

## DELEGATED REPORT

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	N6/2005/0017/AD
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	PROPOSED INTERNAL FLUORESCENT ILLUMINATED FASCIA AND PROJECTING SIGNS
<b>LOCATION:</b>	30 STONEHILLS, WELWYN GARDEN CITY

### THE SITE

The application site comprises a three storey; flat roofed red brick building that forms part of a parade of shops. The application site is located to the Centre part of Stonehills. There are existing parking spaces directly to the front of the property. On the opposite side of Stonehills there are a similar flat roofed red brick building, which is also occupied by shops.

### THE PROPOSAL

It is proposed to replace the existing sign for the internal fluorescent illuminated Greggs sign. It is proposed to have a projecting sign as well which will be situated to the right hand side of the property.

### PLANNING HISTORY

None

### SUMMARY OF RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991- 2011:

**NONE**

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Alterations 2001- 2016 (Deposit Draft Feb 2003):

**NEW POLICY - DESIGN AND QUALITY OF DEVELOPMENT**

Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan Alterations no 1 1998:

**BEV5 – WELWYN GARDEN CITY**

**BEV10 – DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS**

**BEV13 – ADVERTISEMENTS IN CONSERVATION AREAS**

**OTH CRITERIA 7 – ADVERTISEMENTS**

**OTH CRITERIA 8 – ADVERTISEMENTS IN WELWYN GARDEN CITY TOWN CENTRE**

Welwyn Hatfield Review Local Plan Deposit Draft, June 2002:

**D1 & D2**

**R20**

## **SUPPLEMENTARY DESIGN GUIDANCE**

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

Application advertised by means of neighbour notification and site notice. No objections were received.

Welwyn Hatfield Access Group – Request that this application be considered subject to the standards and criteria outlined in the current District Plan (Policy D3d, Policy D5) and that planning approval is conditional on compliance with the detailed access requirements.

Beams – The proposed signs, which entail changes to the existing blind box, would be unacceptable, as the existing line would be deleted that follows through the parade of shops. Beams recommend that this application be refused on the grounds that this application detracts from the existing building and its setting in the Garden City Conservation Area.

Hertfordshire Highways - Advises that any permission, which the Planning Authority may give, shall include the conditions as outlined by them.

### **DISCUSSION**

The main issue in the determination of this application is whether or not the advertisement proposal is of an acceptable size, siting, appearance, design and whether or not the proposed signage would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and respect and relate to the character and context of the area as required by Policy BEV5 and BEV10 of the adopted District Plan and Policy D2 and R20 of the District Plan Review.

The property is located in a Conservation Area as previously stated and falls in an area where there are specific design entablatures on the shop fronts. These entablatures incorporate a cornice, fascia and sub-fascia (blind box) running along the full length of the façade, positioned on top of strong pilasters with capitals and plinths. These shop fronts are normally constructed in timber and painted gloss white. It is thus essential to ensure that the continuity and appearance of the design of the entablatures are not disrupted.

The new proposed signage measures at 680mm high x 5.4 metres in length. It is also proposed to delete the blind box, which forms an important feature along the parade of shop fronts. The Supplementary Design Guidance states that attention should be given to the design, size and location of signs so that they preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The sensitive positioning of signs and the use of appropriate materials is vital to good design. Express Consent will therefore only be granted if the new signage does not harm the character and visual amenities of the Conservation Area or the building on which it is displayed. Therefore because of the unique architectural design entablatures

the new proposed signage would have a harmful impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

It is also proposed to have a projecting sign on the front of the building. This will measure at 560mm wide x 685mm high and 100mm in depth. Most of the shops in the parade have got projecting signs on the front of the buildings. The projecting sign will not have a harmful impact on the existing building or the surrounding area and is therefore of an acceptable design and size.

Stonehills consist of a visual rhythm in the street scene and it is thus desirable to reinforce this rhythm rather than disrupt it and this can be achieved by keeping the blind box and to insert the new signage in the lower façade at the front. It is not considered that the internal florescent illumination would have a harmful impact on the surrounding area.

## **CONCLUSION**

The proposed internal fluorescent illuminated fascia sign would therefore be of an unacceptable size and position and would break up the existing building line, which currently forms an important feature in the streetscene. The projecting sign however is of an acceptable design and will by virtue of its design and size not have a harmful impact on the visual amenity of the streetscene.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

I recommend that planning application N6/2005/0017/FP be **refused** because of the following reasons:

1. The proposed internal fluorescent illuminated fascia will, because of the position and size to the front of the existing building and the removal of the existing blind box, which currently forms an important feature in the street scene and the parade generally, fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area within which the site lies. The development is therefore contrary to Policies BEV5, BEV10 and OTH Criteria 7 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No.1 1998 and Policies D1, D2 R20 and the Supplementary Design Guidance contained of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Deposit Version June 2002.

## **INFORMATIVES**

None

## **DRAWING NUMBERS**

Site Plan – unnumbered  
Existing Shop front – GSE/TG/Survey

Proposed Shop front – GSE/TG/500/10

All received 7 January 2005