

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
DELEGATED REPORT

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| APPLICATION No: | S6/2012/1135/AD |
| APPLICATION Site: | The Hatfield Arms, 54 Great North Road |

NOTATION:

The site is located within the town of Hatfield and the Old Hatfield Conservation Area as designated by the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

This application seeks advertisement consent for installation of 1 x illuminated hanging sign, 2 x amenity signs and 4 x sets of illuminated individual letters.

PLANNING HISTORY:

None relevant

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

East of England Plan 2008

SS1: Achieving Sustainable Development

ENV3: Biodiversity & Earth Heritage

ENV7: Quality in the Built Environment

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005

GBSP2: Towns and Specified Settlements

D1: Quality of Design

D2: Character and Context

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005

CONSULTATIONS

Hertfordshire County Council Transport Programmes & Strategy Department – Do not wish to restrict the grant of permission.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Hatfield Town Council – No response (consultation expired 31/08/2012)

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised by site notice. No representations were received.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

1. The impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding environment and highway safety
2. Other material planning considerations

1. The impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding environment and highway safety

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that control over outdoor advertisements should be efficient, effective and simple in concept and operation. Only those advertisements which will clearly have an appreciable impact on a building or on their surroundings should be subject to the local planning authority's detailed assessment. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. This approach is reflected in the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 (SDG) which sets out general guidelines for the design of advertisements. The SDG supplements Policy D1 Quality of Design and D2 Character and Context of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

The SDG states that all advertisements requiring express consent must accord with the following criteria: (1) proposals should be well-designed and should relate to the character, scale and design of the building on which they are displayed; (2) the size and position of the signs should respect the architectural features of the buildings on which they are displayed; (3) proposals should not create visual clutter; (4) illumination will only be permitted where it would not be visually intrusive and is provided by discreet means.

The proposed replacement signage scheme is similar to the existing signage in terms of scale and position on the building. The existing signs are worn and their design fails to reflect the historical character of the application building or the conservation Area. The proposed signage will be manufactured using traditional methods such as timber moulding, hand painting and sign writing. Individual lettering using a traditional font is also proposed. The design and scale of the signage would respect the architectural features of the application building and is considered appropriate to the use of the building as a public house. The character of the surrounding area is mixed-use and the proposed signs would not detract from the visual amenity or character of the streetscene. The proposed signage would not be overtly prominent and would not create visual clutter. The projection sign would be externally illuminated with a trough light on either side. The amenity signs and individual letter signs would be illuminated by floodlights fixed to the building. This type of illumination is considered to be acceptable and not visually intrusive in this location. The proposal is considered to be in accordance with the design quality aims of saved Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

Highway Safety: Hertfordshire County Council Transport Programmes & Strategy Department were consulted on this application and do not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to a suggested planning condition. The signs would not pose a threat to public safety. A condition in regards the intensity of the illumination of the signs would be appropriate.

Impact on Neighbour Amenity: The nearest residential property is No.62 Great North Road located approximately 12 metres north of the application building. This degree of separation sufficient to avoid any significant impact on residential amenity

subject to a condition restricting any flashing, intermittent or recurring form of illumination.

2. Other material considerations

Protected Species: The presence of protected species is a material consideration, in accordance with Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (section 40), Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as well as Circular 06/05. In the UK the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive is implemented by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Conservation Regulations 2010). Where a European Protected Species ('EPS') might be affected by a development, it is necessary to have regard to Regulation 9(5) of the Conservation Regulations 2010, which states: *"a competent authority, in exercising any of their functions, must have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive so far as they may be affected by the exercise of those functions."* The Conservation Regulations 2010, (Regulation 41) contains the main offences for EPS animals, however the existing site and development is such that there is not a reasonable likelihood of EPS being present on site nor would an EPS offence be likely to occur. It is therefore not necessary to consider the Conservation Regulations 2010 further.

East of England Plan 2008: On 10th November 2010, The High Court quashed the decision of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to unilaterally revoke Regional Spatial Strategies in England on two grounds:

- That he acted outside his statutory powers in circumventing the need for parliamentary scrutiny of such a fundamental change to the national planning system; and
- He failed to consider the likely environmental effects of revoking Regional Strategies

However, the Government is still committed to the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies through the Localism Bill. In the meantime, the policies in the East of England Plan are re-established and form part of the development plan again and are therefore a material consideration which can be taken into account in reaching a decision. However, the Government's intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies is also a material consideration that could be considered to reduce the weight to be attached to policies in Regional Spatial Strategies.

The application has been considered against policy(ies) in the East of England Plan, which at the time of this decision forms part of the development plan for the borough but that the weight accorded to these policies, in light of the above circumstances, has been carefully considered in reaching a decision.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed signage would not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of its surrounding environment in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and Supplementary Design Guidance.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT EXPRESS ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR 5 YEARS

CONDITIONS

- 1-5. C.10 – Advertisements
- 6. C.10.1 – External Illumination
- 7. C.10.3 – Intensity of Illumination
- 8. C.13.1 – The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details SITE PLAN & SIGNANGE POSITIONS & PROPOSED VISUAL & SIGNAGE SPEC & SIGNAGE SPEC 2 received and dated 27 July 2012

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

The proposal has been considered against the National Planning Policy Framework, East of England Plan 2008 policies SS1, ENV3, ENV7 and development plan policies D1, SD1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, in addition to the Human Rights Act 1998, which, at the time of this decision 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).

INFORMATIVES:

None

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