

12 Hans Avenue, Wantage OX12 7DB

To Members of the Planning Committee

RE: Planning Application P22/V1088/FUL

I am writing to ask your support to refuse the above application for change of use from the Motorist Shop [Hans Avenue] to a fast food takeaway.

Wantage Town Council does not support this application and there are 49 objections only 4 in favour - only 1 person lives nearby.

1 Impact on the neighbourhood

In para 5.9 the Planning Officer states that when considering the possible impact and the potential sensitivities of a neighbourhood, it depends on the individual circumstances of each neighbour and this needs to be balanced by reasonable expectation.

The local community has a high density [circa 90%] of people over the age of 70 and up to 95 years of age. There is surely a reasonable expectation that elderly people will be able to continue their lives as they have done for many years.

There is no need to look for guidance, a more detailed assessment and advice. It is pure common sense that no local authority should allow this change of use which will inconvenience, and impact on the amenity of the lives of existing residents by causing a distressing change to our way of life. To grant this application shows disregard for the mental health, well-being and feelings of insecurity for those of us who are the elderly people who live there. The neighbourhood is a supportive, caring, and inclusive community who care for and about each other. It is not a dormitory area where a fast food outlet might be better placed.

2 Opening Hours

Of course, there will be a detrimental change if the historic opening hours for the shop were to change. The gratuitous changes of 1 hour at closing time for 5 days is pointless and indicates that the hours are unreasonable. This applies to Sundays as well – a day when the existing shop has never been open.

This is not a compromise this is major departure from the existing shop hours. Firstly, this shop has never opened after 5.30pm. Secondly, to compare this shop to 'seven-eleven' shops is thoroughly disingenuous, it is an argument which simply does not apply. Never could a Motorists Shop be compared to a food shop. Encouragement from the Government to vary conditions is an advisory recommendation and its application in this case is not appropriate and ill founded.

4 Parking

There is very little use of the existing shop parking due to the incline of the parking space and the 'convenience' of popping in to shop and parking at the kerb. There is no car parking for the bungalow behind the shop and car parking will be obviously reduced when the bungalow is occupied. There is absolutely no way people can turn their cars in that space and backing out into the road is dangerous.

The major effect of traffic will be on those of us living in Hans Avenue where it joins Maria and Suzan Crescents. How can it possibly be argued that this activity will not be detrimental to those living in that area when the takeaway opening hours have practically doubled, which will mean cars will be turning up to

11.30pm particularly on Sundays when historically, the shop has never been open – that is not an adjustment it is a major imposition on the local community.

5 A facility for local residents

From the 49 letters of objection from local residents we have made it quite clear we do not want this takeaway by making our objections in writing. This is another decision which totally disregards the wishes of us, the local people and those directly involved. The local people would not see takeaway food as an amenity, we would have little inclination to use it and there are even more budget restrictions for those people living on a pension.

6 Odour and Waste

There is nothing in this report to say there will be no smells from odour or waste – it just asserts that ‘the specification includes safeguards to ensure the motor does not cause harmful levels of noise.’ So, there will be noise and odour as additionally, the officers consider that cleaning of filters can be subject to a condition. Why have conditions for something that will not be needed.

Conclusion

As someone living in Hans Avenue, at the junction with Maria and Suzan Crescent I strongly disagree with the view of the Planning Officer that this application should proceed.

1 It is not supported by the Wantage Town Council and 49 objections have been registered

2 The three roads affected are occupied by circa 90% of people between the ages of 70 to 95 who find the convenience of the quiet area in which they live and enjoy will have a major and disproportionate change made to their lifestyle, community, and amenity.

3 The shop hours will be almost doubled. They will include unprecedented evening and weekend traffic and noise to the elderly people and cause parking problems and people to feel vulnerable.

4 There is no regard paid to our Human Rights as our rights, feelings and interests have been completely ignored and not respected in any way.

4 There is no guarantee that residents can be given total assurance that odour will not be a problem.

5 It is not a facility that would be used by us as residents as we would be unable to afford a lifestyle which includes takeaway food that would make the shop viable. It is not an amenity for residents in any way.

I ask you all as members of the Planning Committee to support us, as members of this community from the impact of these proposals and to refuse this application.

Yours sincerely

Judy Gibbons

Emailed to Planning Committee on 3rd September 2022

