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| Application Number | 08/0095/ADV | Agenda Item | 3.3 |
| Date Received | 21st January 2008 | Officer | Mrs Angela Briggs |
| Target Date | 17th March 2008 | | |
| 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, flat roof building, constructed in the 1970's, which stands on the north side of Mill Road. It occupies a frontage of about 17.5 metres between 161 (to the west), a launderette (which takes access from Mill Road) with a flat above (which has access from Sedgwick Street), and 169 (to the east), where an estate agency occupies both floors of the building. The front of the building is set back about 1.5 metres from the front line of 161 and 169 which flank it, with the western end about 5.5 metres east of the junction with Sedgwick Street.
- 1.2 To the rear of the site is an area of tarmac, used as a parking area, access to which is from Sedgwick Street, a one-way street along which motor vehicles may only travel north to south.
- 1.3 The building has until recently been occupied by a shop (a Class A1 use) on the ground floor (a use that remains), with financial services office (a Class A2 use) at first floor level.

Access to the offices is from a doorway at the western end of the frontage, adjacent to the launderette.

- 1.4 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, despite some attempts to improve it, with a considerable amount of fly-posted notices. To the front of the property is a wide area used by pedestrians; concrete bollards about 5 metres from the face of the building mark the boundary between the shop 'forecourt' and the public footpath which is part of the public highway.
- 1.5 The immediate locality has a mix of uses, including Class A1 (shops), A2(financial and professional services), 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. All have advertisements of one form or another.
- 1.6 The site is situated within the Mill Road District Centre (East), as identified in the Cambridge Local Plan (2006). 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. The two signs differ in terms of detail and colour from what was proposed in the original application (LPA ref: 07/0809/ADV).
- 2.2 The current, live application proposes:

An internally illuminated double-sided sign, projecting 800mm from the face of the building, 650mm high and 125mm wide. It is to be located at the west end of the shop frontage, adjacent to the entrance of the offices at the height of the fascia. The sign is white with coloured lettering, reading "TESCO express" on two lines, and the word "Cash" in white within a red parallelogram box beneath; only the letters and red parallelogram being illuminated.

[The original proposal, now the subject of an appeal, promoted a double-sided, internally illuminated projecting sign, in the same place, which would project 948mm from

the shop front (900mm of sign and 48mm of fitting), be 500mm high and 90mm wide. The box is shown as dark blue; only the words of the logo “TESCO express” on two lines were to be illuminated].

A fascia sign, measuring 50mm thick (half the thickness of the originally proposed fascia), 650mm deep and 15.4 metres in length, across the full frontage of 163-167, except for the doorway to the first floor offices. The fascia sign will be constructed from the same materials as specified in the original application, aperture cut aluminium with acrylic, and is now predominantly white in colour, with contrasting red and blue lettering. Although the overall length of the fascia is 15.4 metres, the LED illuminated lettering section would only occupy 3 metres at the right hand side of the fascia, centred above the proposed entrance to the shop, with the letters TESCO in red capitals underlined by blue dashes, and the word ‘express’ in blue, lower case letters; the maximum height of the illuminated sign at any one point is 400mm.

[The previous submission showed 100mm thick aperture cut aluminium painted blue-black RAL 5004 with flush fitted acrylic. The sign was the same width and depth. The logo “TESCO express” was more centrally located in the shop frontage and only the letters and dashes underneath illuminated.]

- 2.3 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 98m²) 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 office or living accommodation. 163/165 & 167 Mill Road | A/C |
| 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 | Subject of an Appeal |
| 07/0811/FUL | Erection of a single storey rear extension. 163-167 Mill Road | Subject of an Appeal |
| 07/0809/ADV | Installation of one double sided internally illuminated projecting sign and one internally illuminated fascia sign | Subject of an Appeal |
| 08/0098/FUL | Installation of new shopfront including ATM unit | Pending Decision |
| 08/0099/FUL | Erection of single storey rear extension and installation of plant | 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): | 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 **PPG19 Outdoor Advertisement Control (1992)** recognises that outdoor advertising is essential to commercial activity in a free and diverse economy. It advises that when advertisements are displayed on or close to buildings the appearance of a building can easily be spoiled by poorly designed or insensitively placed signs or advertisements. It also explains that the display of outdoor advertisements can only be controlled in the interest of “amenity” – the effect on the appearance of the building or on the visual amenity of the immediate neighbourhood where it is to be displayed - and “public safety” – the effect upon the safe use and operation of any form of transport on land (including the safety of pedestrians) over water or in the air.

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

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 on behalf of the Highway Authority.”

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 |
| 11 | Barnwell Rd |
| 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 |

130 emails have also been received objecting to the application. A letter of objection from the Cambridge Cycling Campaign has also been submitted raising general concerns.

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;
 Contravention of local policy;
 Light Pollution impact on 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;

Impact on highway safety

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 As explained in 5.3 above the display of outdoor advertisements can only be controlled in the interest of amenity and public safety. From the consultation responses and representations received and from my inspection of the site and the surroundings, I consider that the relevant issues here are:

1. Visual Amenity and how that impacts on residential amenity;
2. Highway safety; and
3. Third Party Representations

Visual Amenity

8.2 As I have already explained, Mill Road is a diverse District 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 or in an area Special Advertisement Control; 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 do respect the character of the building, which although not in my opinion an attractive building, has a strong character albeit not one very sympathetic to its neighbours.

- The original design of the building clearly had a space within it proposed to accommodate advertisements (the strip which runs across the top of the glazed shopfront and is currently painted white), and the proposed fascia sign would occupy that space. The proposed white fascia sign with only the logo lettering above the door illuminated would not be intrusive or out of character with the building, but would respect the original design principles of the building.

- The proposed projecting sign is at the western end of the fascia, adjacent to the door to the offices above the retail unit.

The projecting box itself will not be illuminated, only the lettering within it. Again, I do not think that the sign will be unreasonably intrusive or out of character with what is a relatively modern frontage. The impact of the sign when seen from the west (the bridge side) will undoubtedly be mitigated somewhat by the frontage to 163-167 being set back 1.5 metres behind the face of the launderette (161) next door; from the east (the Coleridge Road end) the sign would read against the flank wall of the projecting launderette.

Similar advertising can be seen at the store in Chesterton High Street.

- 8.4 The change in the colour of the background to the signs since the time of the previous application (07/0809/ADV - when the background colour of the signs was dark blue), does not in my view make a material difference to their impact or whether they are appropriate. Similarly I do not think that the fact that the projecting sign now proposed is slightly taller but projects slightly less, materially affects the impact the signs would have.
- 8.5 I do consider what is proposed to be a singular improvement on the previous signage to occupy the 'fascia space' of the building, which compromised a yellow box sign with red lettering, where the whole of the box was illuminated. That said, as the sign in question has been removed from the premises, that is not immediately relevant to the consideration of the current proposal. What is more relevant is that the absence of any signage on a fascia clearly designed for that purpose, which is currently the case, leaves the building looking somewhat incomplete, though the recent painting of the fascia strip has reduced that visual incongruity.
- 8.6 In terms of the illumination, I am of the view that the illumination of the projecting sign and the lettering element of the fascia sign is acceptable and would not introduce an excessive quantity or an unreasonable or intrusive spillage of light such as to make the proposal unacceptable in this District Centre. A condition

could require that the signs are not illuminated when the store is not open to the public.

8.7 Paragraph 14 of The Cambridge Shopfront Design Guide (Nov 1997), which is a material consideration, refers to illumination and states that *'illuminated box fascias will not be acceptable'*; it goes on to state that *'on buildings where illuminated signs are acceptable, the light source should be discreet...'*. What is being proposed here are not illuminated box signs (though that is what the last sign across the face of this building was) and I do not think that the illumination proposed, limited as it is to the lettering/logos would introduce additional lighting that would be unreasonable or unacceptably intrusive. I consider that the signs proposed would contribute to the design and character of the building and its surroundings and would complement the quality of the built environment, as required by policy 3/15 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006, by returning signs to where the building has been designed to accommodate signs, and thereby allowing the building as a whole to sit more appropriately in its surroundings in this part of Mill Road.

8.8 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

8.9 It is acknowledged that the site is situated within a dense residential area, but it is also necessary to recognise that this is an important shopping frontage and district centre. As previously explained, the site is set back from the carriageway with the two buildings either side projecting 1.5m forward of the shop frontage. On that basis I do not consider that the proposal could have any material adverse impact upon the residential accommodation above the launderette (161). In my view, and given the type of illumination proposed and the presence of street lighting, the signage would have a minimal impact, if any, upon the amenity of nearby neighbours across the street. A condition requiring the illumination be switched off when the shop is not open to trade with the public, would help any possible impact across the street. Given that background, I do not think that what is shown could have an adverse impact on residential amenity across the street that would warrant the refusal of the application.

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

Highway Safety

8.11 The County Council Highway Engineer has chosen to make no comment 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. Given the context of the site where the building frontage to which the advertisements are to be attached is approximately 7 metres back from the carriageway, in a District Centre where there are numerous other advertisements, some illuminated and others not, I do not consider that the introduction of these advertisements, with what is a relatively limited quantity of illumination, would have an adverse effect upon the safe use and operation of any form of transport on land (including the safety of pedestrians).

8.12 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

8.13 82 letters of objection have been received for this application which have all raised the above concerns. One additional letter has been received to this second advertisement application from the Cambridge Cycling Campaign in which it is stated that the objection is to all 3 of the new applications; however, the letter does not give any specific objections to the proposed projecting or fascia sign. 130 emails have also been received raising general concerns. I have already addressed their concerns within this report.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 In conclusion, the proposed advertisements are considered to be acceptable and comply with the aims and objectives of the

Local Plan and the national government advice on dealing with outdoor advertisements. 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 in writing 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;

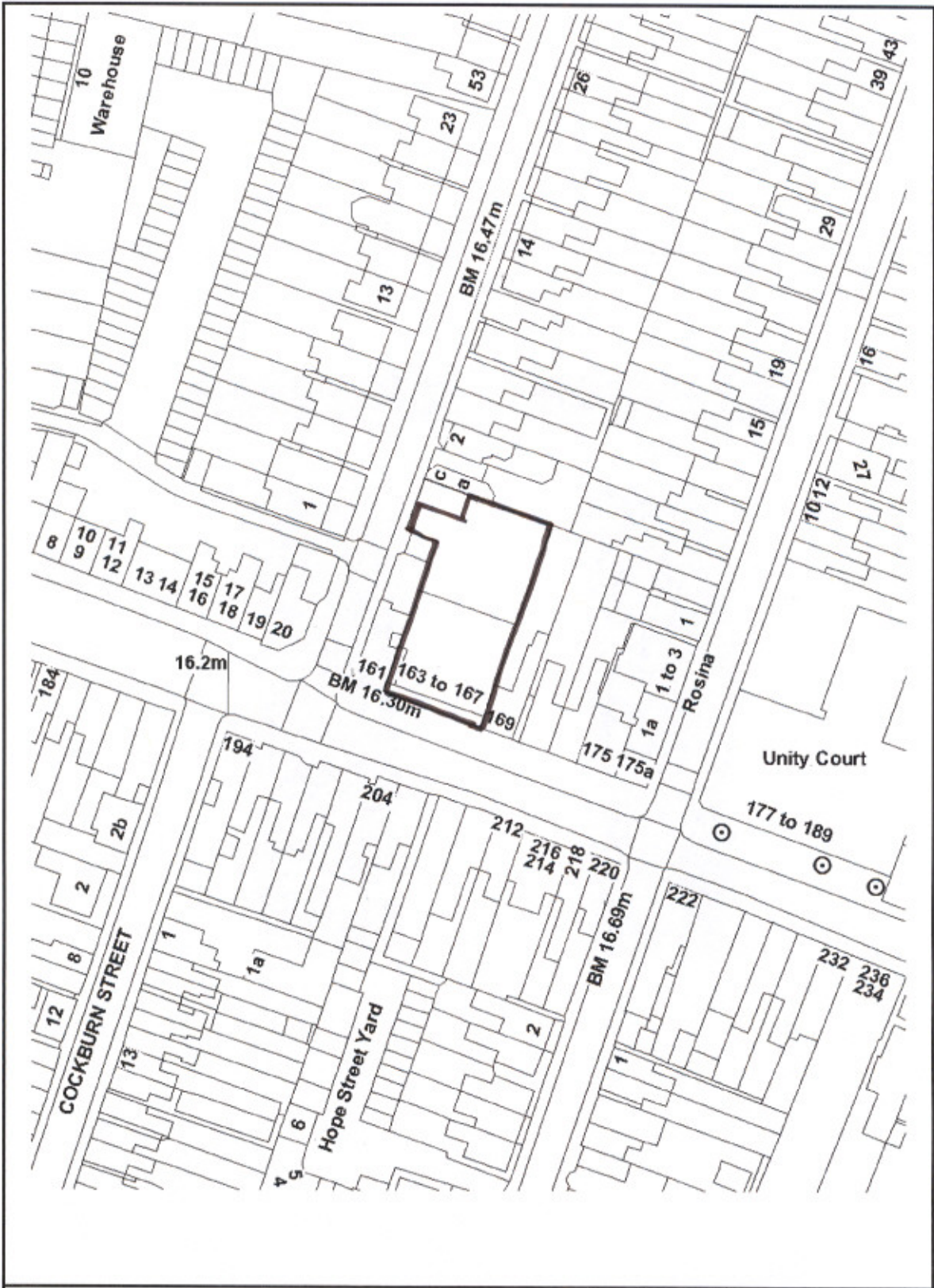
2. The decision has been made having had regard to all other material planning considerations, none of which was considered to have been of such significance as to justify doing other than grant planning permission.

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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163 - 167 Mill Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 3AN