

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	N6/2008/1430/AD
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NOTATION: Within Specified Town Settlement of Welwyn Garden City and within the WGC Central Conservation Area

DESCRIPTION: The application site forms part of an area of land identified for mixed use re-development under Policy TCR5 of the ADP and is the location of the Waitrose supermarket store and the site of the former Cherry Tree. The site is currently being developed for additional A1 retail space approved pursuant to N6/2007/256/MA.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL: The proposal relates to the replacement of the existing Waitrose brand signage with new signage and some new additional signs in accordance with the change in the corporate identity of Waitrose and the redevelopment of the store.

PLANNING HISTORY: N6/2007/265/MA - Erection of two storey extension to extend existing store, construction of single deck car park, revised vehicular access, new service yard and unloading bay, revised recycle bin area, and soft and hard landscaping.

N6/2005/1459/AD – Installation of new and replacement illuminated and non illuminated signage. Approved subject to conditions.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011: None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1 Sustainable Development

GBSP2 – Specified settlements

D1 - Quality of design

D2 - Character and context

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parking Standards, January 2004

CONSULTATIONS: HCC Transportation Planning and Policy – No objections subject to the standard condition relating to levels of illumination and intensity.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS: None

REPRESENTATIONS

This application has been advertised and no representations have been received. Period expired.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

1. Whether the proposal has an impact on visual amenity or highway safety

The signage upgrade is submitted as the proposal approved pursuant to N6/2007/256/MA for the major redevelopment of the store is now being implemented. Express Advertisement Consent was granted in 2005 for replacement and new signage and this proposal is broadly similar in terms of the design and appearance of the signage, although certain signs have been replaced and new ones added. The proposal seeks consent for 29 different external signs at ground floor level and 9 external signs at car park deck level and they are set out as follows:

Ground Level

- Sign 3 – Remove and replace existing with a 2.3m wide by 400mm high by 150 mm high individually illuminated lettering sign.
- Sign 4/5 – Remove and replace with a 3.5m wide by 600mm high by 150mm deep individually illuminated letter signage
- Sign 6 – As above but 4.6m wide and 800mm high. Non illuminated
- Sign 7 – This sign has been removed following discussions with the LPA
- Sign 8 – 8m high pylon signs, double sided totem with letters individually illuminated to be located in place of existing signage facing south.
- Sign 9 – New welcome sign located next to service yard. 1.2m x 940mm
- Sign 10 – New directional sign 1.7m x 602mm relating to parking restrictions. None illuminated.
- Sign 12 – New shopping hours sign to be wall mounted 1.2m x 902mm. None illuminated.
- Sign 13 – Recycling centre sign free standing 2m x 1m from ground level. None illuminated.
- Sign 14 – None illuminated disabled parking signage 2m x 822 from ground level.
- Sign 15 – Family parking non illuminated signage 2m x 602mm.
- Sign 16 – Trolley information sign 1.7m x 602, freestanding and none illuminated.
- Sign 17 – Trolley signs in various locations 1.7m x with a 450mm non illuminated fascia board.
- Sign 18 – Stairs sign, wall mounted and non illuminated 602 x 223mm
- Sign 19 – Lifts sign as above
- Sign 20 – Reserved for bicycles sign, none illuminated, 2m x with a fascia board 602mm x 800mm.
- Sign 21 - External signage on doorway entrance across middle of doors.
- Sign 22 – Directional highway warning signage
- Signs 23-28 – Directional highway warning signage
- Signs 24/27 – one way signs
- Signs 25-29a – External directional and functional signs relating to operation of the store
- Signs 30/31 – Opening hours signage wall hung and 850mm x 602mm.

Sign 32 – 3.8m high fascia sign replacing existing next to college way roundabout. Sign would be non illuminated and have a fascia 2.7m x 2.7m

A number of signs also relate to the first floor deck area although these are a mixture of directional and functional signs relating to the operation of the store and none is illuminated.

The signage is a replacement and upgrade of the previous signage but with the addition of additional signage on the rear elevation of the new extension and more prominent totem pole signs fronting onto Bridge Road. Consent was granted for the replacement of the signs so the principle of new and additional signage is acceptable. In addition, many of the approved signs form part of this submission. A number of the signs have changed scale and height following discussions and some of the signage has, been removed because it was in a far too prominent location, such as sign 7. In addition a number of the smaller signs such as the disabled bay/family parking signs have been removed as the number of these signs was considered to be excessive, resulting in visual clutter.

Some of the signage such as signs 8 and 32 that is, proposed here would be more prominent within the streetscene and would be visible from the wider Conservation Area. However, overall the signage would be an improvement on the existing signage which is looking outdated and in need of replacement and the signage that is intended to be, installed would not be so harmful to the visual amenity of the area that a refusal could be warranted on these grounds alone, especially given the existence of the extant 2005 consent.

HCC as highway authority has no objections to the proposed signage from highway safety perspective and accordingly, subject to conditions it is recommended that Express Advertisement Consent be granted

CONCLUSION: The signage would not have an impact on the visual amenity of the area and the safe and efficient operation of the highway. Subject to conditions relating to restrictions on illumination, it is recommended that express advertisement consent be granted for the statutory period of 5 years.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT EXPRESS ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR 5 YEARS

CONDITIONS:

C.10

1. Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
2. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition.
3. Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the removal shall be carried out to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
4. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.

5. No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any road traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air, or so as otherwise to render hazardous the use of any highway, railway, waterway or aerodrome (civil or military).

REASONS FOR 1-5 ABOVE:

To comply with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

2. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details 0214-AG(P2)-102, 0214-AP-Z10, 0214-AE(P2)-001 REV A, 0214-AZ(P2)-002 received and dated 14 August 2008 and 3 October 2008 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.

3. The intensity of illumination shall be controlled at a level that is within the limit recommended by the Institution of Lighting Engineers in the publication 'Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements' ILE Technical Report No 5.

Reason: So that drivers of vehicles along the adjacent public highway are not dazzled or distracted, leading to interference to the free and safe flow of traffic along the highway.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

Reason for Grant of FP/LB/CA/DT/ (*Approvals only*):

The proposal has, been considered against PPG19, East of England Plan 2008 policies SS1 and development plan policies GBSP2, D1 and D2 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).

INFORMATIVES: None

DRAWING NUMBERS: 0214-AG(P2)-102, 0214-AP-Z10, 0214-AE(P2)-001 REV A, 0214-AZ(P2)-002

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