

5h 3/12/0868/AD – Proposed two externally illuminated fascia signs, two externally illuminated panel signs and five non-illuminated panel signs at Post Office, Baldock Road, Buntingford, SG9 9BL for Mr Basra

Date of Receipt: 19.07.2012

Type: Full – Advertisement

Parish: BUNTINGFORD

Ward: BUNTINGFORD

RECOMMENDATION:

- a) That in respect of fascia sign 1 and signs 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9 (as shown on drawing ref. B18500-P05) advertisement consent be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:
1. Standard advertisement (7A01)
 2. Type of illumination (7A07)
- b) That in respect of signs 5, 6 and 7 (as shown on drawing ref: B18500 – P05) advertisement consent be **REFUSED** for the following reason:
1. The proposed signs 5, 6 and 7 (as detailed on drawing reference B18500 – P05), by reason of their size and number together with the existing advertisements displayed on the site, would result in a cluttered appearance that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Buntingford Conservation Area wherein the site is situated. If permitted the proposal would be contrary to policy BH15 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

Directive:

1. Other legislation (01OL1)

_____ (086812AD.SE)

1.0 Background:

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract. The building forms part of the frontage of Baldock Street, and is located within the Buntingford Conservation Area, which in this part, is characterised by dwellings of varying size and styles and periods lining the highway, mixed with buildings with an employment use.

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- 1.2 This proposal is to replace the existing signage on the site with two externally illuminated fascia signs, two externally illuminated panel signs and five non-illuminated panel signs. The proposed signs are described below:

Fascia Sign 1 - advertising 'Nisa Local' to replace the existing 'Londis' fascia sign located on the front elevation of the building facing Baldock Road. The signage is proposed to measure 4.5 metres long by 0.64 metres high and is of acrylic lettering applied to the brickwork via locators. The trough light illuminating the sign is to extend to a width of 6 metres.

Fascia sign 2 - advertising 'Baldock Road' is to be sited to the left of fascia Sign 1, and is to measure 2 metres long by 0.25 metres high and is to be constructed in the same materials and fixed to the wall by the same method as fascia sign 1. The lighting trough illuminating the sign is proposed to be 2.5 metres in length.

Sign 3 – a high level sign located on the east facing elevation of the building which is proposed to be externally illuminated. It is proposed to measure 1 metre in width by 2 metres in height and is to replace an existing 'Londis' sign. The sign would be illuminated by a small trough light.

Signs 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 - are proposed to be located on the elevation of the building fronting Baldock Road and would cover the doors and windows at the ground floor of this elevation. The signs are proposed to be constructed of vinyl applied to a poly carbonate panel. These signs would replace existing panels. The vinyl graphics are of varying sizes and form.

Sign 9 - is a high level sign located on the west facing elevation of the building. The sign is proposed to be externally illuminated and would measure 1 metre in width by 1.3 metres in height. It would replace an existing externally illuminated 'Londis' sign.

- 1.3 This application is being reported to Committee as the applicant is Cllr Basra.

2.0 Site History:

- 2.1 The only relevant planning history to the consideration of this application is LPA ref: 3/99/1586/AD, which gave consent for the fascia sign fronting Baldock Road and the sign to the east-facing elevation. No record of advertisement consent has been found for the remaining existing signage on the property (i.e. the blocked up doors and windows).

3.0 Consultation Responses:

3.1 The Council's Conservation Officer has commented that, in assessing the vinyl window graphics as proposed, these are considered unacceptable as the graphics, due to their design present a cluttered appearance which detracts from the design of the building and its immediate setting; the collection of which is considered to make a positive contribution to the character of Baldock Street.

3.2 They comment further that the two externally illuminated fascia signs and two externally illuminated 'door panel signs' would have little impact, subject to the removal of the three graphic panels to the windows being removed.

4.0 Town Council Representations:

4.1 Buntingford Town Council comments that in taking into account the proposals are the same as existing with just a name change; this Council has no objections to the proposals.

5.0 Other Representations:

5.1 The application has been advertised by way of press notice, site notice and neighbour notification.

5.2 No letters of representation have been received.

6.0 Policy:

6.1 The relevant 'saved' Local Plan policies in this application include the following:

BH15 – Advertisements in Conservation Areas

6.2 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also of relevance in the determination of this application.

7.0 Considerations:

7.1 The determining issues in relation to this application are the impact of the proposed advertisements on amenity and public safety. Regard is also given to policy BH15 of the Local Plan, which considers proposals for the display of advertisements in Conservation Areas to be acceptable where they:

- are either painted or individually lettered in a suitable material of an appropriate size and design in relation to the building or fascia upon which they are to be displayed;
- shall preferably be non-illuminated. Where illumination is proposed as necessary it should be discreet in size and of a minimum level;
- are of a form that shall be of a traditional fascia or hanging type;
- other than in the most exceptional circumstances, be of an appropriate size necessary to convey their message.

Amenity

- 7.2 It is considered that fascia sign 1 and signs 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9 would not have a harmful impact on the amenity of the area or building upon which they are to be displayed. Whilst the signs are not constructed in traditional materials, which would normally be sought in the Conservation Area and in accordance with policy BH15 of the Local Plan, the use of acrylic is in this case appropriate in relation to the building upon which it is to be displayed, and not considered to be harmful to the amenity of the area. The means of illumination of signs 1, 2, 3 and 9 is considered to be acceptable and the extent of illumination is not considered to be out of keeping in this location close to the centre of Buntingford. The Conservation Officer has not raised any concerns with these signs, and has commented that they would have little impact.
- 7.3 Turning now to signs 5, 6 and 7 (vinyl signs to be applied to the three blocked up windows fronting Baldock Street), it is considered that these signs, by reason of their size and number, together with the other advertisements to be displayed on the site would result in a cluttered appearance that in Officers opinion would be harmful to the amenity of the area and in particular the character and appearance of the Buntingford Conservation Area. Each sign is proposed to be some 1.2 metres wide and 2 metres high. Together with the signs proposed to the blocked up doorways on this elevation and the central fascia sign, it is considered that these would lead to a cluttered appearance to this elevation fronting Baldock Street.
- 7.4 The Council's Conservation Officer has commented that the vinyl window graphics are considered to be unacceptable as the graphics due to their design, present a cluttered appearance which detracts from the considered design of the building and its immediate setting. The Conservation Officer considers that this building together with those surrounding make a positive contribution to the character of Baldock Street.

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7.5 Taking into account the above considerations, it is considered that signs 5, 6 and 7 would be harmful to the amenity of the surrounding area and Conservation Area, and it is therefore recommended that advertisement consent is refused for these three signs.

Public Safety

7.6 County Highways do not wish to restrict the grant of permission, and note that the proposal has no implication on highway safety. Having regard to their comments and the size and siting of the signs it is considered that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on public safety.

8.0 Conclusion:

8.1 In accordance with the above, Officers therefore recommend that advertisement consent is part granted and part refused.

8.2 Fascia Sign 1 and signs 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9 are considered acceptable subject to the standard advertisement time limit condition and type of illumination condition as listed at the head of this report.

8.3 The proposed signs 5, 6 and 7 by reason of their size and number together with the existing advertisements displayed on the site, would result in a cluttered appearance that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Buntingford Conservation Area, and it is therefore recommended that advertisement consent is refused for these signs.