

JOINT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE (CAMBRIDGE FRINGE SITES)

Report by: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Date: 14th September 2016

Application Number	16/1242/ADV	Agenda Item	
Date Received	19 July 2016	Officer	Mr John Evans
Target Date	13 September 2016		
Ward	Castle		
Site	North West Cambridge Development Site, Madingley Road and Huntingdon Road.		
Proposal	Erection of two temporary illuminated totem signs on Madingley Road and Huntingdon Road.		
Applicant	Sainsbury's and The University of Cambridge		

The above application has been reported to Joint Development Control Committee for the Cambridge Fringes in accordance with scheme of delegation.

SUMMARY	<p>The development accords with the Development Plan for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The proposed totem signs will be in place for a temporary three year period only following opening of the new supermarket on the North West Cambridge Development.2. The signs are considered reasonably necessary to support the initial opening of the supermarket, to support the local centre and, on balance, will not create significant harm to visual amenity during that period.3. The signs will not harm public safety.
RECOMMENDATION	APPROVAL

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT

1.1 The application site relates to the North West Cambridge Development site (NWCD), located on the north-western edge of the City of Cambridge, to the

south and west of the village of Girton. The proposed totem signs relate to the new supermarket located in the local centre of the NWCD.

- 1.2 The proposed two totem signs are located at the northern junction with Huntingdon Road (A1307) and the main entrance to the NWCD (Eddington Avenue) and at the southern junction with Madingley Road (A1303) and Eddington Avenue. Both signs are positioned on recently planted grass verges which are not part of the public highway.
- 1.3 Both signs are sited on land designated as open space/green belt in the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (NWCAAP).

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Permission is sought for the erection of two totem signs in relation to the new supermarket on the NWCD. They are intended to advertise the store for the first three years of opening to support the customer base and development of the local centre.
- 2.2 Both signs are 4.4m in height, with a width of 2.1m and are internally illuminated through back lit LEDs for the acrylic lettering only. They contain the corporate branding of Sainsbury's supermarket, the future operator for the food store unit on the NWCD.

3.0 SITE HISTORY

Reference	Description	Outcome
16/0284/ADV	Site wide signage consisting of 6x double sided map nodes (S2) and 22 x finger post signs (S3)	Approved
S/0450/16/AF	Concurrent SCDC application	Approved

4.0 PUBLICITY

- 4.1 Advertisement: Yes
Adjoining Owners: Yes
Site Notice Displayed: Yes

5.0 POLICY

Legislation

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007

- 5.1 Relevant Development Plan policies

North West Cambridge Area Action Plan

NW2: Development Principles
NW4: Site and Setting

5.2 Relevant Central Government Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations:

Central Government Guidance	National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 National Planning Policy Framework – Planning Practice Guidance March 2014
Material Considerations	<u>Informal Guidance</u> Guidance for Marketing Signage for Cambridge Fringe Sites - March 2012 Huntingdon Road: Cambridge Suburbs and Approaches Study March 2009. Madingley Road: Cambridge Suburbs and Approaches Study March 2009.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

Cambridgeshire County Council (Highways Development Management)

- 6.1 The proposed locations are not within adopted public highway.
- 6.2 Please incorporate a condition restricting illumination.

Urban Design and Conservation Team

- 6.3 The proposed totem signs, at heights of 7m and 5m, are considered to be excessive in size.
- 6.4 The proposed totems are standard in design and reflect Sainsbury's current branding, which in our view is out of keeping in this location with the NWCD.
- 6.5 We are also concerned this proposal will lead to a proliferation of additional totem poles. As an alternative approach, we suggest that 'food store' should be added to the road signs that already exist for 'Eddington'. In our view, a temporary canvas banner advertising the new opening of the Sainsbury's food store would be a more suitable approach.
- 6.6 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:

1 Lansdowne Road

7.2 The representations can be summarised as follows:

- The signs will be in place for many years and are not temporary.
- The totems are out of keeping with the prestigious NWCD.
- Obtrusive signage to generate customer base is unnecessary.
- General NWCD signage is unclear.
- A proliferation of street signage is likely.

7.3 Full details of the representation can be inspected on the application file.

8.0 ASSESSMENT

8.1 The NPPG requires that local planning authorities control the display of advertisements in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan, in so far as they are material, and any other relevant factors. Unless the nature of the advertisement is in itself harmful to amenity or public safety, consent cannot be refused because the local planning authority considers the advertisement to be misleading or unnecessary.

Amenity

8.2 The site of both totem signs falls within space identified as open space/green belt with the NWCAAP. The principle function of this area is to ensure that Girton does not coalesce with Cambridge. While this key objective will not be compromised by the application proposal, the purposes of including land within Green Belt have been given appropriate weight in assessing the impacts upon visual amenity.

8.2 Both entrances to the NWCD are wide, open vehicle junctions. The totems are likely to be relatively prominent in context. However, it is recognised that planting and vegetation will soon soften their appearance as it establishes. At present, tree and vegetation cover has only recently been planted at both junctions, but it will become more established over time over the next 12 months. This contributes to the officer view that the signs are acceptable for a temporary period.

8.3 Only the acrylic lettering of the signs will be internally illuminated which should ensure that they will not be unduly intrusive or strident in the street scene during the three years they are in place.

8.4 Officers recognise the need for the future supermarket operator to attract custom from a wider catchment, particularly during the early stages of the development. It may not be obvious when the supermarket has opened for trading, partly because it will not be directly visible from Huntingdon Road or

Madingley Road. Officers consider the needs of the supermarket operator to have a strong launch, in the interests of the developing community, reasonable in this context. An appropriate rationale has been provided for the new signage, which is in accordance with the Council's informal guidance for marketing signage on the Fringe Sites.

- 8.5 The University has produced a comprehensive wayfinding strategy for the NWCD. While I have some concerns there will be pressure for further signage at the site entrances for other retailers and services within the NWCD, this is not the University's intention. This demonstrates that signage has been considered strategically and future pressure for other signs is unlikely. This notwithstanding, any additional advertisements would require Advertisement Consent and would be considered on their individual merits.
- 8.6 On this basis, while concerns have been raised by the Urban Design Team, given that only the acrylic lettering will be internally illuminated and given the signs will be in place for a temporary three year period only, it is considered that on balance the signs are acceptable.

Public Safety

- 8.7 Visibility splays accompanying the application submission demonstrate the proposed totems will not conflict with vehicle sightlines at each junction. The signs will not in the view of officers create any undue harm to highway safety.
- 8.8 The Highways Authority seeks comfort to ensure that the totems do not incorporate any exposed bulbs or excessively bright illumination which might cause distraction to motorists. The applicant has confirmed that the method of illumination is internally lit acrylic lettering only, which is considered acceptable. This can also be ensured through the imposition of condition 2 for the avoidance of doubt.

Third Party Representations

- 8.9 The issues raised in the representation received have been covered in the above report and are summarised below in table 1.

Issue	Report section/officer response
The signs will be in place for many years and are not temporary.	The applicant seeks consent for three years only. The Council can ensure their removal through the imposition of condition 1.
General NWCD signage is unclear.	The University has considered site wide signage comprehensively. See paragraph 8.6. Advertisement of the supermarket in the early years of occupation is considered reasonably necessary.

Proliferation of street signage.	The Council has control of any future signage under the Control of Advertisement Regulations.
Temporary canvas banner advertising the new opening of the Sainsbury's food store would be a more suitable approach (Suggested by the Urban Design Team).	Canvas banners are difficult to maintain and can become untethered. The University is strongly of the view more substantial totem signs are required for the duration of the temporary permission. Officers consider this requirement reasonable.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposed totem signs are considered acceptable for a temporary three year period only, to enable the new supermarket to establish a customer base, in the interests of the success of the NWCD. The appearance of the totem signs and the extent of their illumination are not considered to be unduly harmful to public safety or wider amenity. APPROVAL is recommended.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

1. The express consent hereby approved expires 3 years from the date of first opening of the new supermarket association with the North West Cambridge Development local centre and the advertisement hereby approved shall be displayed before that date.

Reason: In accordance with Part 3 Regulation 14 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 and because the totem signs are acceptable for a temporary period only to facilitate the opening of the new supermarket on the North West Cambridge Development.

2. Only the white acrylic letters of the two totems signs shall be internally illuminated.

Reason: in the interest of visual amenity and Highway Safety (NWCAAP policy NW2).

Contact details

To inspect the application or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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The following pages include:

APPENDIX 1 – Totem sign locations and elevations