

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2008/839/AD
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NOTATION:

The site is located within the Hatfield Aerodrome, Inset 3, as outlined in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

The masterplan for the redevelopment of the Hatfield Aerodrome site, as adopted in the relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance dated November 1999 states that the *“creation of a District Centre is a key component of the overall development”* and that the *“area will become the heart of the scheme creating a sense of place within a high quality, safe environment”*. It is intended that the District Centre will contain, amongst other elements, appropriate shopping, food and drink, and health care uses, to serve the population of the new residential development.

The land covered by this designation is some 9.8 hectares adjoining the west side of Comet Way, located partly behind Waters Garage and Harpsfield Broadway, and stretching westwards to Mosquito Way, to include the listed hangar building. To the north of the District Centre site is the Commercial Area and the listed Administration Block and Canteen Block, whilst to the south are the Bishop Square offices and the recently rebuilt Beales Hotel.

This application concerns Unit 2 in Hatfield District Centre, which faces on to Parkhouse Court and is occupied by Bar Turan. The unit is designated as an A3 use (restaurants, snack bars and cafes) (see planning application reference S6/2007/795/FP and will be used as an Indian Tapas restaurant.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

The proposal is for the installation of an internally illuminated advertisement across the front of the unit (H750 x W17167 x D50 (mm)), an internally illuminated projecting box sign (H750 x W750 x D150 (mm)) and window lettering that will also go across the shopfront, at unit 2, Parkhouse Court, Hatfield District Centre.

The signs will be black, with burgundy lettering and will have an orange, yellow and burgundy logo on them. The lettering on the signs will be stencil cut, backed with a burgundy acrylic panel and illuminated using fluorescent lighting tubes. In addition to this the logos on both the signs will also be illuminated. The level of illumination for each sign will be 360 cd/m².

The glass used in the lower half of the shopfront is frosted grey and the window lettering will sit on top of this and will be coloured burgundy. Logos on the shopfront will be coloured diamond grey.

PLANNING HISTORY:

S6/1999/1064/OP – Outline planning permission for the redevelopment of the Hatfield Aerodrome site in accordance with masterplan (including District Centre).

S6/2003/1137/OP – Full permission for 200 flats and Nursing Home, also outline permission for District Centre including shops, food and drink uses, hotel and health centre, day nursery, residential uses including affordable and key worker housing, bus interchange, servicing and car parking.

S6/2005/675/DE - Mixed use development of district centre comprising shops, food & drink uses, hotel, health centre, day nursery, 267 residential units including affordable and key worker housing, bus interchange, servicing, carparking and landscaping (reserved matters application following outline permission S6/2003/1137/OP).

S6/2007/795/FP – Amendment to reserved matters approval reference S6/2005/675/DE to allow for the relocation/ swap of class A1 (shop) and class A3 (restaurant, bars and cafes) uses within the scheme, at units 8, 8A and 12A, Comet Square, Comet Way, Hatfield District Centre.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

- D1 - Quality of design
- D2 – Character and Context
- D5 – Design for Movement
- D9 – Access and Design for People with Disabilities

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005.

REPRESENTATIONS

This application has been advertised by means of a site notice and no representations have been received.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

- 1) Impact of the proposal upon the character of the area**
- 2) Impact upon public amenity**

The Supplementary Design Guidance (2005) sets out the criteria that advertisements requiring consent must accord with:

1. Proposals should be well designed and sensitively positioned and should relate to the scale, character and design of the building on which they are positioned and not detract from the character of the street scene;
2. The advertisements size and position should respect the architectural features of the building;
3. Proposals that would create visual clutter would not be permitted;
4. Illumination should be carefully controlled and only permitted where it would not be visually intrusive; and
5. Consent will not be granted for any sign that would be a danger to public safety.

The proposed signage would not appear particularly prominent within the street scene and would not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the area. The size and position of the proposed advertisements also respects the architectural features of the building and should not create visual clutter. In addition to this, whilst the signs are illuminated, the level of illumination is not visually intrusive and will not impact on public amenity. The window lettering is also relatively unobtrusive and is in keeping with the design of the District Centre.

The proposal therefore accords with both Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005), which requires all new development to be of a high quality of design, incorporate the design principles of the District Plan & Supplementary Design Guidance (2005), be appropriate to the setting and context of the area and be of the highest quality and Policy D2 which requires the character and context of the development to respect the area in which it is proposed, improving or enhancing the character of the area where possible.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed signage would not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the locality and is in keeping with the design of the District Centre. The proposed signage would not result in a loss of public amenity and is considered to meet the relevant requirements of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

CONDITIONS:

1. C.13.1 – The development/ works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details: site location plan date stamped, proposed shopfront with electronic shutters and signage, side elevation of shopfront with electronic shutters and signage, existing shopfront and signage received and dated 28th May 2008.

1. C10 – Advertisements (1-5)

2. Only the lettering and logos on the sign are permitted to be illuminated.

Reason: To protect residential amenity

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

Reason for Grant of FP (Approvals only):

The proposal has been considered against the East of England Plan, Development Plan policies D1, D2, D5 and D9 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, in addition to the Human Rights Act 1998, which indicate that the proposal should be approved. Material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the Development Plan (see Officer’s report which can be inspected at these offices).

Signature of author..... Date.....