

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
DIRECTORATE OF STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT**

**DELEGATED APPLICATION**

**Application No:** 6/2015/2381/ADV  
**Location:** 1-3 Howardsgate, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 6AL  
**Proposal:** Installation of 2no non illuminated fascia signs and 2no non illuminated hanging signs  
**Officer:** Ms R Collard

**Recommendation:** Granted

6/2015/2381/ADV

<b>Context</b>				
<b>Site and Application description</b>	<p>The application site is located within the town centre of Welwyn Garden City, the unit is located on the corner of Howardsgate and Parkway. Howardsgate is the second principal axis, forming the centre of the commercial shopping area, whilst Parkway consists of commercial units to the north although this is primarily a residential area. Units 1- 3 are located on a corner plot and therefore benefits from two frontages, with the largest frontage would be onto Howardsgate. Howardsgate is a formally landscaped boulevard with paved and planted open spaces, metal works, public seating and advertising.</p> <p>The application seeks consent for two externally illuminated fascia signs and two externally illuminated hanging signs.</p>			
<b>Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)</b>	<p>CA - Conservation Area: WGC1;            PRC - Primary Retail Core (Primary Retail Core)            Town - Welwyn Garden City Town Centre            WARD - HANDSIDE</p>			
<b>Relevant planning history</b>	<p>6/2015/2383/FULL - Proposal: Change of use of No's 3a - 3b from Class A1 (shops) to Class (A3 Restaurant &amp; cafe), amalgamation of units 1-3 to create a single Class A3 unit. Installation of extraction and ventilation, new shopfront, awning and outdoor seating, with associated refuse storage – Pending</p> <p>C6/1988/0876/FP – New shop front and creation of additional floor space for Class A3 use – Granted 26<sup>th</sup> September 1988</p> <p>C6/1987/-183/FP – Alterations to shop front – Granted 21<sup>st</sup> April 1987</p> <p>C6/1986/0998/FP – Change of use to family restaurant with</p>			
<b>Consultations</b>				
<b>Neighbour representations</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Support: 1</td> <td>Object:</td> <td>Other:</td> </tr> </table>	Support: 1	Object:	Other:
Support: 1	Object:	Other:		
<b>Publicity</b>	None			

<b>Summary of neighbour responses</b>	The Cote restaurants I have visited have a high standard of design and attention to detail and these attributes seems to have been translated to the premises plan for the Howardsgate restaurant. It appears that the premises both inside and out will be comprehensively refurbished, and the outside will have a much more co-ordinated look. This looks like a great addition to Welwyn Garden City
<b>Town / Parish representations</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Consultees and responses</b>	Hertfordshire Transport Programmes & Strategy: No objections subject to conditions.
<b>Relevant Policies</b>	
NPPF D1 D2 Others: Supplementary Design Guidance, Welwyn Garden City guide to Shop front and advertisement design	
<b>Main Issues</b>	
<b>Is the development within a conservation area?</b>	
Yes No	
<b>Impact on visual amenity?</b>	
Yes No <b>Comment:</b> Paragraph 67 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that: <i>“Poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment. 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 detailed assessment by the local planning authority. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.”</i>  The relevant District Plan policies include Policies D1 and D2 of the District Plan which require the standard of design in all new development to be of a high quality, and that new development respects and relates to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed.  The SDG states that all advertisements requiring express consent must accord with the following criteria:  a) proposals should be well-designed and should relate to the character, scale and design of the building on which they are displayed; b) the size and position of the signs should respect the architectural features of the buildings on which they are displayed; c) proposals should not create visual clutter; d) illumination will only be permitted where it would not be visually intrusive and is provided by discreet means.  With respect to advertisements in conservation areas, paragraph 6.8 (i) of the supplementary design guidance states, ‘advertisements and signs will only be granted consent where they do not harm the character and visual amenities of the Conservation Area or the building on which they are displayed, in terms of design, materials, scale, detail, and method of illumination. Consent will not be granted for any proposal that would detract from the special architectural or historical character of any building in the Conservation Area or the Conservation Area as a whole.  This is set against the requirement under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing	

the character and appearance of the area.

In addition to the above, The Welwyn Garden City Guide to shop front and advertisement design, July 2012 is relevant. Page 7 of the Welwyn Garden City Guide to Shop front and advertisement design advises that, '*new or replacement adverts and signs should also be carefully considered in relation to the overall design and appearance of the shop and surrounding buildings*'. As the site is identified as 'Stonework Surround' as seen within the Welwyn Garden City Guide to Shopfront and advertisement design and therefore the following design criteria will be applied.

*'Signs should be incorporated within the existing shopfront design, in order to be subservient to the overall design of the building and to ensure that they do not impinge on the stonework surround.'*

Furthermore, there are a number of good practice points which should be followed which include that all new signs should respect the character of the building, and that corporate styles and company logos and standard shop front designs should be modified or adapted to ensure the integrity of the shop front, building and street scene is both maintained and enhanced.

### **Fascia signs**

As the premise has two frontages one fronting onto Parkway and Howardsgate, the proposed signage is proposed on both frontages. Due to the nature of the premises which is a stonework surround. Each of the fascia signs would sit within the stonework surrounds not impinging on the stonework surrounds. The proposed signage would ensure that each colonnade would be retained and therefore maintaining the architectural feature of the existing shop front.

The two fascia signs would feature raised metal letters in an aged bronze finish with the name 'Cote Brasserie' and would measure 0.34m in height, 2.3m in width and would be externally illuminated with mounted spotlights. The background of the fascia sign would be painted in Farrow & Ball Railings colour (dark grey) together with the shop windows. The proposed fascia signs would be externally illuminated. The appearance of the fascia signs are not considered to be objectionable.

### **Hanging signs**

Two hanging signs are proposed, these signs would measure 1m in height, 1.3m in width. These signs would be in proportion with the fascia and are not considered objectionable; furthermore each of the hanging signs would be on different frontages, which is in accordance with 'Welwyn Garden City Guide to shop front and advertisement design.'

The proposed hanging signs would be externally illuminated.

Whilst all signs are to be externally illuminated, a condition shall be imposed requiring the intensity of illumination shall be controlled at a level within the limit recommended by the Institution of Lighting Professionals.

It is considered that the proposed signage would not be out of character with the row of shops it is within. Whilst it is acknowledged that shops immediately opposite follow the white fascia background with individual lettering attached, it is considered that these shop fronts differ in terms of their style and similar signs to that proposed can be seen within this section of shop fronts, therefore the appearance of the signage is considered acceptable at the host site would not be acceptable.

As a result of the new signage is considered to relate to the character of the building and the locality and would not unduly impact on the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.

### **b) Highway Safety**

The comments received from Hertfordshire County Council Transport Programmes and Strategy

(HCCTPS) do not object to the proposal and are noted. It is considered that the proposal would not have an unreasonable impact on the safety and free flow of the highway users and would not unduly impact upon highway safety. HCCTPS do not object to the proposal.

**Would the development reflect the character of the area?**

Yes No

**Comment:** See Comments above

**Would the development reflect the character of the building?**

Yes No N/A

**Comment:** See Comments above

**Would the development maintain the amenity of adjoining occupiers? (e.g. privacy, outlook, light etc.)**

Yes No N/A

**Comment:**

**Any other issues**

It is noted that other details have been submitted relating to the alterations of the shop front, however these have not been considered under this application as it solely relates to the proposed advert.

**Conclusion**

The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of visual amenity. The proposal is not considered to pose a threat to highway safety or to cause harm to the amenities of adjoining occupiers.

**Conditions:**

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.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) in the interests of highway safety and visual amenity.

2. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) in the interests of highway safety and visual amenity.

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.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) in the interests of highway safety and visual amenity.

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.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) in the interests of highway safety and visual amenity.

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).

REASON: To comply with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) in the interests of highway safety and visual amenity.

6. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

LON.0570\_01B & LON.0570\_02 & ES.01.01 & ES.01.02 received and dated 17th December 2015 & EL.01.01 Rev B & EL.01.02 Rev B received and dated 11th March 2016

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

#### POST DEVELOPMENT COMMENCING

7. This consent does not authorise 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 illumination shall be controlled at a level that is within the limit recommended by the Institution of Lighting Professionals in TR5 Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements (2001).

REASON: To avoid undue distraction to road users in the interest of road safety.

9. All parts of the projecting signage and awnings must be at a height of, or greater than 2.3 m vertically above the footpath.

REASON: In the interests of pedestrian/highway safety and convenience.

1. REASON 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:**

1. Notwithstanding the consent issued under the Town and Country Planning Act, a licence issued under the provisions of Section 177 of the Highways Act 1980 is required prior to the erection of any part of the projection into or over the public highway. The applicant is advised to contact the County Council Highways via either the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or telephone 0300 1234047 to arrange this.
  
2. This consent is only in relation to the Advert and not the alterations to the shopfront

**Determined By:**

Ms F Nwanze  
14 April 2016