

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2007/1519/AD
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NOTATION: The site lies within the settlement of Hatfield as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE: The site is located on the west side of Comet Way and is an existing car dealership which has already existing signage relating to the current use by Peugeot. There is currently a tall freestanding sign located towards the front of the site which has a square blue sign with Peugeots name on it supported on a much narrower square steel pole. There are also an existing number of company signs on the existing building.

The character of the area is commercial, with Kentucky Fried Chicken directly to the north and the parade of shops of Harpsfield Broadway to the South.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

Following planning permission earlier this year to change the existing car dealership into a dual franchise for Peugeot and Renault which required some changes to the external layout of parking and access to the current site, along with changes to the external appearance of the existing building and new reconfiguration of internal layout of space(S6/20071143 /AD), this application is to amend the existing signage to incorporate signage for one of the 2 car manufactures that will function from the site. A second separate application has been received for the replacement signage for Renault (S6/2007/1701 /AD).

The application seeks advertisement consent for the erection of 7 different signs which are as follows:

1. RENAULT sign advertising company name fixed to the side of the existing showroom building which would be 1.05m deep and 7.294m long and internally illuminated. The agents have confirmed that this sign would appear grey when non-illuminated and white when lit.
2. WATERS sign advertising ownership of company fixed to the front of the existing building which would be 3.5m long and 0.525m deep and internally illuminated. The agents have confirmed that this sign would appear grey when non-illuminated and white when lit.
3. RENAULT sign advertising company name fixed front of the existing showroom building which would be 1.05m deep and 7.294m long and

internally illuminated. The agents have confirmed that this sign would appear grey when non-illuminated and white when lit.

4. Sales entrance plaque which is a general information sign fixed to the front of the existing building by the side of the new entrance door to the Renault showroom which would be 240mm x 480mm
5. Free standing entrance statement structure supporting an illuminated logo close to the existing main front entrance which would be coloured in the corporate yellow colour of RENUALT with overall dimensions of 4.1m x 4.2m.
6. A non illuminated 'WELCOME' sign above the main entrance door finished in aluminium with overall dimensions of 1.8m x 0.3m.
7. A freestanding illuminated Pylon pole located towards the front boundary of the site which is 4.5m high and 1.26m wide and 0.26 m deep. The design has the Renault logo set against a yellow background with a halo illumination around the logo. The lower part of the structure is painted white and the overall sign is illuminated by ground mounted 150 watt halide spot lights enclosed in a surrounding curb.

All signs are static with a maximum illumination of 250 candelas/sqm

PLANNING HISTORY:

Relevant advertisement consents:

S6/1983/7018/AD - Illuminated post sign – granted 15/12/007

S6/1989/7045/AD - Canopy fascia, wall mounted company identity variable print signs all internally illuminated (static) – granted 08/01/90

S6/1995/100/AD Erection of internally illuminated fascia signs and pole sign - granted 20/03/95

Relevant full planning applications

S6/2007/1143/FP - Alterations To The Southeast External Elevation, Erection Of A Small Ground Floor Extension And New Entrance Feature In Connection With The Occupation Of The Premises As A Dual Franchise - Granted 27/09/07

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

National Policy

PPG19 Outdoor Advertisement Control

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011: None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

CONSULTATIONS:

Highways Authority - not objection subject a planning condition limiting the intensity of illumination.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS: None

REPRESENTATIONS:

I letter was received from Welwyn Hatfield Access Group requesting that the application is considered subject to the standards and criteria outlined in the current District Plan (Policy D3d & D5).

Period expired 15/11/07.

DISCUSSION: The main issues are:

1. The impact on visual amenity.
2. The impact on highway safety
3. Other material planning considerations

1. The impact on visual amenity.

Policy D1 and the guidance contained in the Supplementary Design Guidance is relevant. The proposal will update the existing signage on the current buildings, and although some of the signs are large, the building is of sufficient size to ensure that they would remain subservient in scale to the overall character of the building. The building is set back around 30 from the front boundary with Comet Way, which would reduce the prominence of the signs to an acceptable level when viewed from the adjoining public highway. The character of the surrounding area is mainly commercial with a shopping parade to the south and a fast food takeaway and eatery to the north and so these signs would not detract from the visual amenity of the streetscene.

The freestanding sign to the front of the site would be the most prominent one of those proposed, however through negotiation the original one (which was 6.5m high and 1.26m wide) has been reduced to 4.5m in height whilst retaining the same width. This reduction is much more in keeping and scale with the character of the streetscene, and also the white colour to the lower section would look less prominent than maybe other colours. It would also be reasonable to say these 'types' of sign are now a more common feature often found in the forecourt of petrol stations and streetscenes, although, this site is a car dealership.

On balance, it is considered that sign and the others fixed to the existing building would not appear unduly prominent in the streetscene in this location and would not detract from the visual amenity of the area.

Some of the signs are to be illuminated, however, all of these will be internally lit apart from the sign to the front of the site which has external to its base. Taking account of the character of the surrounding area, this type of lighting would not be out of keeping and would not harm the amenity of any adjoining residential neighbours.

The proposal therefore complies with Policy D1 and the accompanying SDG.

2. As the proposed signage would not be illuminated, and due to the suitable recessed positioning of the signage, it is considered that the proposed installations would have no detrimental impacts on the safety of surrounding highway users.

As the impact on highway safety was not a reason for the refusal of the previous application, it is considered that it would be unreasonable to object to the application on those grounds at this time.

3. There are no other material planning considerations of relevance to the determination of this application.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed installations, by virtue of their suitable scale, design and positioning, would not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the application site, the street-scene or the area in general. The proposal would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety and so complies with Policy D1 and the accompanying Supplementary Design Guidance.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

CONDITIONS:

1. Any advertisement 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.
2. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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 or aerodrome (civil or military).

REASON FOR CONDITIONS 1-5 ABOVE : To comply with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

6. Illumination : The intensity of illumination shall be controlled at a level that is within the limit recommended by the Institution of Lighting Engineers in the publication "Brightness of illuminated Advertisements' ILE Technical report

No.5. Furthermore, this consent does not authorise any flashing, intermittent or recurring form of illumination.

REASON: So that drivers of vehicles along the adjacent Comet Way are not dazzled or distracted, leading to interference to the free and safe flow of traffic along the highway and in the interests of the visual amenity of the area in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan and to comply with the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance 19 (Outdoor Advertisement Control).

7. The current existing sign 'Peugeot' granted by application S6/1995/100/AD on 20/03/95 (pole sign) is to be removed prior to the erection of the sign No.7 (shown on approved drawing Ren0748planning Rev A) hereby granted.

REASON: To ensure that the visual amenity of the streetscene is safeguarded from excessive visual clutter of signage on this application site and to comply with the requirements of Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Council and Supplementary Design Guidance and Planning Policy Guidance Note No.19.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION: N/A

INFORMATIVES: None

DRAWING NUMBERS: 1:1000 Site Location Plan & 91069/P01 Rev A – BOTH received 15/10/07 & Ren 0748 planning received and date stamped 12/12/07

Signature of author..... Date.....