UK) Ltd dated 2nd December 2024 is submitted with this application.

Additional information on the retrospective plant solution proposal is available on the proposed plans prepared by Tesco:

- 3450_Woodley_Plant-ProposedPlan;
- 3450_Woodley_Plant-ProposedPartPlan;
- 3450_Woodley_Plant-ProposedElevation-1;
- 3450_Woodley_Plant-ProposedElevation-2; and
- 3450_Woodley_Plant-ProposedElevation-3.

Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the development plan comprises Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) Core Strategy (January 2010) and Managing Development Delivery (MDD) (February 2014).

Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents.

WBC Core Strategy (2010)

Policy CP1 'Sustainable development' of the WBC Core Strategy (2010) states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that:

- "1) Maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment;*
- 2) Minimise the emission of pollutants into the wider environment...*
- 8) Avoid areas where pollution (including noise) may impact upon the amenity of future occupiers."*

WBC Managing Development Delivery (2014)

Policy CC04 'Sustainable Design and Construction' of the WBC MDD (2014) states:

"Planning permission will only be granted for proposals that seek to delivery high quality sustainably designed and constructed developments..."

Policy CC06 'Noise' of the WBC MDD (2014) states:

- "1. Proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed noise impacts to protect noise sensitive receptors (both existing and proposed) from noise impacts in line with Appendix 1 of the MDD.*
- 2. Noise impact of the development must be assessed. Where there is no adverse impact (No Observed Effect Level) then noise will not be a material consideration.*
- 3. Where there is an adverse effect (Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level to Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level), then*
- a) The development layout must be reviewed. Where this results in there no longer being an adverse impact then design and mitigation measures should be incorporated accordingly.*
 - b) Where there is still an adverse impact then internal layout must be reviewed. Where this results in there no longer being an adverse impact then design and measures should be incorporated accordingly.*
 - c) Where there is still an adverse impact then physical mitigation measures such as barriers/mechanical ventilation must be reviewed. Where this results in there no longer being an adverse impact then design and mitigation measures should be incorporated accordingly.*
 - d) Where there is still an adverse impact and the development falls within the significant observed adverse effect level then planning permission will normally be refused."*

WBC Borough Design Guide SPD (2012)

Point NR13 of the WBC Borough Design Guide SPD (2012) states the following:

"Non-residential development should contribute to the quality of the public realm, either by creating high quality new spaces, streets or other routes that are accessible to the public, or by enhancing the existing public realm in terms of its safety..."

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

The NPPF is an additional material consideration. It is underpinned by a presumption in favour of sustainable development and in terms of that presumption, Paragraph 11 states that for decision taking this means *"approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay..."*

Paragraph 85 goes on to advise that *"Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth."*

Planning Justification

As noted above, retrospective planning permission is sought replacement of plant comprising 2 no. remote gas cooler units and 3 no. floor-mounted AC units with protective railings alongside the installation of 2 no. 2.4m high timber fence enclosures and 2 no. access gates.

The Tesco Express store (the Site) forms part of a shopping centre which also comprises other commercial uses. Retrospective planning permission is sought for the installation of the plant solution required to facilitate the viable operation of the store. A previous planning application was submitted for the replacement of the plant under ref. 251639 which was refused on 19th September 2025. The reason for refusal states:

"By virtue of its inappropriate location close to entrance doors of the premises and its excessive height and built form, the proposals would visually enclose these exits thereby increasing public safety concerns because of its poor design legibility and reduced scope for any visual surveillance that would help avoid unnecessary instances of crime and/or antisocial behaviour. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Core Strategy, Policy TB21 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan, and Point NR13 of the Council's Borough Design Guide."

The delegated officer report also outlined the following detail which formed the basis of the above reason for refusal:

"The proposed enclosure would wholly obstruct the door to Shop Unit 6 and it would partially obstruct the set-back access that has been created (labelled 'MOE' on the submitted plans). By virtue of its location and combined with the height and scale of the built form these entranceways would be visually enclosed, and a restricted space would be created on the pavement behind the enclosure. This space would be cramped, unlit and it would not benefit from passive surveillance, and this could potentially lead to unnecessary instances of crime and/or antisocial behaviour."

The concerns in respect of safety have been fully acknowledged and the proposal has been amended with the following:

- Additional gates on either side of the 2.4m high timber fence plant enclosure, to restrict access to the area of concern in respect of anti-social behaviour and crime.

Moreover, as the plant equipment is proposed to be enclosed by the 2.4m high timber fence, noise mitigation is in place, along with obstruction of the plant from public views. The relevant Noise Impact Assessment prepared by KR Associates (UK) Ltd dated 2nd December 2024 is submitted with this application. The report demonstrates that plant noise levels are below the minimum background noise levels when assessed in accordance with British Standard 4142: 2014 + A1: 2019, meeting the specific requirements of the Local Authority. On this basis, it is considered that the proposals will not have an unacceptable noise or amenity impact.

It is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of safety, noise and amenity and does not harm the character or appearance of the context, complying with policy CP1 of the WBC Core Strategy (2010), policies CC04 and CC06 of the WBC MDD (2014) and point NR13 of the WBC Borough Design Guide SPD (2012).

Consequently, it is concluded that there are no policy grounds for objection to the application proposal and we respectfully request that planning permission is granted.

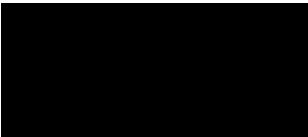
Contents of Submission

The following supporting documents and information have been submitted via the Planning Portal in support of the application:

- The relevant planning application fee;
- The completed application form;
- This covering letter prepared by ROK Planning;
- Location plan prepared by Tesco Stores Ltd;
- Existing and proposed drawings prepared by Tesco Stores Ltd; and
- Noise Impact Assessment prepared by KR Associates (UK) Ltd dated 2nd December 2024.

I trust that you have all the information you require to validate this application. If, in the interim, you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact either Anna Anderson [REDACTED] or myself at this office. I look forward to your formal acknowledgment.

Yours faithfully,



Daniel Botten
Senior Associate Director
ROK Planning Ltd

