

## **ABG/19956/1 – Sackville TCI Property (GP) Ltd**

**Erection of replacement canopy and general refurbishment, alteration to fenestration on Units 1-3, 37-39 Bury Street and 13 Market Place, combination of Units 31-32 to create one unit, associated street works. The Precinct, Bury Street, Abingdon.**

## **ABG/19956-X – Sackville TCI Property (GP) Ltd**

**Single storey extension to units 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11 and 12, the combination of units to create larger units, the replacement of kiosk units with a two storey retail unit, and associated works. The Precinct, Bury Street, Abingdon.**

### **1.0 The Proposal**

- 1.1 These are two applications, one full application and one outline application, which relate to a proposed two-stage improvement to the Bury Street Precinct in Abingdon. The Precinct runs between Market Place and Broad Street and is currently comprised of 41 shop units. The full application (ABG/19956/1) represents stage one, and proposes the general refurbishment of the Precinct. The main elements of the refurbishment are –
- Replacement of the existing modern detailing and fenestration of the units facing, and on the corner of, Market Place with more traditional detailing and fenestration to reflect the character and appearance of Market Place.
  - The existing concrete canopies that run along both sides of Bury Street to be replaced with cantilevered glass canopies.
  - Combining Units 31 and 32 into one larger retail unit.
  - New street furniture.
- 1.2 The outline application (ABG/19956-X) represents stage two of the programme. All matters are reserved except access. The proposal primarily involves –
- Single storey extensions to the rear of Units 9, 10, 11 and 12 into the west service yard area.
  - Single storey front extensions to Units 1, 2 and 3.
  - The combination of 8 units into 4 larger units.
  - The replacement of two existing kiosk shops near to Woolworths with a two storey retail unit.
- 1.3 Extracts from the application plans are in **Appendix 1**. The applications have been submitted by the company that manages the Precinct under the terms of a lease with the Council. The applications come to Committee because the Council is the freehold owner of the Precinct.

### **2.0 Planning History**

- 2.1 The Bury Street Precinct dates from the late 1960's and is largely unchanged from its original construction.

### **3.0 Planning Policies**

- 3.1 Policy S7 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 supports the environmental enhancement of Bury Street Precinct. Policies DC1 and DC5 require all new development to be acceptable in terms of design and highway safety.

### **4.0 Consultations**

- 4.1 Abingdon Town Council – “no objections” to both applications.
- 4.2 Local Residents/Traders – two of the existing traders have submitted letters concerned about the potential loss of their premises should some of the proposed works proceed (this is a legal

matter between the traders and the management company and is not material to the consideration of the planning applications).

4.3 One letter has also been submitted on behalf of three traders in Bath Street raising concerns regarding the replacement of the existing kiosk shops with a two storey retail unit. The concerns are that the proposal will reduce pedestrian access between the Precinct and Bath Street and that delivery vehicles serving the new unit will add to congestion in Bath Street.

4.4 County Engineer – no objections subject to a financial contribution of just over £15,000 to ABITS when the extensions to the shops are implemented.

4.5 Environment Agency – no objections.

4.6 County Archaeologist – no objection subject to a condition.

4.7 Deputy Director (Environmental Health) – no objections.

#### 5.0 **Officer Comments**

5.1 Officers consider these applications for the refurbishment of the Bury Street Precinct are very welcome. The Precinct contains the main shopping street in Abingdon town centre and is starting to show its age. These proposals represent a significant modernisation of its appearance and can only help to support the vitality and viability of the town centre.

5.2 Stage one of the proposals will freshen the appearance of the existing buildings through the replacement of the existing solid canopies along Bury Street with new modern glass canopies and a general re-decoration of the upper floor level above the shops. The design of the canopies includes light fittings mounted close to the shop fronts. The buildings fronting Market Place will be more heavily revised to reflect the traditional detailing of Market Place. This will include the replacement of the existing modern fenestration with more traditional glazing in wood. It is proposed that Units 31 and 32 be combined into a single larger unit to provide a more attractive size for modern retailing.

5.3 These improvements, together with new street furniture, should lead to a considerable improvement in the quality of the shopping experience and are supported by Officers. One issue that has been raised concerns how the glass in the canopies is to be cleaned. Officers have requested clarification of this issue from the applicants and an update on this will be reported at the Meeting.

5.4 Stage two is more radical, involving amalgamation and extensions to existing shop units and the replacement of the two kiosk shops near to Woolworths with a new two-storey retail unit. This would provide a number of larger units that are likely to be more attractive for national retail chains. As this is an outline application, a further reserved matters application (or applications) would need to be approved before any of the proposed works could start.

5.5 Traders in Bath Street have raised concerns regarding the proposed two storey retail unit, as mentioned in para 4.3 above. The existing pedestrian route to Bath Street to either side of the smaller kiosk would be retained as a single route alongside the proposed unit. Officers consider that there would be no material change in the nature of this link between Bury Street and Bath Street. It is likely that servicing of this unit would take place from the turning head in Bath Street, but as this area is currently used by servicing vehicles for Woolworths, Superdrug and Timpsons, the extra traffic associated with the new unit is unlikely to materially worsen highway safety. The County Engineer does not object to the proposal. Consequently, Officers consider this element of the stage two proposal to be acceptable.

5.6 Officers consider this proposal to be equally welcome in terms of supporting the town centre's retail function. The County Engineer has requested a contribution to ABITS from the proposed

extensions to the retail units, which would be secured via a Section 106 Planning Obligation with the County Council.

6.0 **Recommendation**

*ABG/19956/1*

6.1 *Permission subject to the following conditions:*

1. *TL1 Time Limit – Full Application*
2. *MC1 Submission of Materials (Details)*
3. *CN8 Submission of full details of new joinery, cornices, mouldings, lintols, cills, glass canopies, brackets, seals, light fittings, rain water drainage, seats, bollards and lamp columns*

*ABG/19956-X*

6.2 *It is recommended that authority to grant outline planning permission is delegated to the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy) in consultation with the Committee Chair subject to:-*

- i) the completion of a Section 106 Obligation to secure a financial contribution to ABITS*
- ii) conditions on time limits and details of parking in the west service yard*