

Planning Statement

Site: Tesco Express, Shop 7, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 4UL, United Kingdom

Proposal: Installation of 2x remote CO₂ gas cooler units, 3x floor-mounted AC units (with protective railings), and construction of a 2.4m high hit-and-miss timber fence enclosure with access gate and Armco barriers on two sides.

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a minor planning application for proposed plant equipment installation and associated fencing works at the Tesco Express store located at Shop 7, Reading, RG5 4UL. The proposal seeks to support the operational efficiency of the store while maintaining an appropriate design response to the surrounding built environment. This document outlines the proposed development, site context, relevant planning considerations, and confirms that landscaping and community involvement details are not required due to the minor nature of the works.

2. Site Description and Context

The application site comprises a Tesco Express convenience store situated within a local centre environment, primarily surrounded by mixed-use commercial and residential properties. The site includes a service yard located to the rear of the premises, which provides space for plant and servicing equipment.

The existing store forms part of a small retail parade and benefits from rear servicing arrangements. There are no listed buildings within the immediate vicinity, and the site is not located within a Conservation Area. Access to the rear of the premises is via a dedicated service route, which is separate from customer access.

3. Description of Proposed Development

The proposed development includes:

- **Installation of 2x remote CO₂ gas coolers:** Positioned to the rear servicing area of the site to support store refrigeration needs in a sustainable and efficient manner.
- **Installation of 3x floor-mounted air conditioning (AC) units:** These will ensure continued climate control within the store, promoting staff and customer comfort.
- **Protective railing:** Installed on one side of the AC units to offer safety and equipment protection from potential service yard movements.
- **Erection of 2.4m high timber hit-and-miss fence enclosure with access gate:** This enclosure will screen the proposed plant equipment and provide a secure and visually acceptable boundary treatment.
- **Installation of Armco barriers on two sides:** These barriers will ensure physical protection to the plant area from vehicular movements within the service yard.
- The design and positioning of the equipment and enclosures have been carefully considered to minimise any potential visual or acoustic impact on neighbouring properties and the wider environment.

4. Planning Policy Context

The proposal is considered in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), relevant local development policies of Reading Borough Council, and general design principles.

Key planning considerations include:

- **Design and Visual Amenity:**

The proposed fencing and plant equipment are located to the rear of the building, well-screened from public views. The hit-and-miss timber fencing provides a visually acceptable and durable screening method that respects the commercial context of the site. The materials used are of high quality and appropriate to the function and appearance of the setting.

- **Residential Amenity:**

The plant equipment has been designed and located to minimise impact on neighbouring uses. Acoustic reports can be provided where necessary to demonstrate compliance with acceptable noise thresholds, though the layout and nature of the area support limited risk of noise nuisance.

- **Operational Efficiency:**

The installation of upgraded plant equipment is essential to the efficient and sustainable operation of the store. The proposed changes are minor in scale and directly support the site's continued function as a local retail unit.

5. Landscaping

Given the location of the development within an existing hard-surfaced service yard, and the minor nature of the proposal, **no landscaping works are proposed or required** as part of this application. The development will not result in the loss of any existing landscaping or green infrastructure.

6. Community Involvement Statement

In accordance with national guidance, pre-application community consultation is not a statutory requirement for minor planning applications. This proposal constitutes **a minor application** relating solely to operational plant and servicing infrastructure within the store's own servicing area, and **does not require a formal Community Involvement Statement**.

The works are functional and modest in scale, with limited visual impact and no effect on public amenities. No changes to store access, hours of operation, or public-facing elements of the site are proposed.

7. Conclusion

The proposed development at Tesco Express, Reading, comprises minor external works to support the operational needs of the store. It is modest in scale, appropriately located, and sensitively designed with screening measures in place to minimise any potential impact.

The application complies with national and local planning policy, and the development is considered acceptable in principle and detail. No landscaping or community consultation is required in line with the minor nature of the proposal. Planning permission is therefore respectfully sought.

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