# Sainsbury’s considers retail pod with WBAC at Hampton Hill store to boost customer convenience



A Sainsbury's supermarket in Hampton Hill is under consideration for the installation of a single-storey retail pod operated by We Buy Any Car (WBAC), alongside new signage within the store's car park. This proposal comes as part of Sainsbury's broader strategy to enhance customer services by introducing convenient facilities alongside their existing retail offerings.

The planning application, submitted by Sainsbury's Ltd and managed by WSP, details the construction of a modest 15-square-metre retail pod situated in the western corner of the supermarket's car park on Uxbridge Road. This addition would necessitate the loss of four parking spaces, reducing the total from 485 to 481. The pod is designed to operate as a kiosk for WBAC, enabling customers to book appointments or undertake speculative car valuations on site. Transactions are handled entirely through bank transfers, with no money exchanges occurring at the pod itself. On average, the pod is expected to process about 12 cars per week, with purchased vehicles being removed within 24 hours and later sold at local auctions. The pod will be constructed off-site and delivered ready for use, featuring four solar panels on its roof to support its operations.

In terms of aesthetics and environmental integration, all 14 proposed signs for the pod would be non-illuminated, non-reflective, and designed to blend seamlessly with the surrounding greenery. This approach is consistent with WBAC pods located elsewhere in the country. The signage's subdued colour palette aims to complement the existing trees near the southern boundary of the supermarket site, aligning with local planning policies around visual amenity. The supermarket is located adjacent to residential areas, a leisure centre, and a golf course, with bus stops within 200 metres providing easy public transport access.

Sainsbury's justifies the pod's introduction based on a detailed understanding of the evolving needs of its customers and positions the pod as a complementary feature rather than a disruptive element. The planning application argues that the pod conforms with national and local planning frameworks, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), by ensuring no significant adverse effects on amenity, highways, or public safety. The application also notes that the area already contains various retail advertisements and commercial signs, suggesting the new signage will not adversely impact the visual environment.

This development is part of a wider trend observed across the UK, where Sainsbury's is incorporating similar retail pods at multiple stores. For example, a similar WBAC pod has been proposed at the Lower Richmond Road store in Richmond, also involving a small number of lost parking spaces and non-illuminated signage. Retail pods are becoming commonplace features within large supermarket car parks, intended to provide specialised services such as car buying, shoe repairs, and key cutting, as seen with other retailers like Timpson at Sainsbury's stores in Portishead.

The strategic deployment of these pods reflects a diversification in retail services aimed at increasing one-stop convenience for shoppers, making use of otherwise underutilised car park spaces. While some local concerns occasionally arise over the loss of parking spaces, these pods generally have a small footprint and are designed to integrate well with existing store layouts and community settings.

Richmond Council has yet to reach a decision on the Hampton Hill application, with an expected resolution by 21 November. The outcome will be of interest not only locally but also as an indicator of the council's stance on the expanding trend of retail pod installations within established supermarket sites.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://teddington.nub.news/news/local-news/hampton-hill-supermarket-could-get-single-storey-var-buying-company-pod-installation-and-new-signage-in-car-park-274172)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://teddington.nub.news/news/local-news/hampton-hill-supermarket-could-get-single-storey-var-buying-company-pod-installation-and-new-signage-in-car-park-274172)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://teddington.nub.news/news/local-news/hampton-hill-supermarket-could-get-single-storey-var-buying-company-pod-installation-and-new-signage-in-car-park-274172)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://teddington.nub.news/news/local-news/hampton-hill-supermarket-could-get-single-storey-var-buying-company-pod-installation-and-new-signage-in-car-park-274172)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://teddington.nub.news/news/local-news/hampton-hill-supermarket-could-get-single-storey-var-buying-company-pod-installation-and-new-signage-in-car-park-274172), [[2]](https://richmond.nub.news/news/local-news/sainsburys-plan-to-build-we-buy-any-car-pod-at-one-of-its-richmond-stores-245244), [[4]](https://www.northsomersettimes.co.uk/news/24076329.plans-timpson-pod-outside-sainsburys-portishead/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://teddington.nub.news/news/local-news/hampton-hill-supermarket-could-get-single-storey-var-buying-company-pod-installation-and-new-signage-in-car-park-274172), [[2]](https://richmond.nub.news/news/local-news/sainsburys-plan-to-build-we-buy-any-car-pod-at-one-of-its-richmond-stores-245244), [[4]](https://www.northsomersettimes.co.uk/news/24076329.plans-timpson-pod-outside-sainsburys-portishead/), [[5]](https://planning.org.uk/app/108/SK4700BTIBK00)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://teddington.nub.news/news/local-news/hampton-hill-supermarket-could-get-single-storey-var-buying-company-pod-installation-and-new-signage-in-car-park-274172> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://richmond.nub.news/news/local-news/sainsburys-plan-to-build-we-buy-any-car-pod-at-one-of-its-richmond-stores-245244> - Sainsbury's has submitted a planning application to Richmond Council for the construction of a single-storey retail pod operated by We Buy Any Car (WBAC) at its Lower Richmond Road store. The proposed pod, measuring 15sqm, would be built off-site and installed in the store's car park, resulting in the loss of three parking spaces. The application includes details of the pod's design and signage, with all signs being non-illuminated and non-reflective, in line with WBAC's branding. The decision is pending approval from the council.
3. <https://planning.org.uk/app/129/DCAPR_170597/> - A planning application has been submitted for the construction of a single-storey retail pod in the car park of Sainsbury's at 1 Nash Way, Harrow. The application, received and validated on 16th October 2024, seeks permission for the new structure, which is intended to enhance the store's services. Further details regarding the design and purpose of the pod are available through the planning portal.
4. <https://www.northsomersettimes.co.uk/news/24076329.plans-timpson-pod-outside-sainsburys-portishead/> - Plans have been submitted to build a new Timpson pod retail unit at the Sainsbury's store in Portishead. The proposal includes the erection of a single-storey Timpson retail pod in the existing Sainsbury's car park and the creation of a new pedestrian access. The application aims to enhance the store's services by providing a dedicated space for Timpson's offerings, with further details available in the planning application documents.
5. <https://planning.org.uk/app/108/SK4700BTIBK00> - A planning application has been submitted for the construction of a single-storey retail pod (Class E) at J Sainsbury Plc, Pallant Way, Orpington. The proposal includes the removal of three parking spaces and associated signage. The application, received on 23rd September 2024 and validated on 3rd October 2024, aims to introduce a new retail facility to the site, with detailed plans and supporting documents available through the planning portal.
6. <https://planning.org.uk/app/117/SLC98YJLIUO00> - An application has been submitted for the erection of a single-storey retail pod and associated signage at Sainsbury's Supermarket, 120 Whitehorse Lane, South Norwood. The planning application, received and validated on 14th October 2024, seeks permission for the new structure, which is intended to enhance the store's services. Further details regarding the design and purpose of the pod are available through the planning portal.
7. <https://planning.org.uk/app/142/SQ4XSZFOFRP00/> - A planning application has been submitted for the construction of a retail pod (Use Class E) and additional car parking at Sainsbury's Apsley Mills Retail Park, Hemel Hempstead. The application, received and validated on 16th January 2025, aims to introduce a new retail facility to the site, with detailed plans and supporting documents available through the planning portal.