DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: …Sam Dicocco……

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
18/01422/AD	Erection of two estate signs.	1 Avenue One Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 2HB

Submitted Plan Nos
AP(0)001; AP(0)002; SK(0)A100 Rev P14 AA(0)033 Rev A AP(0)002 Rev H

1.0 Policies

SECN12 Achieving well-designed places

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 17/00477/1 - Erection of single storey retail foodstore (use class A1), a three storey hotel (use class C1), a single storey restaurant/drive-thru (use class A3/A5), a single storey coffee shop/drive-thru (use class A1/A3), new access arrangements, car parking, service areas, landscaping and other associated works following demolition of existing building (as amended by drawings received 02/06/2017). Granted subject to S106 agreement. 18/09/2017.

2.2 17/02842/1AD - Erection of two internally illuminated estate totem signs – Refused 29/12/2017

"The internally illuminated monolith signs would, by way of their size, scale, and most importantly, siting, would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the signs surroundings which is semi-rural and well landscaped in character. The proposal would therefore fail to comply with the provisions of paragraph 67 of the National Planning Policy Framework."

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 Hertfordshire County Council – No objection

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The site to which the application relates would contain a single storey foodstore, a single storey restaurant/takeaway with drive-thru, a three storey hotel and a single storey coffee shop/drive-thru. The site is currently in the process of construction, with the redundant industrial/commercial building having been demolished. The site is contained by four roads, Sixth Avenue to the north, Avenue One to the east, Baldock Road to the south and Dunhams Lane to the west.

4.1.2 The sites surroundings are commercial to the north (Sixth Avenue) and the east (Avenue One).

4.1.3 Dunhams Lane, to the west, has a much more rural feel, on the urban fringe with an open play area to the west separating residential area from the industrial/employment land. The employment land to the east of Dunhams Lane is well screened by mature hedging and trees.

4.1.4 To the south, significant effort in the form of vegetation screening has given Baldock Road a rural feel in spite of the employment land being located to the north. With the exception of one large commercial building near the entrance to Jubilee Road off of Baldock Road, the screening suffices in giving a rural feel in terms of entering the residential area of Letchworth Garden City. To the south of Baldock Road near to 1 Avenue One lies a largely open sports and recreation area.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 The proposal would see the erection of two free standing internally illuminated estate signs, albeit, with no illuminance levels stated on the application form. The estate signs would be positioned at angles towards Baldock Road, at both the Avenue One junction and the Dunham's Lane junction.

4.2.2 The sign upon Avenue One would be positioned adjacent, and slightly behind, the taller section of the building to contain a supermarket. Following negotiation, the sign would be 5m in height, with a width of 2.7m and be statically internally illuminated to a maximum 250 candelas per metre squared.

4.2.3 The sign upon Dunham's Lane would be 4m in height, with a width of 2.05m and be statically internally illuminated to a maximum 250 candelas per metre squared. The sign would be positioned on the corner of Dunham's Lane and Baldock Road, in front of the vegetative screening.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The principle issue in the determination of advertisement applications is whether the sign would have an adverse impact on the surroundings amenity as well as any safety impacts of the sign. Paragraph 67 of the NPPF states that "poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment…Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts."

4.3.2 Given that the signs would be freestanding, the impact of the signs can only be on the sites surroundings. Notwithstanding this, the buildings on the site, to which the advertisements relate, and the character of the site itself, does inform the existing amenity of the area. Furthermore, those existing advertisement consents granted for the buildings within the site, with specific reference to those advertising externally from the site, are a consideration in terms of the cumulative impact on the sites surroundings.

4.3.3 It is accepted that the site has a discernible contrasting character to its surroundings, in that it is a group of commercial premises within an area of employment land. In that light, the site does rely more heavily on passing interest as opposed to those sites and buildings in employment uses.

4.3.4 As previously described, the character of Baldock Road and Dunham's Lane contrast quite significantly to the industrial/employment character of Sixth Avenue and Avenue One. Avenue One and Sixth Avenue host utilitarian, plain, architecturally uninspired purposeful buildings. Dunham's Lane and Baldock Road host, quite intentionally, large vegetation screening giving the appearance of a rural road entering a residential part of Letchworth. The rural appearance is concentrated by the open space and uses of land to the south of Baldock Road and the west of Dunham's Lane.

4.3.5 Following the refusal, and negotiation during this application, the height, width and design of the sign on Dunham's Lane have been amended to better fit within the amenity of the area. The signs now host a dark green lower part, and light green upper part which would respect as best as possible the appearance of this part of the site. The signs height has been reduced to 4m in height, with a width of 2.05m, in order to best respect the amenity of the area. The sign will now, due to its siting, be slightly higher than the nearby road sign, however, will not appear out of scale or overly dominant.

4.3.6 The sign near the junction of Avenue One and Baldock Road has also been reduced in size, in terms of height and width, as well as design. The design of the sign reflect that of the estate sign to be positioned on the corner of Dunham's Lane and Baldock Road as described above. The sign would be 5m in height, with a width of 2.7m. It is considered that the sign, as amended in positioning as well as size and design, would now be in proportion to the scale and size of buildings and other signage proposed within the site, and not harm the visual amenity of the sites industrial/commercial surroundings.

4.3.7 The method of illumination of the signs is stated as internally illuminated. Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority have no objection to the signs in regards to highway safety. The level of illumination stated at 250cd/m^2 is considered well within an appropriate level for the size and positioning of the sign in terms of public safety. The level of illumination will be conditioned on any potential approval.

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.1 The advertisements proposed are considered to have an acceptable impact on the visual amenities of the surrounding area. In the absence of any public safety or visual amenity objections I consider the proposed signage compliant with the paragraph 67 if the National Planning Policy Framework.

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That the advertisements be **CONSENTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

   Reason:To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which

form the basis of this grant of permission.

2. (a) 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.

(b) No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to-

(i) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);

(ii) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air; or

(iii) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.

(c) Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.

(d) Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.

(e) Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

Reason: As imposed by regulation within the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

3. The signs hereby consented shall be internally illuminated, static in illumination and limited to a maximum illumination of 250 Candelas per square metre.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and public safety.

Signed  Simon Ellis Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 2 August 2018	