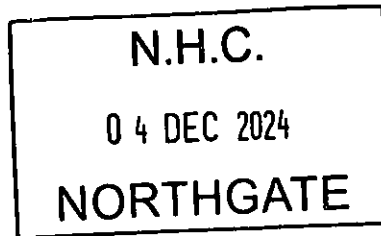


LADDS

21, High Street
Royston
Hertfordshire
SG8 9AA

Tel: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]



North Herts Council,
P O Box 10613
Nottingham
NG6 6DW

29th November 2024

Dear Sirs,

**Re : Application Refs : 24/02500/FP and 24/02501/FP
Proposed alterations at 23, High Street, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9AA**

We acknowledge receipt of your formal notice regards the above Full Planning Application made for proposed works to the adjacent and adjoining property to our above shop.

Having looked through the plans and details, we are initially glad to see that the developer is proposing to provide two, albeit small, retail units at ground floor / street level to help maintain and promote the use of the High Street as a preferential shopping venue.

We do, however, as owners and operational retail providers in the High Street for nearly 50 years, have several concerns regards the proposed plans and ultimate usage of both the shop units and residential properties, that we request are considered and raised as Planning Conditions as appropriate, prior to any final decision being made.

1. Storage facilities, refuse handling and deliveries to the shop units

SEE ALSO
ATTACHED ARTICLE

The current plans make minimal provision for any storage of goods within and show no consideration on how refuse is to be dealt with from the shop units.

Whilst the plans show a nominal "st" (presumably meaning store) area within the sink cupboard area, and can be little more than a shelved area, we are concerned that the lack of sufficient retail storage will result in a disproportionate amount of additional deliveries having to be made. This, when looking at the location and accessibility of the shop entrances shown, from our experiences, will result in added congestion immediately on the junction of John Street and the High Street. Whilst there is parking bays provided specifically for deliveries along the High Street, delivery drivers do not use these and will continue to park as close to the point of delivery as possible.

Furthermore, there is no provision made at all for any refuse handling from either of the shop units. Again, we assume that the developers consider that all rubbish can be stored within the shops themselves or within the "st" areas, and removed via the front entrance? This can again only add to increased congestion and vehicles parking close to / blocking the John Street / High Street junction when removing accumulated retail rubbish.

Proprietors : King Street Caterers Ltd. Registered Office : 21 High Street, Royston

Directors : M Ladds, M E M Hays, Y J Gautrey

VAT Registration No. 213 7506 86

2. Storage and refuse handling from the residential units

SEE ALSO
ATTACHED ARTICLE

Whilst Drawing No PL01 indicates a very small area of communal rubbish storage for the residential properties accessible only externally, the size and location of this is vastly inadequate for 7 properties, and in our consideration is only included to try and offer mitigation that the developer is aware of what they must include to tick a box.

Whilst some of the flats seem to have additional internal store areas, access to the street from all properties is via the rear staircase. With the current requirement by North Herts DC for the use of residential wheelie bins, it is assumed that each property may be permitted to have two wheelie bins

(assuming, that is, that they will not have a third brown / garden waste bin each ?). The passageway currently indicated for " bins " appears to show a larger, presumably communal bin and two small bins, however we are concerned that the rear of the property, along the public highway / footpath will very quickly become the bin area, potentially with up to fourteen wheelie bins, lined up against the rear property wall (and blocking the basement flat windows ?). Also access to this internal bin area can only be made from the street, again not particularly conducive to help the residents dispose of their rubbish as the developer seems to propose.

Further along King Street, on the other side of the property, Costa and the flats above also have a rear accessible, somewhat larger bin area, however the doors from this bin store are often left open, and bagged rubbish can be seen left around the bins. This is resulting in our regular sightings of rats running along King Street, seemingly passing between the Costa bin store and the rubbish that accumulates to the rear of the pizza outlet on our other side.

Therefore, we hope you can understand our concerns over the increased storage, handling and disposal of waste resulting from the addition of a further 7 residential and 2 retail units. Whilst we do not live within our shop, and lock up and leave every evening, it already regularly looks rather unsightly along King Street with various size bins and bagged rubbish left / stored in the street and on the public highways. To have, what we can only currently see, as a further quantity of bins and rubbish potentially left / spilling out onto the street to the rear of the proposed development, further adds to the unsightliness and potential for increased vermin activity.

We would consider that, as we have in our shop, part of the ground floor of the development, and within the footprint of the development, should be employed as a designated bin store area.

3. Vehicular access / usage to properties and bicycle / car parking ?

We note that within the application, there does not seem to be any report submitted on vehicular access or usage considerations of residents / users of the properties ?

Whilst there is simply the word " Bikes ", at the top of the set of steps beyond the " bins " area, how residents are expected to use this for bicycle storage is laughable ! Again, the provision for such storage is poorly considered and vastly inadequate for any such bike storage.

With regard vehicular access, we assume that it is considered by the developers that none of the residents will have any requirement to drive or park to the rear of the property ? With the current parking restrictions along King Street, we assume that it will be part of the leases of the properties that any vehicles must be parked away from the property, especially with the

current no waiting restrictions along King Street, so residents are not even legally permitted to pull up and unload for any time whatsoever prior to 6.30 pm ?

Whilst restrictions in King Street do expire at 6.30 pm, we have a shuttered garage access to the rear of our shop immediately next to the rear of the proposed property, that is in use throughout shop opening hours, often at weekends when we are carrying out maintenance within our shop and is required 24/7 for access in emergencies, alarm calls etc. We are concerned that, as we are already regularly encountering, despite having clear signage and double yellow lines, we will have increased instances of having to spend time and hassle in locating vehicle owners to clear our garage to allow us to gain access / make egress from our property. Sometimes delaying our departure and homeward journey by more than an hour !

Again, we would consider, that as a minimum, the development of the property should provide adequate secure bicycle storage within the rear, ground floor footprint of the proposals, which should be considered and provided alongside the increased and sufficient area for bin / refuse storage, both being areas that should be accessible from both within the main staircase thoroughfare, as well as from the street to the rear.

If this results in the loss of one of the proposed residential units, presumably that just above ground level, then this compromise should be a condition of your response requiring the developers to provide suitable, and necessary, communal facilities for a development of this extent, and perhaps in doing so, this reconsideration of the ground floor design, could also add storage and refuse areas, and rear access for the shop units to avoid the High Street congestion serving the shop units as our earlier noted concern against Item 1. For example, the provision of a ramp from the proposed bin store rear doors, instead of retaining the corridor and small set of steps would allow easy access / egress to the street for bins, bikes etc into a redesigned ground floor communal bin / store area.

4. Potential Mains Drainage issues

With the increased occupancy of the proposed development, a further concern we have is with the potential increase in drain blockages along King Street.

In the past, we have had a number of occurrences of the mains outflow being blocked, generally due to the build-up of fat deposits from the fast-food outlets further down the High Street, causing foul water to back up and run into our rear garage / store area, resulting in obnoxious mess having to be cleared and loss of stock.

Whilst we accept that this is wholly due to the poor housekeeping mainly from these outlets, we are concerned that with the additional outflow from the new shops and flats the instances of such occurrences will increase, also directly impacting on the residents of the new development as well as ourselves and other properties further up King Street.

5. Accessible / Disabled access to the shop units ?

We were of the understanding that any new planning application, in accordance with Building Regulations DDA approval, should show provision for the use and access of disabled persons, especially into publicly accessible areas, such as the shops ?

Indeed, when Barclays Bank was in operation, they had a lift installed, from street to the raised ground floor level to provide suitable accessibility. We are aware that the developer has already removed this lift, and the plans propose infilling the area where this lift was installed to provide a flat, raised, level floor within Shop Unit 2.

6. Fire Escape provision ?

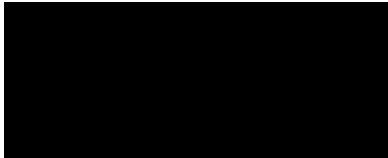
As a further general point, we note that there are no apparent alternative fire escape provisions, especially, in our view, with concern to the flats to the top two floors. It would currently appear that the only means of escape is via the rear entrance / access staircase.

Whilst the plans do not show any means of escape at roof level, we wish it noted that the roof of our property is of insufficient construction to support any escape structures and does not provide a means of escape to ground level.

We would note that whilst we raise the above points, the change of use of the building can only be an eventuality in these current times, but we are glad to see and support the retention of the retail units onto the High Street. However as our noted considerations we feel that the current proposals do not go anywhere near far enough to provide sufficient or suitable facilities for the management and operation for the two shop units and seven residences.

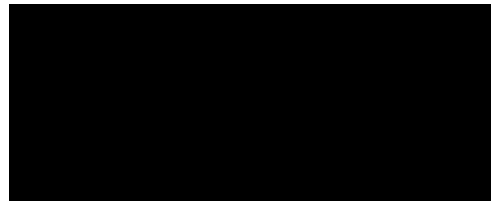
We await with interest your considered outcome of this application,

Yours faithfully



Margaret Hays

Director
Ladds Royston



Yolande Gautrey

Director
Ladds Royston