

PLANNING COMMITTEE – 14 OCTOBER 2021**PART 2**

Report of the Head of Planning

PART 2Applications for which **PERMISSION** is recommended

2.1 REFERENCE NO - 21/504190/FULL			
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Retrospective application for installation of a modular self-service launderette facility and associated works.			
ADDRESS Bapchild Service Station London Road Sittingbourne Kent ME9 9PP			
RECOMMENDATION - Grant			
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE Parish Council objection			
WARD West Downs	PARISH/TOWN Bapchild	COUNCIL	APPLICANT Photo-Me AGENT Plande International Plc
DECISION DUE DATE 29/09/21		PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 06/09/21	

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.1 Bapchild Service Station stands on the A2 within the village of Bapchild and is within the Local Plan defined built up area boundary of the village, opposite housing which is well set back from the road. Adjacent to the service station is a car dealership with a wide forecourt displaying cars for sale. This is a busy area on a main road, although noise levels are far lower at night.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This retrospective application seeks planning permission for the installation of a modular self-service launderette facility to the road facing side of the service station shop, and close to the boundary with the adjacent car sales forecourt. The facility comprises three machines for the washing and drying of clothing textiles, with two washing machines and a single drying machine within a single 3.15m wide by 2.3m deep by 2.21m high (3.05m to the top of the signage cube) unit. The units are securely fixed to the ground with a protective cover to the sides and roof for users, and they feature external illumination to allow extended hours of use.

3. PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

- 3.1 None

4. POLICY AND CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan 2017 policies:

CP4 (Design)

CP6 (Community facilities and services to meet local needs)

DM14 (General development criteria)

DM16 (Alterations and extensions)

5. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 One neighbour objection was received stating that *'the brightness of light which shines directly into my bedroom and prevents me from falling asleep, and it is operated 24 hours, so the light is constantly shining into my bedroom and the noise of the people using it during this abnormal hours of the day, combines to give me a sleepless night. If the launderette can be operated within reasonable hours; not open later than 22:00hrs in the day, with lights turned off after this time, so this does not affect my sleep, then I have no objection to the installation of the launderette.'*

6. CONSULTATIONS

6.1 Bapchild Parish Council objects for following reasons

- 24-hour operating hours results in disturbance for local residents in particular noise from vehicles parked during the night and people waiting for their washing to finish during the night.
- There is considerable light disturbance into the bedrooms of residents opposite the installation.
- Parking to use the installation is restricted near the machines and has the potential to encroach either on the foot way and/or vehicles exiting the garage petrol pumps.
- We cannot establish any local need for such a facility, it would seem to be more suited to areas where there is a lack of washing facilities.
- We have concerns about the amount of water discharge as we have experienced local problems with the mains drainage system which have required lorries to The Council's pump out the excess water over several days.

6.2 The Environmental Health Manager has considered the application and the Parish Council's comments above and says:

'there is currently no evidence to support that this facility is causing noise disturbance to local neighbours, I have checked our records, this department has received no complaints in this respect. Additionally, this facility would not cause such concerns to this department as to warrant the need for a noise impact assessment and the setting is of an existing commercial nature where there is potential or existing 24 hour access to fuelling facilities. Any noise complaints received therefore will be dealt with under nuisance legislation.

Again with lighting, it was not considered necessary to recommend a lighting condition for this application primarily for the reasons stated above. If indeed there is an issue of light

pollution affecting nearby neighbours, is this associated with the laundry facility specifically or the service station as a whole? It is my opinion that if this is the case, this department can address this satisfactorily through nuisance legislation.'

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

7.1 Application papers for application 21/504190/FULL.

8. APPRAISAL

8.1 The application site is located on an existing busy commercial site within a built-up area and as such the principle of development is accepted. Bapchild Service Station has an existing well lit forecourt; there are various illuminated fascia signs, and I can find no restrictions on its hours of use. The additional activity and lighting likely to be generated from the launderette installation is minimal compared to the existing situation, and I do not believe that it would not have any adverse effect on the neighbouring amenities over the existing situation unless it operates beyond the hours when the service station is busy.

8.2 I note the neighbour's objection regarding lighting, but the Environmental Health Manager has raised no concerns. He is content that any lighting issues can be dealt under nuisance legislation, noting that the launderette is at ground floor level and is approximately 30m away from the dwellings on the other side of The Street, the A2 .

8.3 I have considered the points raised by the Parish Council, but do not find any to represent a reason to refuse planning permission for the installation. Nevertheless, I perceive potential for nuisance arising from the installation at times when the service station is otherwise quiet and so I have recommended conditions to prevent use and illumination of the machines when the station is not open to the public other than by self service payments methods.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 Having taken all the above into account, I consider the proposal to be well designed and of an appropriate scale, and I do not consider that they will have any significant impact on the surrounding neighbours than current situation.

10. RECOMMENDATION - Approve subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

- (1) The launderette machines hereby permitted shall not be available for use during those hours when fuel sales are only available by self-service machine at the service station in which they sit.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, recognising that noise levels at the site may be less when fuel is only sold by self-service machines.

- (2) The launderette machines hereby permitted shall not be illuminated during those hours when fuel sales are only available by self-service machine at the service station in which they sit.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, recognising that lighting levels at the site may be less when fuel is only sold by self-service machines.

The Council's approach to the application

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), July 2021 the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and creative way by offering a pre-application advice service, where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome and as appropriate, updating applicants / agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

The application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the Committee and promote the application.

NB For full details of all papers submitted with this application please refer to the relevant Public Access pages on the council's website.

The conditions set out in the report may be subject to such reasonable change as is necessary to ensure accuracy and enforceability.

