Objecting to the Planning Application

We are encouraging as many people as possible to object to the planning application that has been submitted by Buckinghamshire Housing Association (BHA)

The easiest way to object is to go online www.wycombe.gov.uk and search Planning Applications. You will need to key in the postcode of the shop **HP27 0SL** and proceed from there

Alternatively, you can write a letter which should be sent to the Case Officer (Heather Smith), Planning Department, Buckinghamshire Council – Wycombe Area, Queen Victoria Rd, High Wycombe HP11 1BB

You will need to quote the Planning Application reference **20/07032/FUL**

There are a number of valid reasons for objecting to a planning application but, in this case, the principal issue is the potential loss of the shop, an essential commercial amenity.

- The application proposes the conversion of the first floor to a self-contained one bedroom flat. In order to achieve this, the shop would be downsized and will lose its kitchen and toilet facilities which are currently situated at first floor. The BHA application assumes that the shop will be retained but it will have no kitchen or a toilet. **The shop cannot continue to operate without these facilities and will have to close.**

In writing your objection we suggest that you explain how the loss of the shop and post office will impact on you personally. You might wish to include some of the following points:

- State how frequently you use the shop, for many of you this will be every day.

- Make mention of the convenience of its location at the heart of the village

- Point out that there is no suitable location or building for a replacement shop

- It is worth mentioning that the hair salon, which is currently closed, has operated successfully for many years and is an important community facility

- If you are elderly, you could mention that you will have to rely on others for your shopping

- If you are not a driver or do not own a car, you could state that you will have to rely on others or use the bus service (there are only two buses a week into Wycombe)

- You can point out that the nearest shop to Speen is the Co-op in Walter's Ash which is 2 miles away. There are serious traffic management and parking problems in the vicinity of that store and these would become much worse if our shop was to be lost

- By all means raise an objection to the fact that the application identifies three parking spaces in front of the shop and cars would have to reverse out onto the road at the Chapel Hill/Hampden Road junction. The sight lines are very poor.

- You might also wish to allude to the fact that, because BHA must know that the shop will no longer be viable, this could be their first step towards converting the entire property to residential use.

It will strengthen your argument if you are able to make reference to the **Wycombe District Local Plan** and, more particularly, **Policy DM 29**. The policy is designed to protect land or buildings last occupied for community use and is worded as follows –

- 1. *Development which cannot be adequately served by existing built facilities is required to provide sufficient additional built facilities as are needed to meet the needs of future occupants. This assessment shall take account of the capacity and accessibility of existing facilities. In assessing capacity, first priority will be given to allocated and committed growth in the area*
- 2. *Land or buildings currently or last occupied for community use must be retained unless the applicant has clearly demonstrated through an exhaustive needs assessment that the land and/or buildings proposed to be lost are surplus to any community needs.*

You will appreciate that BHA have carried out no such assessment, the first floor is not surplus to community needs; the premises have traded successfully as a hair salon and are actually suited to a variety of commercial uses.

We do hope that you are able to find the time to lodge your objection, we believe the strength of feeling is such that the Council will have to reject the application, but we need weight in numbers.