

LOCATION:	Tesco , Station Road, Chobham, Woking, Surrey, GU24 8AQ
PROPOSAL:	Application for Advertisement Consent for 1 fascia sign, 1x projecting sign, 4x vinyl, 1x frosting, 2x dibond
TYPE:	Advert
APPLICANT:	Mr Andy Horwood
OFFICER:	Melissa Turney

This application would normally be determined under the Council's Scheme of Delegation but it is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee on the request of Councillor Tedder because any change would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Chobham Village Conservation Area.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT subject to conditions

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application seeks advertisement consent for a total of 9 adverts including the erection of a fascia sign and a projecting sign above the ground floor on the front elevation; three vinyl adverts on the ground floor front elevation windows; one vinyl and plain frosted glass on the east elevation ground floor flank wall; and 2x dibond - directional sign for the car park on the eastern boundary fence and disable parking sign on the ground floor front elevation. The application is retrospective as all adverts have been erected.
- 1.2 The application site is located on the northern side of Station Road, within the settlement area of Chobham and within the Chobham Village Conservation Area. There are no neighbouring statutory listed buildings or within the immediate vicinity. The existing adverts are located on the southern (front) and eastern (side) elevation of the building. Two additional signs relating to a disabled parking space and entrance into the car parking are by the entrance and front elevation of the building.
- 1.3 The retrospective adverts and signs do not result in harm to the visual amenity of the site and surroundings. Furthermore the existing signs preserve the character and appearance of the Chobham Village Conservation Area. The adverts also result in no adverse impact on public safety, including highway and pedestrian safety.
- 1.4 It is therefore recommended to grant advertisement consent subject to conditions.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is a two storey detached building which is currently occupied by Tesco Express and is sited on the northern side of Station Road. The site is located on the edge of the settlement of Chobham and is located within the Chobham Village Conservation Area. The site is visible from a number of public vantage points. Chobham Village Hall, a Locally Listed Building, is located within 40m to the west of the site.

2.2 A public footpath runs along the eastern boundary of the site. The building immediately to the east is an empty building previously a restaurant and west is a public house and are two storey flat roof buildings. To the south of the site opposite is the recreation ground.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

3.1 The site has an extensive planning history. The most recent planning history which relates to adverts at the premises is listed below:

12/0188	Advertisement Consent for the erection of one externally illuminated fascia sign and one externally illuminated hanging sign. Granted on the 15 June 2012 subject to conditions.
---------	--

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The application seeks retrospective advertisement consent for new signage for the existing Tesco Express store. As part of the negotiation with the applicant on this application signs 1 and 3 which related to box fascia's have been removed from this application. The remaining signages forming part of this proposal are listed below:

- Sign 2 (Box fascia) – Located to the eastern side of the front elevation, 2.765m in width, 0.57m in height, finished in aluminium powder coated white. This sign would be externally illuminated via existing swan lighting.
- Sign 4 (Projecting sign) – Located to the western side of the front elevation, 0.8m in width and 0.65m in height, finished in white aluminium powder coated in white. This sign would be non-illuminated
- Sign 5 (Vinyl Advert) – Located to the front elevation, 1.835m in height and 1.315 in width – vinyl applied internally (White Chiffon Vinyl to be applied on reverse side the shop)
- Sign 6 (Store Directory Vinyl) - located centrally on the front elevation (inside and outside) - 1.7m in height and 0.8m in width vinyl applied internally
- Sign 7 (Advert Vinyl) – Located to the eastern side of the front elevation, 1.780m in height and 2.28m in width applied externally. (White Chiffon Vinyl to be applied on reverse side the shop)
- Sign 8 (Advert Vinyl) – Located on side the elevation (eastern), 1.78m in height and 1.655m in width, applied externally.
- Sign 9 (Plain Frosting) – Located on side elevation (eastern) would be 3.11m in height and 1.090m in width.
- Sign 10 – New wall mounted disable car parking sign
- Sign 11 – New fence mounted directional signage

4.2 During the course of the application amended plans were received to remove the blue fascia from the front elevation, alter signs 2 and 4 to remove the internal illumination, and elevations submitted for sign 10 and 11.

4.3 A heritage statement has been submitted in support of the application and any relevant extracts from this document will be referenced in section 7 of this report.

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

5.1 The following external consultees were consulted and their comments are summarised in the table below:

External Consultation	Comments Received
County Highways Authority	<p>No objections are raised regarding highway safety</p> <p>(See Annex A for a copy of their response).</p>
Chobham Parish Council	<p>Objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The scheme contains internal illumination elements unsuitable in the Conservation Area, failing to respect its historic character. - The large front and side window advertising vinyl posters are a visually dominant form. - The window vinyls fail to respect the rural village character of the street scene. <p>Request the planning history is reviewed. The appearance of the store was concern to members of the public and controls were put in place. No change in policy that would suggest any relaxation in this regard.</p> <p>[Officer response: During the course of the application officers have worked with the applicant to seek design changes to remove the blue fascia and the internal illumination</p>

5.2 The following internal consultees were consulted and their comments are summarised in the table below:

Internal Consultation	Comments Received
Urban Design and Heritage Consultant	<p>29th June – Objection;</p> <p>Objection to the internal illumination elements and the large scale front and side vinyls will have detrimental effect on and fails to respect the enhance, the historic character of the Chobham Village</p> <p>1st September – Objection</p> <p>Objection to the internally illuminated and halo lighting Omission of blue front fascia is welcomed Vinyl's on balance are considered acceptable.</p>

	<p>30th November – No objection</p> <p>Following submission of amended plans while sign 4 should be traditional hanging sign the main issues have been addressed and no objection is raised.</p> <p>(See Annex B for a copy of the responses)</p>
Environmental Health Officer	<p>No objection as the level of illumination is within the permitted level</p> <p>(Officer comment: Following the removal of the internally illuminated signs no further comments have been received from Environmental Health Officer. Due to the amendments there would be no change to the existing illumination from the Swan neck lights)</p>

6.0 REPRESENTATION

6.1 A total of 4 individual letters of notification were sent out on 2nd June 2023, 11th July 2023, 4th August 2023 and 24th August 2023. A site notice was displayed on the 7th July 2023 and 29th August 2023 and a press notice published on 16th June 2023. To date one letter of representation has been received.

6.2 The table below summarises the material planning reasons for objection:

Material Reason for Objection	Officer Response
<p><u>Character</u></p> <p>Any signage forward of the property or larger in size is not keeping with the rural village of Chobham.</p>	<p>The signs are not considered to dominate the building or surrounding area. Furthermore, the signage would impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.</p>
<p><u>Neighbours</u></p> <p>Close to adjoining properties</p>	<p>The site is opposite the recreation ground. No adverts would face towards the neighbour at Flexlands Farmhouse to the rear of the site. To the east is an empty building previously a restaurant and west is a public house. The site is therefore located a sufficient distance from neighbouring properties not to have a detrimental impact.</p>

6.3 The table below summarises the non-material planning reasons for objection:

Non-Material Reason for Objection	Officer Response
<p>The car park is rammed, store is busy the litter as result is pretty much out of control</p>	<p>Not a material consideration with an application for advertisement consent because the considerations are limited to visual amenity and public safety.</p>

7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

- 7.1 The application site is located within the Chobham, as set out in the proposals' map included in the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2012 (CSDMP). For this development, consideration is given to policies DM9, DM11 and DM17 of the CSDMP, Chobham Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2001 (CCA), The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Regard is also had to the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) guide: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements 2014.
- 7.2 The advertisement regulations require Local Planning Authorities to consider the impact of advertisements in respect to amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan and other relevant factors. Factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest. Factors relevant to public safety and to this proposal include, the safety of persons using any highway. There is no statutory definition of amenity but the PPG states that this is usually understood to mean the effect on visual and amenity in the immediate neighbourhood of an advertisement or site for the display of advertisements, where residents or passers-by will be aware of the advertisement.
- 7.3 Therefore, the material issues to consider with the application are:
- Amenity (including residential and visual amenity); and,
 - Public Safety (including highway and pedestrian safety)

7.4 Amenity

- 7.4.1 Paragraph 136 of the NPPF states that the quality and character of a place can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. Policy DM9 and DM17 of the CSDMP respectively, requires development to respect and enhance and area's character; and, promotes the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and its setting.
- 7.4.2 The Chobham Conservation Appraisal (CCA) 2001 explains that the High Street with a concentration of statutory listed buildings on each side forms the historic core of Chobham Conservation Area, of which the Grade I Listed St. Lawrence's Church is architecturally and historically the most important building. The site is outside of this historic core located on Station Road which contains a mix of uses including residential, commercial and community facilities. The 2001 CCA states that the Station Road tree lined approach bordering the recreation area makes a special contribution to the conservation area. However, the CCA explains that Station Road does not contain any Listed Buildings but that the properties between the Village Hall and the High Street make a pleasant group. The CCA also acknowledges the modern additions within this area. This includes the application site which is a modern style building. To the west of the site is a Locally Listed Building Church Hall and the modern forecourt of the Esso petrol filling station, on the roundabout corner of Station Road and the High Street, contains a plethora of signage including illuminated lettering on the totem pole.
- 7.4.3 Given this mixed historic and modern context, the type and style of signage on this modern building would need to complement its modern architecture. A heritage style hanging sign, for example, would visually appear out of place on this building. Furthermore, the building is setback from the highway by approximately 8 metres and given that it is on the opposite side of the road from the tree-lined approach, visually it does not conflict with this important approach into the conservation area. The fascia and projecting signage has replaced existing signage of a similar size and design and so visually do not have a significant greater impact than those replaced. Overall, the Council's Heritage Consultant has raised no objection and considers the main issues have been addressed. The previous projecting

sign was a modern interpretation of a hanging sign with lighting troughs above the sign and was located fully below the first floor window. It is noted that the Heritage Consultant would have preferred a traditional hanging sign, however, the existing projecting sign is sited higher on the building, is a box design but is non-illuminated. Whilst therefore the old sign was better in terms of siting and design, on balance the overall visual impact is the same because the new sign is an improvement on the previous signage by being non-illuminated. The projecting sign is also on the western end of the front of the building closest to the public house, and combined with the setback from the road, this further reduces its impact.

- 7.4.4 Although the vinyls add to the total number of adverts on the building, cumulatively this does not result in clutter. Rather, these vinyls are considered to provide some visual interest to the front of the building and restrict views of the internal roller shutters which are a poor feature of the existing building. While there would be an increased number of adverts, it is considered these are broken up with sufficient space between them as not to dominate the front elevation of the building.
- 7.4.5 The Council's Heritage Consultant originally raised concerns about the internal illuminated signs. This type of lighting can be particularly visually harmful. During the course of the application all internally illuminated signs have been removed from the proposal. Instead the fascia sign is externally illuminated with the existing swan neck lighting and this is a type of lighting that is more appropriate in a conservation area. The proposal does not therefore result in increased level of illumination or lights. The Environmental Health Officer has reviewed the application and raised no objection due to the illumination were within the permitted levels. As already explained, unlike the previous projecting sign, the replacement projecting sign has no illumination and so this is an improvement.
- 7.4.6 Two additional signs have been erected. Sign 10 is a disabled car parking sign and sign 11 is an entrance sign. Both of these signs are considered necessary to advertise the disabled parking and directional signage for customers and would not result in a detriment impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 7.4.7 None of the signs would not directly front or face any residential accommodation. The building to the west is an empty building, previously a restaurant, and the building to the east is a public house and opposite the site is a recreation ground. As such it is considered that the retrospective adverts and signs would not result in detrimental impact to nearby residential occupiers amenities.
- 7.4.8 For the reasons given above the adverts would not result in harm to the amenity of the surrounding area, neighbouring occupiers or the setting of the Conservation Area and are in accordance with Policies DM9 and DM17 of the CSDMP and paragraph 136 of the NPPF.

7.5 Public Safety

- 7.5.1 Paragraph 136 of the NPPF and the Advertisement Regulation 2007 require consideration of public safety. The site fronts the A3046 Station Road and therefore the County Highways Authority has been consulted on the application. Policy DM11 of the CSDMP requires new development not to result in a detrimental impact on the safe and efficient operation of the highway network.
- 7.5.2 The County Highways Authority raise no objection. The proposal does not result in an unsafe environment for pedestrians and other highway users and are acceptable in respect to public safety.

8.0 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

- 8.1 Under the Equalities Act 2010 the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation of persons by reason of age, disability, pregnancy, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation. This planning application has been processed and assessed with due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty. The proposal is not considered to conflict with this duty.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The retrospective adverts do not result in harm to the amenity of the surrounding area or neighbouring occupiers amenity and do not result in harm to Chobham Village Conservation Area. The retrospective adverts do not result in unsafe highway conditions to the detriment of the safe and efficient operation of the public highways network. Therefore, the application complies with Policies DM9, DM11 and DM17 of the CSDMP and NPPF.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

GRANT subject to the following conditions:

1. This consent shall be limited to a five year period from the date of the permission, when the advertisement hereby permitted shall be removed and the land reinstated to its former condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To accord with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

2. The development shall be retained in accordance with the following approved plans:

03_6683_03B_R3 Received 4th November 2023
02_6683_02D_R3 Received 4th November 2023
Projecting+sign+V2.1 Rev B Received 4th November 2023
03_6683_03C Received 3rd August 2023
02_6683_02C Received 26TH May 2023
Location Plan Received 26TH May 2023

unless the prior written approval has been obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning and as advised in ID.17a of the Planning Practice Guidance.

3. (a) Any advertisements displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

(b) Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition.

(c) Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the removal shall be carried out to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

(d) 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.

(e) No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any road traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air,

or so as otherwise to render hazardous the use of any highway, railway, waterway (including any coastal waters) or aerodrome (civil or military).

Reason: To comply with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. The development here by permitted shall not include any internal illuminated signs.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities enjoyed by neighbouring residents and to accord with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informative(s)

1. This Decision Notice is a legal document and therefore should be kept in a safe place as it may be required if or when selling your home. A replacement copy can be obtained, however, there is a charge for this service.