

Sakyi, Richard

From: Roger Hardy [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 May 2010 20:54
To: Sakyi, Richard
Subject: Planning application 10/00490/FUL: comments on revised development

14 Church Road
 Sherington
 Newport Pagnell
 Bucks.
 MK16 9PB

Dear Richard

Reference: Planning Application No. 10/00490/FUL
 Proposal: Construction of a new village shop (*incorporating a post office*) with new vehicular access and parking
 Address: Land between the Village Hall and 8A Church Road, Sherington

We strongly object to the proposed development for the reasons listed below:

1. This revised proposal (previous proposal 10/00018/FUL) is a commercial development in a quiet residential area. Compared to the original proposal, the building is now much closer to Church Road and so will have a greater impact on the local environment and will more drastically change the character of Church Road.
2. The proposed development is contrary to Milton Keynes Council (MKC) policy of segregating buildings for residential and commercial use. A development in one of the existing commercial areas of the village would be more appropriate (for example adjacent to the Cooks Farm development on the High Street or on the High Street itself). The revised development is still as close to the boundary with number 8A Church Road and therefore having a significant impact.
3. The Block Plans show the North East corner as being over the culvert for the stream that runs behind the properties at 10 and 12 Church Road. In addition, the Block Plans show that at places the revised proposal extends even further into the existing public open space – as indicated by the overlap onto the outline of the 5 trees to be felled on the South East side of the plan.
4. The proprietors of the Virginia House Stores (the shop that closed last autumn) have commented at the public meeting in Sherington Village Hall that passing trade was a vital part of generating business. Located away from the High Street, passing trade will be greatly reduced. Does MKC have a copy of the business plan for this application to assess if the development will be a 'white elephant' leading to an abandoned/empty building or to be sold on for other use?
5. It is worth mentioning that there used to be second village shop next to Sherington First School on School Lane at what is now the residential property known as the Old School House. This closed in the late 1970s/early 1980s when even its close proximity to the school did not prevent its demise. At that time there was no anguish about its loss to the village. This is a clear example of the consequences of a lack of passing trade when villagers became increasingly mobile and could venture out of the Sherington village for more cost effective shopping. In addition, the advent of home delivery services by the leading Supermarkets has further increased competition. If approved a new village shop and post office is unlikely to be trading before the autumn and after 1 year of the previous shop and sub-post office being closed people have had to make alternate arrangements.
6. The revised development is still on a significant area of green/public open space that is subject to MKC Policy L2 addressing the Protection of Public Open Space and Existing Facilities and no alternative provision of at least equivalent size, quality, suitability and convenience has been made.
7. The Virginia House Stores (now closed) on the High Street has had several incidents; building a new shop in a quiet residential area, with easy access from the road and across green open space, may promote a higher potential for such events during periods of closure (i.e. at night) and reduce the security of adjacent residential properties.
8. The entrance to the proposed development is immediately opposite to the access to two residential properties on the opposite side of Church Road (numbers 17 and 19) and could increase the risk of an accident – vehicle and/or pedestrian.
9. The entrance to the proposed development is on a bend where car drivers do not have a clear vision of approaching traffic – the Parish Council has previously requested residents on the 'inside' of the bend to trim their hedges low to improve line-of-site vision. In addition there has already been an incident at this

- corner where a child was knocked down while crossing the road and had to be taken to hospital by ambulance for treatment.
10. Church Road is not a wide road and is currently already used by local bus services in addition to school buses. There is already a weight restriction to prevent heavy traffic entering the village along Bedford Road, past Sherington Nursery. The speed of traffic up and down Church Road is at times already inappropriate for the road. Having an access road on the corner will raise safety issues.
 11. Although the revised development proposes 22 off-road parking spaces it is likely that 'passing business' will not use them and instead park on Church Road, to save time, as happens at the current village shop in North Crawley that also has off-road parking but many passing customers park on the road. Given the width of Church Road either side of the access road to the proposed development this will cause significant congestion and raise a safety issue.
 12. The application for the proposed development states there will 22 vehicle parking spaces and that there are zero existing spaces – this is incorrect; although there are no marked-out/dedicated spaces in the Village Hall car park there is already space for in excess of 20 vehicles (probably around 24 to 25, based on MKC standard parking space size). Therefore this development will restrict parking availability in addition to causing increased competition for parking. When there are weekend events at the Village Hall parking along Church Road can already be congested/chaotic/dangerous, reducing the off-road parking capability will exacerbate this situation and may prevent access for the local bus services (as has already occurred on a number of occasions) and increase the risk of an accident.
 13. The adjacent Village Hall has more regular daytime use (playschool, dance school, youth club, in addition to being the location for voting in local and National elections) so there will be competition for the available off-road parking.
 14. Deliveries to the proposed development raise a number of issues:
 - The noise from deliveries will be disturbing in a residential area; newspapers are delivered to the current village shop between 5 and 6am. If deliveries are made when the shop is closed to prevent disruption, then this could be early in the morning or in the early evening causing disruption to the surrounding residential properties.
 - If deliveries are made with a large commercial vehicle it will have a mandatory audible reversing warning that will also cause disturbance to surrounding residents.
 - If deliveries are made with a large commercial vehicle on-road parking may prevent access.
 15. The opening hours of the proposed shop/post office, particularly in weekday mornings and on a Sunday morning, are likely to cause disturbance and nuisance to the surrounding residential properties.
 16. The proposed development adjacent to a building where a Playschool is in operation during the week may raise a security risk for the children from passing customers (strangers, non-village people) who would park their vehicles close by. The development may restrict use of the outdoor play area immediately behind the Village Hall by Playschool for the same security reasons since the children would be visible and approachable as there is only a low fence (1 metre in height). Currently, according to the submitted plans for the proposed development, the development area will intrude into this outdoor play that extends 13metres to the rear of the village hall. The space for a pedestrian path past the Village Hall and through to the remaining green open space will therefore be extremely restricted in this overlapping region.
 17. In the Application for Planning Permission, at item 26 it is noted that the development will be built on land owned by the Trustees of Sherington Village Hall. Have the Trustees given the necessary permission(s)? For the previous development application the Trustees made several objections.
 18. We are also concerned that should the proposed development be approved whether there would need to be a restriction on any future proposals/requests to expand the size of the development.
 19. We are also concerned that should the proposed development be approved whether there would need to be restrictions on the operational hours of use of the site to prevent use during anti-social hours and the noise and disruption this would cause to the residents. The village shop in North Crawley is currently permitted to be open from 07:00 to 20:00 Monday to Saturday and 09:00 to 16:00 on Sunday.
 20. We are also concerned that should the proposed development be approved whether there would be a restriction on proposals/requests to apply for the licensing of the shop to sell alcohol.
 21. We are also concerned about the potential for anti-social behaviour since the development and adjacent public open space may become a location for the congregation of people consuming alcohol bought at the shop with the consequent disturbance and anti-social behaviour that may occur as a result. Given that Sherington village rarely receives a patrol by the Police Force there are no constraints in place to prevent or limit such behaviour.
 22. We are also concerned since it is understood that there may be signage to direct customers from the High Street to the proposed new location of the shop/cafe – will there be any restrictions on the location and size of such direction signs to prevent/limit their impact on the environment?

Yours sincerely

Joy and Roger Hardy

