

Meadway Shopping Parade

Job No: 1364

Tilehurst, Reading



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Statement of Community Involvement - May 2015

Chillingham Ltd

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STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

1.1. This Statement has been prepared in support of the detailed planning application by Chillingham Ltd to extend and upgrade the Meadway Shopping Parade, Tilehurst.

1.2. The existing offer is a tired and unattractive 1970’s parade, with existing residential over.

1.3. This has been the subject of previous proposals, which have not progressed. This proposal is considered viable and implementable, hence has been the subject of consultation in early 2015.

1.4. The proposals consist of new shops in a ‘L’ shaped configuration, linked to the existing parade, which is to be upgraded to create a unified refurbishment of the Meadway Shopping Parade.

1.5. The application site is entirely within the control of Chillingham Ltd, save for the public vehicular access, shared with the Asda adjacent, and the public toilet block.

1.6. This Statement sets out the pre-application engagement process undertaken by the applicant, involving Reading Borough Council, Councillors and the public.

1.7. This pre-application consultation process has served to fulfil three primary objectives: -

INFORM

- To provide illustrative information on the emerging proposal, in advance of the submission of a planning application.

ENGAGE

- Engage with Officers, Councillors and the public to enable feedback prior to submission.

FEEDBACK

- For the consultant team to take on board, as is reasonable, feedback influencing the proposals for submission.

2.0 The Proposals

2.1. The proposal is to create a linked shopping parade of new and existing shops, anchored by the existing Asda adjacent, as a critical mass of retail to attract and retain shoppers in the locality, fulfilling the role of the parade as a District Centre.

2.2. This is demonstrated By Boots who have elected, as a national retailer, to remain in situ in their current unit, opposite Asda, serving the Tilehurst community.

2.3. The proposals therefore respect their wish to remain, and are designed around their demise, integrating Boots into a new build scheme looking onto a reconfigured courtyard car park.

2.4. The direct route from Asda to Boots is reinforced as the “entrance” for shoppers leading to / from the upgraded and extended existing parade, toward Honey End Lane.

2.5. The parade is upgraded and extended to create a unified shopping scheme, which encourages footfall through the existing, and extended elements of the proposals.

2.6. The residences over will benefit from a rationalised approach of upgraded entrance enclosures, with secure control, lift and stairs, on the gables of the existing buildings fronting onto Honey End Lane.

2.7. Vehicular access to the site will remain via the shared Asda access, with the majority of deliveries accessing via a “designated” service route to the north of the site. This is also the allocated residential parking area, to the rear of the parade.

2.8. The planning application is submitted in detail.



Existing parade upgraded



Direct route to Asda reinforced

3.0 Policy Background to Public Consultation

3.1. This is a public facility as the 'hub' of the local community, and the proposals are therefore subject to Community Involvement as an integrated and important component of the planning process.

3.2. NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK – The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states at paragraph 188 that :

“Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.”

3.3. Paragraph 189 encourages applicants to engage with the local community before submitting planning applications.

3.4. MEADWAY BRIEF 2013 – The site has been the subject of consultation previously by Reading Borough Council in 2012. This culminated in adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance for the site in November 2013.

3.5. The SCI is a reference for the evolution of the proposals, acknowledging that the RBC Brief promotes a wider remit.

3.6. The proposals concentrate upon the Chillingham ownership, reflecting the adjoining Asda ownership by extending into the banking to the rear of the site, but do not consider the Asda site – in separate ownership.

3.7. PRE APPLICATION PROCESS (RBC) – Reading Borough Council have a formal pre-application process, which has been followed by the developer.

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PRELIMINARY

WIP 20. Pre-Application Submission - 6 March 2015



This Formal Pre-application is contained with the Design and Access Statement, submitted with the planning application.

3.8. The applicant has held pre-application discussions with Officers of the Council as follow:

- Mark Worringham - RBC

Initial Pre-application dated 1st October 2014

- Reading Borough Council Estates Department - April 2015

4.0 Public Consultation Methodology

4.1. The nature of the public consultation on the application proposals was discussed with LPA Officers during the Pre-Application process.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF CONSULTATION –
The locality was advised by letter of the event.

4.2. Logically this followed the format deployed by RBC for their consultation process of occupying a shop in the precinct.

4.3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION 27 APRIL 2015
A vacant unit, no 5, was occupied for a day / evening, with a presentation of the proposals, mounted on boards, and requests for formal and informal feedback.

4.4. The consultation was ‘manned’ by Accord and PP Planning, to introduce the proposals and respond to questions.

4.5. The unit was visible aided by directional signage identifying the shop unit.

4.6. Signage was set up around the parade to notify passer-by / users of the parade of the event.

4.7. The boards were arranged in the shop front in a logical, accessible layout, explaining the proposals in lay terms.



Public Consultation Day - 27/04/15

5.0 Analysis of Comments & Responses

5.1. The public feedback was generally positive, particularly on the security elements of the proposals. There is an over-riding encouragement for “something to happen” to upgrade the precinct and the local retail offer, whilst retaining the existing tenants - Boots, dentist, travel agent etc.

5.2. Local Councillors attended the Public Consultation with imminent elections, they did not comment on the proposals.

5.3. The Public Consultation was attended by circa 90 visitors.

The significant matters raised at the Public Consultation are:

- Public toilets - There is a need for this facility (reinstated - see Design and Assess Statement)
- Parking provision - Is there sufficient to serve the site? (Transport Assessment justifies)

- Rear bank / trees – addressed in the Arboricultural Report.
- Upper parts appearance condition – access and security are addressed in this application.
- Timescale – subject to tenants leases via pre-lets of significant new / existing units.

5.4. The application proposals have evolved and developed as a result of engagement with the LPA and other Council officers. These changes are encapsulated in a review of the design evolution within the Design and Access Statement.

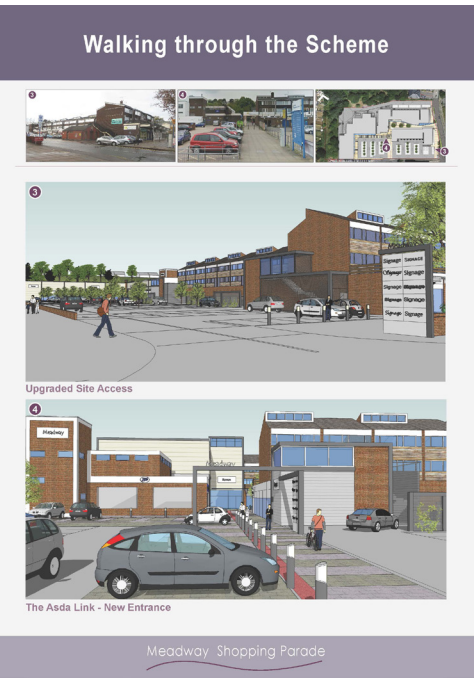
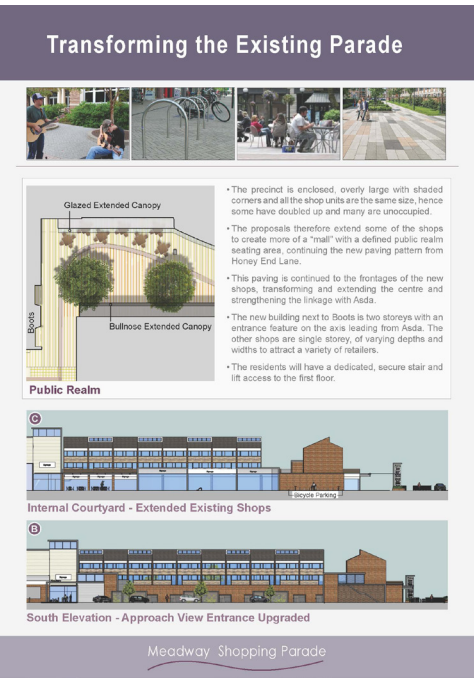
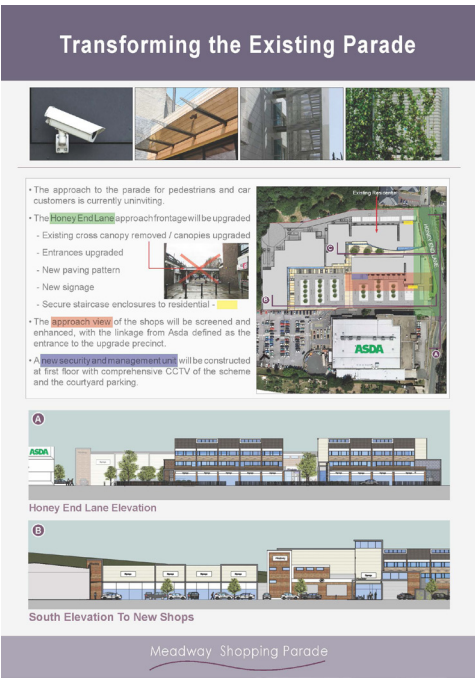
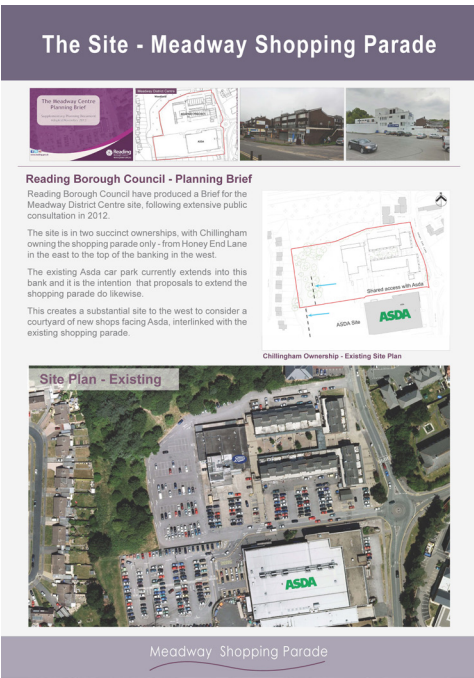
5.5. A number of attendees have subsequently been updated via email to follow up/inform as wide an attendance a practical.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1. The comments and feedback have been a valuable exercise in reinforcing the positive attributes of the proposals as a realistic / viable / deliverable approach to upgrading the Meadway Precinct retail offer.

We consider that the approach adopted, as agreed in advance with RBC Officers, accords with paragraphs 188 and 189 of the NPPF and trust that the content of this document is helpful to Officers in consideration of the overall proposals.

The Boards as Exhibited - see Appendices



7.0 Appendices

PUBLIC CONSULTATION BOARDS - 1 & 2

The Site - Meadway Shopping Parade



Reading Borough Council - Planning Brief

Reading Borough Council have produced a Brief for the Meadway District Centre site, following extensive public consultation in 2012.

The site is in two succinct ownerships, with Chillingham owning the shopping parade only - from Honey End Lane in the east to the top of the banking in the west.

The existing Asda car park currently extends into this bank and it is the intention that proposals to extend the shopping parade do likewise.

This creates a substantial site to the west to consider a courtyard of new shops facing Asda, interlinked with the existing shopping parade.



Chillingham Ownership - Existing Site Plan



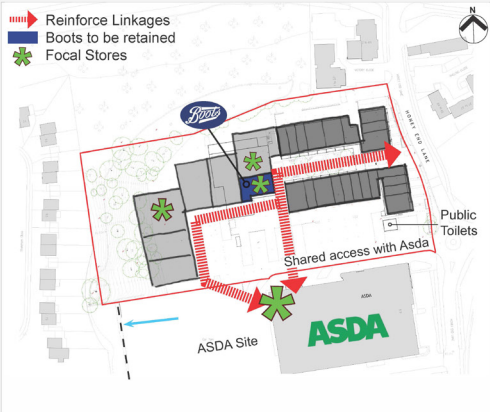
Meadway Shopping Parade

The Proposals

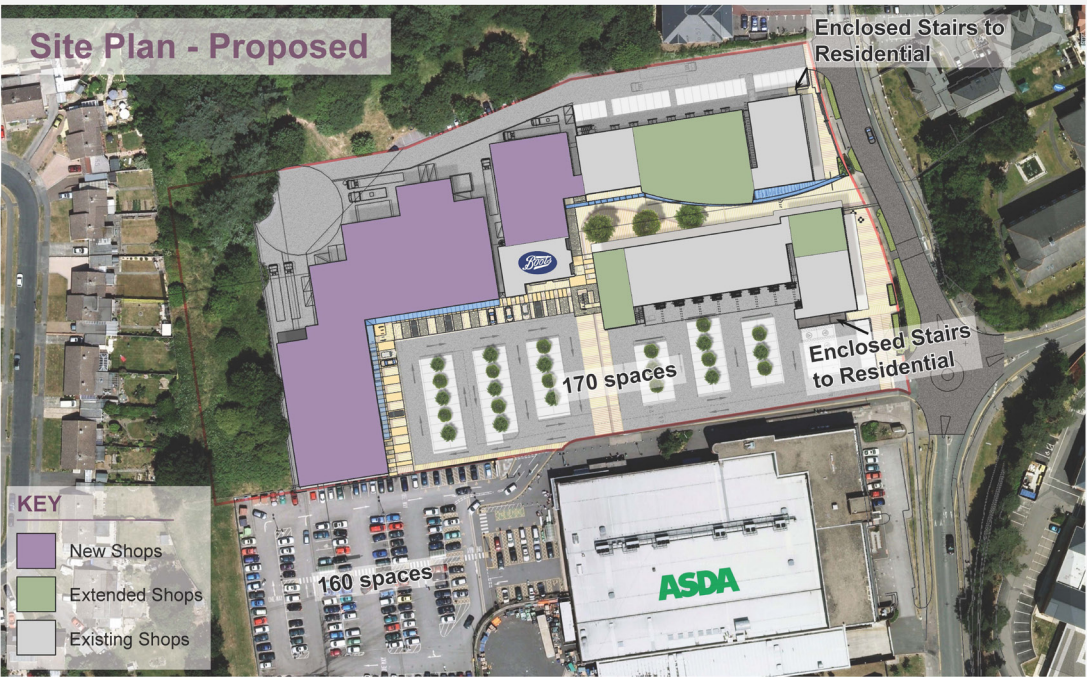


The Proposals

- Boots have elected to stay in their current location, continuing to serve the local Tilehurst Community.
- The proposals therefore “revolve” around Boots existing building, demolishing the rest of the block to create the new courtyard of shops, facing onto a reconfigured car park.
- The Asda car park will remain as current (160 spaces)
- There are also 170 customer car parking spaces for the extended shopping parade.
- The public toilets are considered for relocation within the proposals - or remain as current.



Chillingham Ownership - Proposed Site Plan



Meadway Shopping Parade

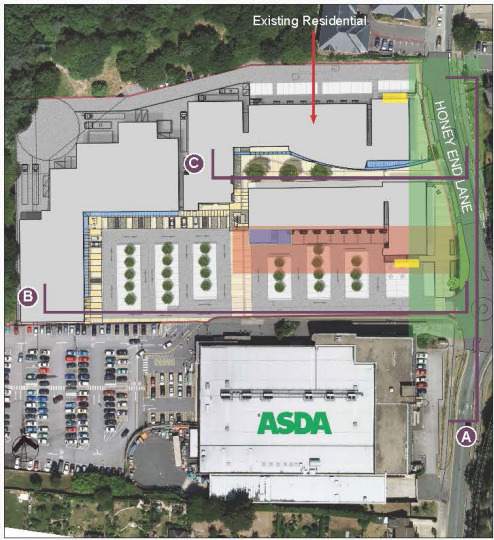
7.0 Appendices

PUBLIC CONSULTATION BOARDS - 3 & 4

Transforming the Existing Parade



- The approach to the parade for pedestrians and car customers is currently uninviting.
- The **Honey End Lane** approach frontage will be upgraded
 - Existing cross canopy removed / canopies upgraded
 - Entrances upgraded
 - New paving pattern
 - New signage
 - Secure staircase enclosures to residential -
- The **approach view** of the shops will be screened and enhanced, with the linkage from Asda defined as the entrance to the upgrade precinct.
- A **new security and management unit** will be constructed at first floor with comprehensive CCTV of the scheme and the courtyard parking.



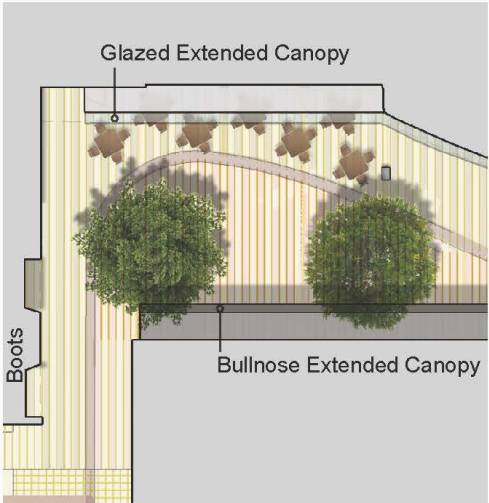
Honey End Lane Elevation



South Elevation To New Shops

Meadway Shopping Parade

Transforming the Existing Parade



Public Realm

- The precinct is enclosed, overly large with shaded corners and all the shop units are the same size, hence some have doubled up and many are unoccupied.
- The proposals therefore extend some of the shops to create more of a "mall" with a defined public realm seating area, continuing the new paving pattern from Honey End Lane.
- This paving is continued to the frontages of the new shops, transforming and extending the centre and strengthening the linkage with Asda.
- The new building next to Boots is two storeys with an entrance feature on the axis leading from Asda. The other shops are single storey, of varying depths and widths to attract a variety of retailers.
- The residents will have a dedicated, secure stair and lift access to the first floor.



Internal Courtyard - Extended Existing Shops



South Elevation - Approach View Entrance Upgraded

Meadway Shopping Parade

7.0 Appendices

PUBLIC CONSULTATION BOARDS - 5 & 6

Walking through the Scheme



Honey End Lane - Pedestrian Access



The New Shopping Courtyard

Meadway Shopping Parade

Walking through the Scheme



Upgraded Site Access



The Asda Link - New Entrance

Meadway Shopping Parade

Chillingham Ltd