

Planning Committee

Meeting Date: 8 April 2025

Contact Officer: Graeme Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer

Waitrose Ltd, Greyhound Lane

[P25/S0727/FUL](#)

Refurbishment of an existing customer carpark.

Reason for report:

- ☒ The application is a FUL, Outline or Reserved Matters application
- ☒ There has been (or may be) local objection

1. Officer Recommendation:

SUPPORTS with comments:

- Subject to no objection from Highways
- Subject to no objection from the District's Forestry Officer

Call-In

If the recommendation is to object, or likely to be contrary to SODC's recommendation, the Town Council must agree whether to request that SODC Councillors call the application into SODC's committee. Thame's District Councillors are not bound to this request.

2. Key Issues:

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

There are several neighbours who could be affected by the proposals. Should the stated aims of reducing queuing times through improvements to how the car park works succeed it is possible that noise and pollution would be lowered for all. The applicant has suggested that improved light fittings will be used to replace reduce light spill which might also benefit the local area.

Numbers 39 - 30 North Street and the occupants of Friday Court, off North Street would be potentially affected. For numbers 30 – 38 and Friday Court the anticipated impact will be minimal as there is no proposed change to the parking regime on their border.

Number 39 is the house sandwiched between the Waitrose car park and Yeat's Lodge. It is proposed to add an extra 3 parking bays on the north-west corner, which backs onto number 39's frontage. An existing 6-foot high fence sits on the boundary. This means any increase in noise and emissions from the additional parking spaces would likely be considered small when set against the current activity within the car park and North Street.

There appears to be no additional risk of overlooking associated with the proposals.

The occupants of number 38 North Street have raised concerns regarding the railings that help shield their property from inappropriate access and manoeuvres. These appear to be unaffected by the proposals.

- **Parking and Access**

It is proposed that the access from Greyhound Lane will not change. The car park currently hosts 198 spaces and the proposals would remove 16 of them in order to improve the access and to provide some wider spaces to account for the increased width and length of modern cars. Some spaces are described by the applicant as being very small meaning most vehicles parking within them must cross into the adjacent space.

Once cars reach the car park they would not, as is the current arrangement, be directed immediately left into a one-way system. Parking bays will be removed from the first two rows to enable vehicles to move forward with two left-turns available. This could allow easier access to almost 60 spaces and four vehicle charging spaces.

The number of disabled spaces (5) and those set for electric vehicle charging (8) will remain the same but one extra parent and child space would be created, taking the total to 8. Ten bicycle spaces will be retained.

Three new car parking spaces are proposed in the car park's north-west corner, meaning there will be a net loss of 13 spaces. The southern-most, raised car park will be realigned, with the echelon parking spaces moved to the centre and the numbers of right-angle spots reduced to more practical sizes.

- **Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area**

The impact on the Conservation Area will be mostly neutral, although the pedestrian approaches from Greyhound Lane and North Street will be somewhat decluttered through the removal of the metal trolley stops, set into the pavement and their associated railings. A new bollard / rail will ensure vehicles cannot access North Street via the pedestrian access.

It is proposed to remove an area of shrubbery in the north-west corner of the car park to enable the 3 replacement parking spaces to be built. It is proposed to use a "no-dig" method of construction utilising concrete block pavements. This does not reduce all requirement to dig but would reduce the likely depth of excavation to a maximum depth of 300mm. This system would also be used to allow for a kerb realignment next to the mature lime tree on the western boundary. It is possible the root system of this, and at least two other amenity trees could be affected, meaning harm could result.

3. Planning History:

No planning applications relating to the car park area within previous 20 years.

4. Risk Appraisal

Dependent on the Town Council's recommendation to SODC is it likely that there would be a contrary decision by SODC? If so then a councillor should be nominated at the meeting to represent the views of the Town Council at the planning committee.

5. Policies Relevant to the Application

The following policies are of particular relevance when considering this application.

Thame Neighbourhood Plan 2 (TNP2) Policies

GDR2	Town Centre uses
GDV1	Visitor economy
CPQ1	Design in response to local character
CPQ2	Design principles for employment development
CPQ3	Town Centre design principles
NEB1	Biodiversity
GATCP1	Town Centre parking

SODC Local Plan 2035 Policies

DES1	Delivering high quality development
DES2	Enhancing local character
DES3	Design and access statements
DES6	Residential amenity
DES7	Efficient use of resources
DES8	Promoting sustainable design
ENV6	Historic environment
ENV8	Conservation areas
INF1	Infrastructure provision
TC5	Primary Shopping Areas
TH1	The strategy for Thame
TRANS2	Promoting sustainable transport and accessibility
TRANS4	Transport assessments, transport statements and travel plans
TRANS5	Consideration of development proposals