

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION Nos: N6/2014/1988/FP & N6/2014/1862/AD

SITE ADDRESS: 31 Stonehill, Welwyn Garden City

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT:

N6/2014/1988/FP: Installation of new shopfront including relocation of door; and,

N6/2014/1862/AD: Installation of one fascia sign, projecting sign and vinyl

RECOMMENDATIONS:

N6/2014/1988/FP: APPROVE

N6/2014/1862/AD: APPROVE

NOTATION:

The site lies within Welwyn Garden City in the Town Centre and the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

31 Stonehills is located in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre and is on the eastern side of the highway. Stonehills consists of a variety of shops and financial and professional services. Each of the units has its own shop front, most of which contain large panes of glass that do not relate to the Georgian windows in the first and second floors above.

31 Stonehills is a three storey mid-terrace building. The ground floor consists of 2 No. white framed, full-height windows located on either side of the centrally located, recessed, entrance door onto the street. The doors are bounded by stonework detailing on the street elevation. The first and second floor windows are white Georgian style windows that are formally arranged in a regular pattern, which is repeated on other units either side of No. 31 along the length of the terrace on this side of the Stonehills. The windows design in the ground floor serves the ground floor shop unit and does not match the first and second floors Georgian style windows. The building is finished at first and second floors with red facing brickwork.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSALS:

The full planning application and application for Consent to Display Advertisements propose alterations to the ground floor fenestration, including the relocation of the shop door, and the installation of one fascia, projecting sign and vinyl applied to the shopfront glass.

Following the provision by the applicant of pre-application advice issued by the Borough Council on 8 September, 2014, the applications were amended on 19 September, 2014, as follows:

N6/2014/1988/FP: Drawing No. SV-WELWYN-LC3-DWG Revision L3C#3 Indicates no changes to the shop frontage in terms of construction and appearance with the

centrally located, recessed door onto the street retained, and the 2 No. full-height windows either side of the door retained within the stone surrounds. Existing shopfront to be retained and painted white

N6/2014/1862/AD: Drawing No. SV-WELWYN-LC3-DWG Revision L3C#3 – changes as above with ‘Savers’ fascia lettering in blue with the ‘v’ in red centrally located above the door in the now to retained shopfront. Sign lit by a downward projecting LED trough light box.

Projecting sign attached to fascia at R/H side of shop front (southernmost corner of the building) – Sign to be non- illuminated with ‘Savers’ graphics(as described above) applied to timber signage using specialist stencils. Sign to be 295mm high x 400mm long (outward projection) x 42mm wide, on brackets attached to timber backboard on shop fascia. The existing shopfront is to be retained and painted white

PLANNING HISTORY:

N6/2005/0771/AD - Retention of internally illuminated fascia and projecting signs – Approved - 17/08/2005

N6/1997/0783/AD – Erection of internally illuminated fascia and projecting signs – Granted 10/11/1997

N6/1994/0563/AD - Erection of internally illuminated fascia and projecting signs – Granted - 15/12/1994

N6/1991/7049/AD - Internally illuminated fascia sign and internally illuminated projecting sign – Granted 14/10/1991

N6/1980/0272/ - Alterations to shop front (Application received March, 1980) – Granted 12/06/1980

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

National Policy: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 – Sections 2 ‘ Ensuring the vitality of town centres’; 7 ‘requiring good design’; and, 12 ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’.

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1: Sustainable Development

D1: Quality of design

D2: Character and context

R3: Energy efficiency

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005; and, the Welwyn Garden City – Guide to Shopfront and Advertisement Design (September, 2012).

CONSULTATIONS:

Hertfordshire CC – Highways – raises no objections to application Ref: N6/2014/1862/AD subject to a condition limiting the intensity of illumination which should be controlled within the limits recommended by the Institution of Engineers in the publication “Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements” ILE Technical Report No. 5.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS:

None

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised by site notice and press notice. Period expired 7 October 2014.

No representations have been received.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

- 1. Impact on the character and appearance of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area**
- 2. Impact on the amenity of adjoining occupiers**

1. Impact on the character and appearance of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area

31 Stonehills is a mid-terrace building in the Welwyn Garden City Town Centre. It has a shop fronts in the ground floor that generally conforms to the pattern and rhythm of the majority of shop fronts within this terrace and Stonehills as a whole.

N6/2014/1988/FP: The proposed replacement shopfront was considered to be unacceptable in that it would result in an off-set shop entrance onto the street and the loss of the centrally located recessed door and symmetrical shape to the shopfront with the full-height, double windows either side of the door being lost. Following the receipt of the amended plans on 19/9/14, it is noted that the existing shopfront is to be retained.

It is considered that the retention of the shopfront, and its repainting in white is acceptable in that it would maintain the existing shopfront design which sustain the character and appearance of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area in accordance with advice contained in the NPPF; District Plan Policies D1 and D2; and, the adopted SPD, Welwyn Garden City – Guide to Shopfront and Advertisement Design (September, 2012).

It is considered that proposed signs, by virtue of their siting, scale and design, would sustain the character and appearance of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area in accordance with the NPPF and Policies D1 and D2.

N6/2014/1862/AD: It is considered that the changes indicated in the submission of amended Drawing No. SV-WELWYN-LC3-DWG Revision L3C#3 – comprising a centrally located ‘Savers’ fascia sign above the retained central front door comprising

of individual letters located and in proportion to the fascia and the non-illuminated projecting sign on the R/H side of the shop front are acceptable. Herts CC –

The proposed vinyl manifestations would be across the shop front but would not appear unduly intrusive when travelling along Stonehills.

Highways has raised no objections on highway safety grounds subject to the control of the light output which can be achieved via the imposition of the LHA's suggested condition. The proposed fascia sign would be lit via a trough light above which would be fixed to the cornice. This would be static and would be at 800cd/ms which complies with the advice from the Institution of Lighting Engineers.

In respect of appearance and impact on visual amenity, it is considered that the design of the proposed fascia and projecting signs design would sustain the character and appearance of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area in accordance with advice contained in the NPPF; District Plan Policies D1 and D2; and, the adopted SPD, Welwyn Garden City – Guide to Shopfront and Advertisement Design (September, 2012).

2. Impact on the amenity of adjoining occupiers

The impact of the proposed development on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers is considered in terms of the impact on neighbouring properties access to day/sun/sky light, privacy, noise and disturbance. Giving consideration to the nature of the proposal, its scale and proximity to the nearest residential property, it is considered that the new shop front and signs would not have any unreasonable impact on the daylight or sunlight afforded to any neighbouring residents who may occupy space above shops at first and second floor levels, or to the level of privacy they currently enjoy. It is considered that the proposal would sufficiently maintain the amenity of adjoining occupiers in accordance with the provisions of District Plan Policy D1.

CONCLUSION:

The proposals for the alterations of the shopfront and installation of new signs as outlined in both applications would sustain the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would maintain the character and visual amenity of the Conservation Area in accordance with advice contained in the NPPF and District Plan Policies D1 and D2. Neither proposal would be to the detriment of the residential amenity of adjoining neighbours, or be unduly harmful to highway safety subject to a condition restricting illumination in respect of the advertisement application Ref: N6/2014/1862/AD. Both applications are in accordance with the provisions of District Plan Policies and the NPPF and have sufficiently addressed the sustainability aims of the Plan.

There are no other material considerations.

RECOMMENDATION:

N6/2014/1988/FP: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

1. C.2.1 – Three year time limit
2. C.13.1 - The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details on Drawing No. SV-WELWYN-L3-DWG – Location Plan at scales 1:1,250 and 1:200 and existing elevations received and dated 19 August 2014 & Drawing No. SV-WELWYN-L3-DWG Revision L3C#3 received and dated 19 September, 2014 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings and any changes must be agreed in advance in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASONS FOR APPROVAL

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be viewed on the Councils website or inspected at these offices).

INFORMATIVES:

None.

RECOMMENDATION:

N6/2014/1862/AD: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

1. C.10 – Three year time limit
6. C.13.1 - The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details on Drawing No. SV-WELWYN-L3-DWG received and dated 19 August 2014 & Drawing No. SV-WELWYN-L3-DWG Revision L3C#3 received and dated 19 September, 2014 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings and any changes must be agreed in advance in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

POST-DEVELOPMENT

7. This consent does not authorize any flashing, intermittent or recurring form of illumination.

REASON: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

8. The intensity of the illumination of the trough light hereby permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 800 cd/m unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of the visual amenity and highway safety of the area in accordance with the NPPF and Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

REASONS FOR APPROVAL

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be viewed on the Councils website or inspected at these offices).

INFORMATIVES:

None.

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