MRPP

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PLANNING PRACTICE

Town Planning Consultants
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PLANNING APPLICATION FOR IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO CUSTOMER CAR PARK

TESCO SUPERSTORE, 78-80 FINCHAMPSTEAD ROAD, WOKINGHAM, RG40 2NS

SUPPORTING PLANNING, HIGHWAYS AND DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

MRPP (MARTIN ROBESON PLANNING PRACTICE) IN ASSOCIATION WITH TPA (TRANSPORT PLANNING ASSOCIATES)

OCTOBER 2026

This supporting statement provides material to explain the proposals and its elements serve as a planning, highways and design & access statement.

The planning application relates to improvements to the existing customer car park serving the Tesco Superstore at Finchampstead Road. The works are consequential to the improvements to the Local Highway Network through the provision of the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR)[1]. This is nearing completion and forms part of the critical infrastructure required to serve the substantial expansion to the south of Wokingham, set out in Policy CP21 of the Core Strategy (South Wokingham Strategic Development Location).

The proposed 'development' in this application comprises of only the hard surfacing associated with the laying out the additional parking spaces, associated aisles and kerbs.

As a consequence of the completion of the SWDR, the existing constrained access into and out of the customer car park from Finchampstead Road is to be closed. It is replaced by a new roundabout connecting to the eastern side of the car park which has been designed to meet the maximum predicted peak-hour flows. This improvement is due to open later 2026 and thus facilitates the early completion of works within the Superstore's car park to effectively and safely connect with this new infrastructure.

The application also needs to be considered in the context of other aspects of the approved plans for the SWDR including, in particular, its related beneficial landscaping. This has been designed having regard to the relationship with the existing Tesco store and its car park.

The improvements will enable customers arriving at the site to have good visibility across the car park, in particular towards the store entrance, and to be directed towards aisles that are organised to prevent unnecessary queuing or conflict with other vehicles entering or exiting from the car park. The entry from the new roundabout also facilitates much improved visibility for customers using the click-and-collect facility, petrol filling station and car wash located on the southern margin of the site.

However, internal visibility is limited by a belt of generally poor-quality trees with the majority being category C and D. These have been subject to detailed Arboricultural Assessment (which is submitted as a supporting document to the application) and found to be of limited quality and/or at near the end of their life. The assessment describes the assemblage as primarily comprising "*typical low-quality ornamental plantings and maintained shrub beds of limited arboricultural significance"* [2]. These are therefore to be removed. As they are not protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), the site is not within a Conservation Area, and the area is not subject to a blanket policy protection of woodland, there is no restriction on their removal. With

[1] Planning Application Reference: 192929

[2] Arboriculture Impact Assessment, Paragraph 1.3.5

regard to the Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement, as the site area within the red line boundary is below the 0.2ha threshold, it is exempted from the 10% net gain provision[3].

At present a recycling facility is provided for customers on the eastern side of the entry into the store's car park. That is currently a logical location for the facility, allowing customers to drop off items before shopping. However, with the new entrance, this would cause right-turning movements soon after the entry into the car park. Tesco wish to retain a recycling facility, and this will be relocated adjacent to the existing petrol filling station near the southern boundary of the site. The new location utilises existing hardstanding within the car park, adjacent to the car wash facility, which has been accounted for in the net parking provision figures. See the proposed site plan for details.

The store is currently served by a 258 space customer car park[4]. Because of the acknowledged shortage of convenience goods retailing floorspace available to residents of Wokingham, the store's car park is heavily used with peak space utilisation intensity being one of the highest in the region. The Wokingham Retail and Commercial Leisure Study (2025)[5] confirms in its evidence base that there is capacity to accommodate between 14,700 to 17,200 sqm of additional convenience goods floorspace to address unmet needs by 2040. Little, if any, of that has been provided.

The existing store has a gross internal area of 5,864sqm and the relevant car parking requirement at the time of construction, about thirty years ago, based on a ratio of 1 space:14sqm would have been well in excess of 400 spaces. However, the store has been operating with less than 260 spaces. The additional car parking and its access aisle are to be sited where the existing recycling facilities and tree belt are currently located. The total number of proposed car parking spaces serving the store (excluding ancillary facilities) increases to 293[6]. Existing provision includes 18 disabled spaces. The Managing Development Delivery (MDD) guidance requires the proposal to provide a minimum of 13 bays, and thus future provision will remain compliant.

The Core Strategy through Policy CP6 seeks to ensure that the extent of parking is managed to ensure sustainable development benefits, including mitigation of potential adverse impact on the local highway network. There is associated guidance in the MDD[7] that sets out the parking ratio for superstore car parking to be no less than 1:20. The resulting ratio following the improvements, that are the subject of this application is 1:20.01. Such provision sits on the policy limitation itself. The proposal therefore

[3] From 6 August 2026, BNG does not apply to planning applications for developments where the site area is within the red line boundary is 0.2 hectares or below.
[4] Excluding parking serving ancillary facilities (which includes 10 parking spaces)
[5] Wokingham Retail and Commercial Leisure Study 2023 (Firstplan, 15 September 2023): Paragraph 8.32, table 8.5.
[6] Ancillary facilities i.e petrol station, click and collect and car wash.
[7] Managing development delivery and appendix 2: car parking standards (2014).

complies with the required ratio while ensuring an appropriate level of parking provision to optimise customer satisfaction.

The application is supported by an appropriate drawing set, Arboriculture Assessment, and this Statement. It is also demonstrated that the proposed limited groundworks would result in no harm to, or change in, the setting and use of the existing site. Surface water drainage will be to the existing sustainable drainage system.

The proposed enhancements to the parking arrangement would further optimise the benefits of the imminent SWDR and importantly meet the local parking MDD local parking standards.

In light of these positive outcomes, planning permission should therefore be granted without delay.

MRPP/TPA

October 2026