

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Ward

App Ref: PL/25/1663 Full planning permission

Address: Co-op Supermarket, Henley Road, Reading, RG4 6DH

Proposal: Erection of a single-storey extension to the rear of the existing shop, removal of existing external plant and installation of new external plant in the yard and landscaping.

Applicant: The Cooperative Group Food Limited

Received date: 20/11/2025

Target Decision date: 15/01/2026

Case Officer: Stephen Vigar

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site comprises a two storey building forming the eastern end of a parade of shops fronting Henley Road and at the corner of Chiltern Road. A vehicle access exists from Chiltern Road as an entrance to the service yard to the rear of the site. The service yard contains a range of buildings and other plant associated with the supermarket use.

Relevant Planning History

25/0319 New mechanical plant in the yard, removal of external cold-rooms with erection of a single storey rear extension and spraying of the existing shopfront - Refused

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal involves the erection of a single-storey extension to the rear of the existing shop to provide additional retail floorspace and to house some of the plant and equipment currently existing within the rear service yard. New air handling plant is proposed to the rear in the open air to allow for ventilation. An area of soft landscaping is proposed on the boundary with Chiltern Road.

3. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- Transport Development Control – confirmed no objection subject to CMS condition.
- Environmental Protection – confirmed no objection subject to conditions securing noise levels.

Two site notices were displayed at the site one to each frontage (deadline 12 December 2025). No letters of representation have been received.

4. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)

TR3 (Access Traffic and Highway-related Matters)

EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources)

NPPF 2024 and associated NPPG.

Equality Act 2010

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

5. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

The proposed extension is considered to be of a reasonable scale and would not dominate the plot in terms of its extent, and would not appear excessively large when viewed from the street.

The proposed external air handling plant would be well set back from the road and would not appear obtrusive in the streetscene.

Following discussions with the applicant, the proposals include a simple landscaping scheme including low hedging and a small decorative tree. It is considered that these serve to soften the appearance of the development when viewed from the street. A condition requiring provision and retention of this landscaping is recommended.

The proposals are considered to be in accordance with Policy CC7.

Residential Amenity/Noise

The proposed extension adjoins another commercial use at ground floor and would not be harmful to residential amenity in terms of overbearing effects, loss of outlook, loss of light or loss of privacy.

The noise effects of the proposed plant as set out in the submitted noise assessment have been discussed with the Council's Environmental Health Officer and are considered acceptable as follows:

- The Background noise as measured (at a quieter location) is 25dBA
- Policy compliant level (EN16) would be 15dBA measured nearest noise sensitive receptor.
- Predicted level is 22dBA excluding adjustments for tonality.

- However there is uncertainty around the usefulness or applicability of the submitted background noise level as this was taken in a nearby residential street and not at the parade of shops and unaffected by the current noise environment.
- It is reasonable to expect the actual background noise level to be higher if there is existing night time plant at the store, and other commercial uses at the parade. Reasonable to take the submitted background of 25dBA as a conservative figure.
- However it remains the case that the proposals exceed the policy requirement of 10dBA below background level, i.e. 15dBA in this case.
- It also remains the case that the absolute noise level would be relatively low and predicted to not exceed 22dBA at the most affected noise-sensitive receptor. Taking this together with the conservative background level, it is considered that the noise effects of the development would not be sufficiently harmful to warrant refusal of the application. The residual concern would be a more theoretical risk of raising the overall background noise level i.e. 'background creep', rather than specific harm from this particular development at the current time.

It is considered that a condition is necessary restricting noise to 22dBA at any noise sensitive receptor and requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with noise assessment in all other respects. On this basis the proposal would not harm the amenity of nearby dwellings on upper floors within the parade of shops and also nearby on Chiltern Rd in accordance with Policies CC8 and EN16.

Highways

Highway Authority advice is that whilst it would be preferable for the service yard and/or service roads front (Henley Rd) and rear (Tilbury Close) to be used for deliveries, it is apparent that this has not occurred since at least 2009 and the yard has been obstructed by various plant and other structures. It is also apparent that there is no pavement crossover serving the 'access' and this is now in fact blocked by a street tree and highways bollards.

In the absence of any Highway Authority objection and on the basis of the existing situation it is considered that the proposal would not cause any increase in congestion, or additional harm to highway safety. The proposal is in accordance with Policy TR3 on this basis.

It is not considered necessary to secure submission of a construction method statement by condition, although the main Henley Road is nearby, Chiltern Road and the existing service yard provide sufficient space for unloading and storage of materials in a way which would not obstruct or interfere with traffic on the main road.

6. CONCLUSION

The proposed extension and associated structures, plant and landscaping are considered acceptable in visual terms and would not harm the character or appearance of the area.

The proposals would not harm neighbouring amenity either in terms of the scale and siting of the buildings themselves, or in terms of the noise emitted from the proposed plant.

The highway aspects of the proposals are acceptable.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

Recommended Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The development hereby permitted shall ONLY be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and details:

Drawing No: 3923.11e revision E dated 4 March 2026

Drawing No: 3923.13a revision A dated 20 October 2025

Plant Noise Impact Assessment 92732/NIA Revision 2 dated 15 October 2025

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. All hard and soft landscaping, including removal of existing fencing where indicated on the approved plans, provision of replacement fencing, and provision of all tree and hedge planting, shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans in the first planting season following first occupation of the extension or installation of external plant hereby permitted, whichever is the sooner. Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interest of ensuring that the landscaping of the development enhances the visual local environment and in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

4. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be as specified on the approved plans.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and ensuring the new development responds positively to the local context and character in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5. (i) The specific sound level of the plant and equipment hereby approved, (LAeq,TR) (with reference to BS:4142:2014 amended 2019) as measured at a point 1 metre external to the nearest noise-sensitive facade shall not exceed 22dB, LA90,T when all plant and equipment (or any part of it) is in operation.
The rating level, LAr,Tr (specific sound level plus any adjustment for the characteristic features of the sound) as measured at a point 1 metre external to the nearest noise-sensitive façade (habitable window of a dwelling) shall not exceed 25dB LA90,T when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation.
- (ii) The plant and equipment hereby approved shall not be installed otherwise than in strict accordance with the specifications recommended within the submitted Plant Noise Impact Assessment 92732/NIA Revision 2 dated 15 October 2025 and shall be retained and maintained as such at all times thereafter.

REASON: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally, in accordance with Policy CC8 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

6. No construction, demolition or associated deliveries shall take place outside the hours of 0800hrs to 1800hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 0800hrs to 1300hrs on Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays without prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In order to protect occupiers of nearby properties from unreasonable disturbance from works connected with implementing this permission in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives:

1. The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow permission to be granted within the prescribed target or agreed extended timescale for the decision to be issued.
2. i) The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic.
ii) Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.
3. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the permission may result in the Council

taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.

4. A Building Regulations application may be required for the proposed development. Please go to our website for more advice.

<https://www.reading.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/building-control/apply-for-building-control/>

You can also find advice and submit an application using the Planning Portal.

5. The developer is advised to avoid the use of the grass verges for development related activity, e.g. storage of materials, due to the resulting potential harm to important street trees.