

Application Number	07/0809/ADV	Agenda Item	3.1
Date Received	17th September 2007	Officer	Mrs Angela Briggs
Target Date	12th November 2007		
Ward	Romsey		
Site	163 - 167 Mill Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 3AN		
Proposal	Installation of one double sided internally illuminated projecting sign and one internally illuminated fascia sign.		
Applicant	Tesco Stores Ltd C/O Agent		

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT

- 1.1 163-167 Mill Road is a two-storey building on the north side of Mill Road, a little east of the junction with Sedgwick Street. The site is situated within the Mill Road Local Centre (East), as identified in the Cambridge Local Plan (2006). It has until recently been occupied by a shop (a Class A1 use) on the ground floor (a use that remains), with offices (a Class A2 use) at first floor level. To the rear of the site is a car parking area, access to which is from Sedgwick Street, a one-way street along which motor vehicles may only travel north to south, to its junction with Mill Road; the parking spaces are allocated and serve the property the subject of this application, and the offices that occupy the first floor of the building.
- 1.2 The ground floor of 163-167 was last occupied by Wilco Motorists Discount Store, but is now vacant. The existing signs have been removed and the property currently has an unkempt appearance within the street scene. To the front of the property is a wide pedestrian footway, known as The Broadway, with concrete bollards along the frontage.

- 1.3 The immediate locality has a mix of uses, including Class A1, A2, A3 (cafes) and A5 (take-aways) – some with residential uses above - on the Mill Road frontage, with predominantly Class C3 (dwellings) use in the tight-knit residential streets to the north and south of Mill Road.
- 1.4 The site does not fall within the Conservation Area and there are no Listed Buildings adjacent.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The advertisement application seeks consent for two signs. One is a double-sided, internally illuminated (LED) projecting sign, at the west end of the shop frontage, which would be 500mm high, 90mm deep and would, in all, project 948mm from the shop front, 900mm of which would be the actual sign and 48mm the fitting. The second sign is a fascia sign, measuring 100mm thick and constructed from thick aperture cut aluminium painted blue black RAL 5004 with flush fitted acrylic. Although the overall length of the fascia is 15.6 metres, the LED illuminated lettering section would only occupy 3.2 metres in the centre of the fascia, with the letters TESCO in red capitals underlined by blue dashes, and the word 'express' in white, lower case letters; the maximum height of the illuminated sign at any one point is 400mm
- 2.2 In addition to this application, two further applications have also been submitted which relate to the installation of a new shopfront and an ATM machine at the western end of the shop frontage, and a single storey rear extension (of approximately 87m²) for storage and plant purposes.

3.0 SITE HISTORY

Reference	Description	A/C, REF, W/D
C/63/0007	Conversion of ground floor for use as butcher's shop. 163 Mill Road	A/C
C/64/0448	Change of use of ground floor from residential to shop. 167 Mill Road	A/C
C/68/0726	Supermarket with stores and	A/C

	office or living accommodation. 163/165 & 167 Mill Road	
C/68/0276	Supermarket with stores and office over. 161-165 Mill Road	A/C
C/69/0337	Erection of five shops with office space above. 163-169 Mill Road	A/C
C/70/0405	Erection of shop, office and flat. 163-169 Mill Road	A/C
C/71/0826	Erection of 3 lock-up shops at ground level with offices over. 163/167 Mill Road.	A/C
C/73/0583	Erection of shop front. 163-167 Mill Road	A/C
07/0810/FUL	Installation of a new shopfront including a new ATM unit. 163 – 167 Mill Road	Decision Pending
07/0811/FUL	Erection of a single storey rear extension. 163-167 Mill Road.	Decision Pending

4.0 PUBLICITY

4.1	Advertisement:	No
	Adjoining Owners:	Yes
	Site Notice Displayed:	No
	Public Meeting/Exhibition (meeting of):	No
	DC Forum (meeting of): (Cancelled)	No

5.0 POLICY

5.1 Central Government Advice

5.2 PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development (2005):
Paragraphs 7 and 8 state that national policies and regional and local development plans (regional spatial strategies and local development frameworks) provide the framework for planning for sustainable development and for development to be managed effectively. This plan-led system, and the certainty and predictability it aims to provide, is central to planning and plays the key role in integrating sustainable development objectives. Where the development plan contains relevant policies, applications for planning permission should be

determined in line with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 5.3 **PPS6 Planning for Town Centres (2005):** States that the key objective for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability by planning for growth and development of existing centres, promoting and enhancing existing centres by focusing development in such centres and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all. The statement seeks to enhance consumer choice to meet community needs and ensure new development is well served by a choice of means of transport.
- 5.4 **PPG13 Transport (2001):** This guidance seeks three main objectives: to promote more sustainable transport choices, to promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services, by public transport, walking and cycling, and to reduce the need to travel, especially by car. Paragraph 28 advises that new development should help to create places that connect with each other in a sustainable manner and provide the right conditions to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- 5.5 **Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions:** Advises that conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.
- 5.6 **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003**
- P1/3 Sustainable development in built development
 - P8/1 Sustainable development – links between land use and transport
- 5.7 **Cambridge Local Plan 2006**
- 3/1 Sustainable development
 - 3/4 Responding to context
 - 3/15 Shopfronts and Signage
- 5.8 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Cambridge City Council (Nov 1997) – The Cambridge Shopfront Design Guide: This document has been instrumental in improving the quality of design to retail premises in the City. It gives clear guidance on all aspects of shopfront, signage, illumination, canopy and security design whilst not stifling innovative approaches.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

Cambridgeshire County Council (Engineering)

- 6.1 No comment.
- 6.2 The above responses are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the consultation responses can be inspected on the application file.

7.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 7.1 The owners/occupiers of the following addresses have made representations:

11	Barnwell Rd
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Tynedale House, 36	Selwyn Gardens
18a	Covent Garden
109	Coleridge Rd
13	St Barnabas Rd
1	Thorpe Way
31	Greville Rd
89	Castle St
67	West St, Isleham
16	Coleridge Rd
43	Marshall Rd
	Rassbeigring 7 (Germany)
	Steph-Pelli-Str. 6 (Germany)
24	Manhattan Drive
Down House	Primrose Lane
9	Tenison Avenue
5	Meadow Farm Close, Oakington
City of Cambridge Residents Trust, 5 Fitzwilliam Rd	

94	Argyle St
340	Mill Rd
43	Marshall Rd
21	Fen Rd
87	Ramsden Square
35	Brampton Rd
35	Brampton Rd
106	Gwydir St
13	Sedgwick Street
63	Warren Close, The Triangle
137	Coleridge Rd
63	Warren Close, The Triangle
The Shadowhouse, 71	Cromwell Rd
25	Thoday St
88	Tenison Rd
6	Great Eastern St
37	Argyle St
42B	George Pateman Court, Tenison Rd
36	Greville Rd
12	Rustat RD
2	Romsey Rd
17	Christchurch St
12	Hemingford Rd
55	Hemingford Rd
59	Mawson Rd
158	Gwydir St
56	Ross St
45	Hemingford Rd
27	Belgrave Rd
79	Great Eastern St
129	Hemingford Rd
175	Gwydir St
126	Sedgwick Street
57c	St Philip's Rd
172	Gwydir St
155	Gwydir St
146	Sedgwick Street
81	Catherine St
218-220	Mill Rd
11	Greville Rd
19	Ainsworth Place
30	Station Rd, Whittlesford

104	Suez Rd
124	Thoday St
14	Sedgwick Street
148	Cromwell Rd
34	Gwydir St
122	Gwydir St
114/6	Mill Rd
118	Tenison Rd
92	Brampton Rd
171	Gwydir St
36	Cromwell Rd
28 School Court	Thoday St
35	Norfolk St
156-160	Mill Rd
32	Nuttings Rd
59	Cavendish Ave

7.2 The representations can be summarised as follows:

Illuminated fascia box sign would be out of character and would be contrary to the guidance as stated with the Cambridge Shopfront Design Supplementary Planning Document;

Light Pollution and Local Residents;

The impact on the visual appearance of the area at night;

The signs do not respect the existing street scene of Mill Road and are too bright;

7.3 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations can be inspected on the application file.

8.0 ASSESSMENT

8.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from my inspection of the site and the surroundings, I consider that the main issues are:

1. Visual Amenity
2. Residential amenity
3. Highway safety
4. Third Party Representations

Visual Amenity:

- 8.2 As I have already mentioned, Mill Road is considered to be a diverse Local Centre providing a good mix of shops and services. Among the services there are examples of many different types of signage, which range from the traditional to the modern. This particular part of Mill Road is not situated within the Conservation Area and as such the installation of signs would not necessarily be subject of the more stringent rules that govern signs that are proposed in Conservation Areas; that said it remains important that all signage proposals are considered carefully in their context and are appropriate.
- 8.3 The signs proposed by this application, in my opinion, would improve the appearance of what is currently an unattractive building and would help promote an active street frontage, complementing the adjacent uses that currently operate. The old signs, which have been removed, were much more strident than the quieter, more subtle signs that are now proposed. The removal of the signs has exposed the building in a way which, far from adding to the visual quality of the street, materially detracts from it. While this 'exposure' should not justify any new advertising material, I cannot but say that what is proposed would be a significant visual improvement over the current appearance of the building, or that when the ground floor was last occupied.
- 8.4 The proposed signs, in my view, would not be dissimilar to those of the other larger store in the Local Centre, the existing Co-op to the east, in terms of size and style. That this property is set slightly further back from the carriageway than the Co-op, between two buildings that stand slightly forward, would probably help, a little, to limit any impact upon the street scene.
- 8.5 In terms of the illumination, I am of the view that an LED internal illumination of the projecting sign and the fascia sign is acceptable and would not introduce an excessive quantity or unreasonable spillage of light such as to make the proposal unacceptable in a Local Centre. There are many examples of other signs and bold colours in fascias and projecting signs elsewhere in the street, including the Co-op, the Tanning Shop, the Cambridge Bed Centre and Corals Bookmakers.

8.6 Paragraph 14 of The Cambridge Shopfront Design Guide (Nov 1997) refers to illumination and states that *'illuminated box fascias will not be acceptable'*. The guide does not specify whether it relates to internal or external sources of light, however the illustrations above show external sources of light. Paragraph 14 also states that: *'on buildings where illuminated signs are acceptable, the light source should be discreet...'*. I am of the view that the LED internally illuminated sign is discreet and would not introduce additional lighting that would be over and above the level of lighting that currently exists along Mill Road.

8.7 In my opinion the proposal would comply with the aims and objectives of Policies 3/4, and 3/15 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006.

Residential amenity

8.8 It is acknowledged that the site is situated within a dense residential area, but it is also necessary to recognise that this is also an important shopping frontage and local centre. As previously explained, the site is set back from the carriageway with the two buildings either side projecting slightly forward of the shop frontage. In my view, and given the type of illumination proposed, the signage would have a minimal impact on the amenity of nearby neighbours, would not be significantly brighter than any other existing shop signs, and would be significantly better than what until recently was on the site. On that basis I do not think that what is shown could, reasonably, warrant refusal of the application.

8.9 In my opinion the proposal is compliant with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003) policies P1/3 and P8/1, Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/4, and 3/15.

Highway Safety:

8.10 The County Council's Highway Engineer has made no comments on this proposal. I am therefore satisfied that he has no objections to the signs and that they are not considered to have an adverse impact on the highway safety of pedestrians, cyclists or vehicles.

8.11 In my opinion the proposal is compliant with Policies 3/4, and 3/15 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006, and Policy P1/3 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003.

Third Party Representations

8.12 82 letters of objection have been received for this application who have all raised the above concerns. I have already addressed their concerns within this report.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 In conclusion, the proposed signs are considered to be acceptable and comply with the aims and objectives of the Local Plan and Structure Plan Policies. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

FOR RECOMMENDATIONS OF APPROVAL

1. APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

1. The advertisement hereby approved shall only be illuminated whilst the premises upon which it is displayed are open for trade, unless agreed otherwise with the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity. (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 policy P1/3 and Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies 3/4 and 3/12)

Reasons for Approval

1. This development has been approved, conditionally, because subject to those requirements it is considered to generally conform to the Development Plan, particularly the following policies:

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P1/3;

Cambridge Local Plan (2006): 3/4 and 3/15;

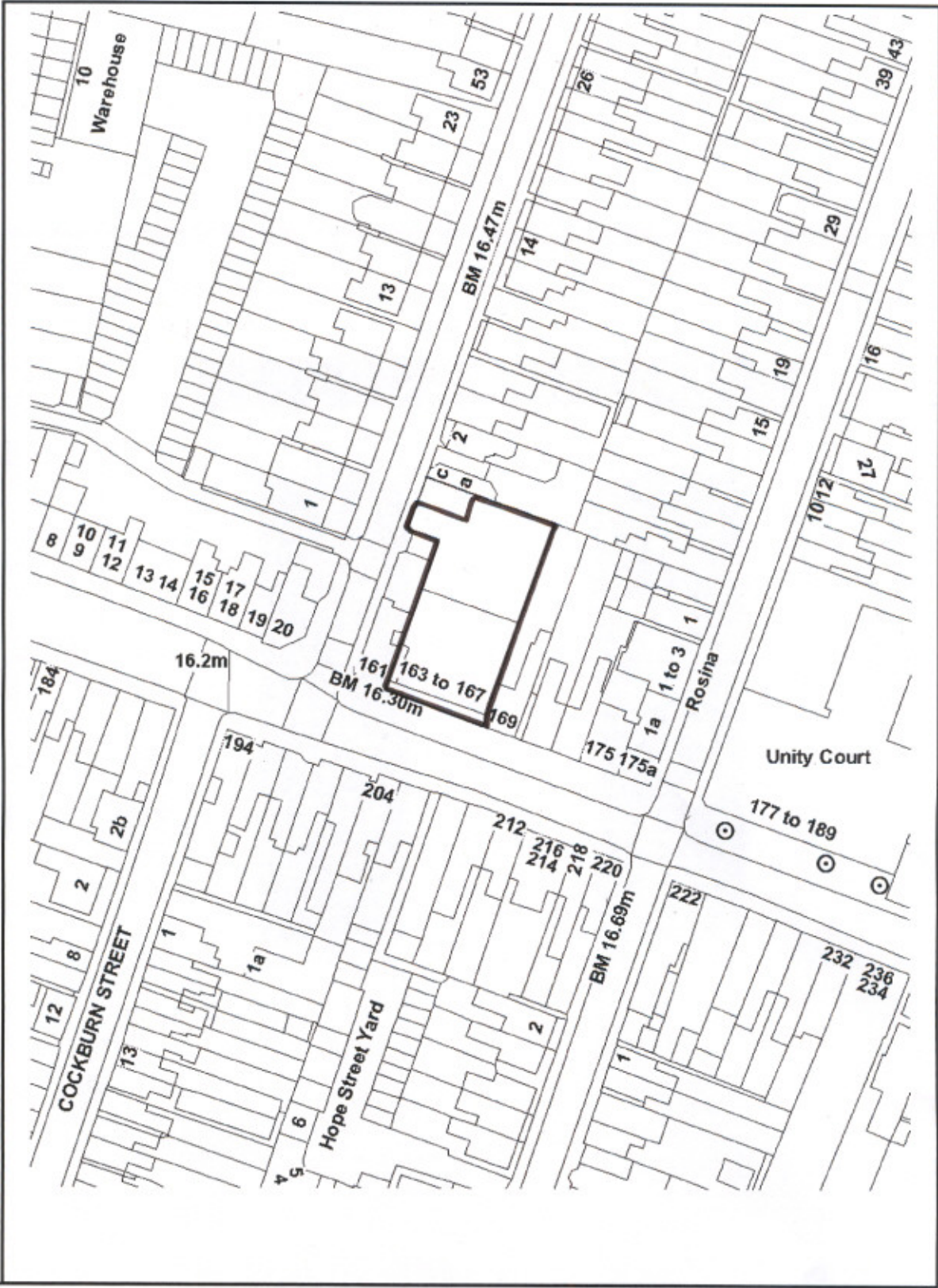
2. The decision has been made having had regard to all other material planning considerations, none of which was considered to have been of such significance as to justify doing other than grant planning permission.

These reasons for approval can be a summary of the reasons for grant of planning permission only. For further detail on the decision please see the officer report by visiting the Council Planning Department.

Under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, the following are background papers for each report on a planning application:

1. The planning application and plans;
2. Any explanatory or accompanying letter or document from the applicant;
3. Comments of Council departments on the application;
4. Comments or representations by third parties on the application as referred to in the report plus any additional comments received before the meeting at which the application is considered; unless (in each case) the document discloses exempt or confidential information
5. Any Structure Plan, Local Plan or Council Policy Document referred to in individual reports.

These papers may be inspected by contacting John Summers (Ext.7103) in the Planning Department.



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