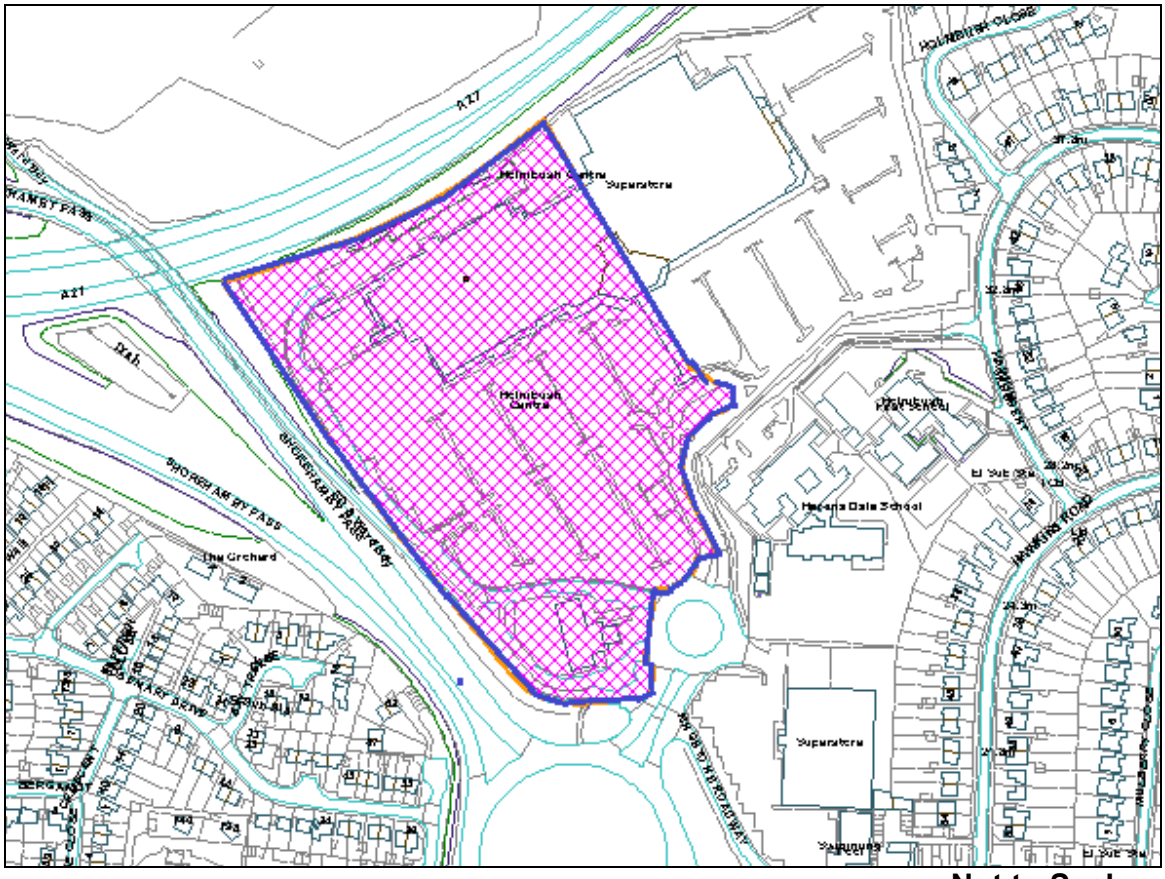
Application Numbers: AWDM/0886/14 **Recommendation – APPROVE**

Site: **Tesco Holmbush Centre Upper Shoreham Road Shoreham-By-Sea**

Proposal: **Community room extension and extension to sales area on west elevation with mezzanine. Extension to storage area to rear of store**

Applicant: Tesco Stores Ltd Ward: Hillside
Case Officer: Matthew Porter



Not to Scale

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Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application site is a Tesco Extra Superstore situated in The Holmbush Centre, a well established out-of-town retail park on the edge of the Built Up Area Boundary, adjacent to the South Downs National Park.

The proposal is part of a wider programme for the refurishment and reconfiguration of the store. It involves:-

- An additional 305.2 sq m of convenience goods sales area, and a mezzanine for storage.

This will enable an additional 305.2 sq m to be used for the sale of wines and spirits. The floorspace is currently used for storage. A mezzanine will be installed to relocate this storage. This will be installed directly above the extension to the wines and spirits and so will have the same floor area of 305.2 sq m. The mezzanine will not be used for retail sales and will only be accessible to staff.

- Provision of an in-store community room of 72. 6 sq m

The proposed community room would be able to be booked free of charge for community groups and classes, on an ad-hoc or timetable basis. Community groups would not be charged for the use of the space. The room will have access to computers and the internet. It would be accessed via the main store entrance.

- Provision of a cage marshalling areas to the north-west corner of the existing servicing yard and to the rear of the store, of 100.3 sq m

These cage marshalling areas will allow for the temporary storage of cages whether stocked or empty.

Consultations (Summarised)

West Sussex County Council Highways: *No objection. Proposals do not alter existing access arrangements to site, nor is it considered development will materially alter traffic generation of site*

Worthing & Adur Councils Environmental Health: *No adverse comments*

Representations (summarised)
None

Relevant Planning History

ADC/0049/06
Extensions to south (front) and west side and alterations to car park and to access road/roundabout adjoining bus layby (revised scheme)
Permitted 29.06.2006

ADC/0290/10
Bulk store extension at rear
Permitted 01.10.2010

AWDM/0104/12
Application for variation of condition 7 of planning permission ADC/0049/06 to enable continued use of former lobby at front of store by Virgin Holidays
Permitted 22.02.2012

AWDM/1469/13
Installation of Dry Cleaning, Key Cutting, Shoe & Watch Repairs Pod
Permitted 02.01.2014

AWDM/0700/14
Installation of proposed ATM at front of the store
Permitted 18.07.2014

Relevant Legislation

The Committee should consider the planning application in accordance with:

Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) that provides the application may be granted either unconditionally or subject to relevant conditions, or refused. Regard shall be given to relevant development plan policies, any relevant local finance considerations, and other material considerations; and

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that requires the decision to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance
National Planning Policy Framework
Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AS3, ACS5
South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment

Planning Assessment

Principle

Sales area and mezzanine

Adur Saved Local Plan policy AS3 (which relates to retail development outside of town centres) is dated, and lacks reference to the sequential approach and impact assessment, two key tests of planning policy. The emerging Adur Local Plan is of limited weight as it is insufficiently advanced. In the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has considerable status.

The NPPF takes a town centre first approach to significant retail development and only allows out of centre development as proposed here where the sequential test has been

met; no significant harm to existing designated centres is evident and the site is accessible by all modes of transport.

In this case, the applicant has not undertaken a sequential test for this proposal, contrary to paragraph 24 of the NPPF. Nonetheless, the submitted planning statement does refer to Tesco's site requirements.

The Council accepts there is little scope for disaggregating just the wines and spirits department of this Tesco Extra Superstore into a separate, sequentially preferable unit closer to Shoreham Town Centre. Given Tesco's business model and practical consideration of how the store operates, such an arbitrary sub-division is unrealistic.

For these reasons, no sequentially preferable site to the current proposed site in Holmbush, nor any such sites which are edge of centre, is considered to meet the nationally set criteria of available, suitably and viability.

In this instance, an impact assessment is not required as the proposal does not meet the default threshold set out in the NPPF.

In conclusion, the site is out of centre but no feasible sequential preferable town or edge of centre sites are apparent and no significant harm to any town centre shops as a result of the proposal alone should occur. Conditions to limit the scope of the store are proposed to provide additional safeguards. The proposal would complement the existing retail offer.

Community Room

Saved Local Plan policy ACS5 is a permissive policy that permits new community facilities within the built-up area (although development involving the loss of an existing community facility will not be permitted). This is broadly in compliance with Paragraph 70 of the NPPF, which additionally requires an integrated approach to considering the location of community facilities and services.

It is doubtful whether the location of the proposed community room, inside a food store and located 1.5 metres to the north east of Shoreham Town centre, would be truly integrated with the needs of the local community. However a public swimming pool is nearby, suggesting a public need of some sort, and the supermarket is accessible by bus.

Given its unique circumstances, it is difficult to forecast the impact this community room may have on other existing community facilities in Southwick and Shoreham. Certainly, the applicant has not attempted to qualify this in their submission.

Unlike other venues within the built up area boundary, this facility would not be embedded within an existing community or neighbourhood, but would be rather isolated relatively; it is unlikely to directly compete with the services and community participation

such other venues offer. Uptake of it, at least initially, would involve staff directly employed by Tesco rather than the wider community.

In conclusion, this small scale proposal may come to present a community facility of some worth to the public as awareness of it grows, without resulting in the direct loss of a valued community facility elsewhere.

Cage marshalling

These proposed areas are purely functional to the operation of the store, and raise no policy issues in principle.

Visual amenity and setting of the South Downs National Park

The site is situated on the edge of the built up area boundary, and adjacent to the elevated landscape of rolling chalk downland of the South Down National Park, (classified in *South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment* as the Adur to Ouse Open Downlands landscape type).

Paragraph 115 of the NPPF instructs Local Authorities to give great weight to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks. This extends to their setting.

The very open character and long views means there are few screening opportunities making this landscape type highly sensitive visually.

The cage marshalling area would be visually low key in comparison with the existing backdrop of the store building and its car park, including from long views looking south from viewpoints on the escarpment looking downwards onto the site. It is to be situated within the service yard, amongst existing external apparatus. Its form and appearance is reflective of its practical function, and would not be detrimental to the special landscape qualities of the National Park.

To avoid potential exacerbation of harmful discernable night time glow on this sensitive landscape from overspill of security lighting of the cage marshalling, it is recommended this be subject to further detail by way of a planning condition.

The predicated traffic levels and noise and disturbance generated by this proposal on the ‘remoteness’ and tranquillity of the National Park would be insignificant when set against the backdrop of the existing out of town retail park and the A27 and the link road connecting up to the A27 bypass, both major vehicular routes.

Residential amenity

The site is long established and residential properties are well away from the store. Vehicular access to the site is taken via the A270.

No discernible impact would be felt by any neighbour, business or residential.

Parking and accessibility

The proposed development will have very marginal implications on existing access or parking arrangements at the site.

This site is not sustainably located (it is located 1.5 metres to the north east of Shoreham Town centre) but the Holmbush Centre is accessible by local bus services. It is well connected to the road network, which allows for satisfactory accommodation of predicated traffic levels and servicing.

Accordingly, the proposal meets the relevant tests of national policy, being capable of enjoying adequate access across a variety of modes of transport.

Recommendation

APPROVE, subject to the following conditions:-

1. Standard time limit
2. Approved Plans
3. Gross floorspace and sq m of non-food comparison goods restricted
4. Mesazzine used for storage only and not sales area
5. Community room used as D1 only
6. Community room only access through store
7. No external lighting or floodlighting
8. Access and parking for cars and cycle retained

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework