

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2007/17019/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 already been received for the replacement signage for Renault (S6/2007/1519/AD).

The application seeks advertisement consent for the erection of 5 different signs which are as follows:

1. 2 No. PEUGOT signs which are 3.93m long and 1.024m deep with white letters on a blue opaque background with internally illuminated letters on the top fascia of the existing building.
2. 1 No. logo sign (Chrome Lion) which is 1.047m high on the fascia of the building above the entrance door.
3. 1 No. WATERS sign with white letters on internally illuminated blue opaque back ground on top fascia of existing building.
4. 2 No. Corner wrap around yellow internally illuminated signs comprising of 3 elements with an overall height of 0.710m (with stop ends)

5. 1 No. 4 m high externally illuminated totem sign which is 4m high and 1.17m wide located towards the front of the site.

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

S6/2007/1519/AD - Installation of Illuminated And Non-Illuminated Signage Granted 13/12/07

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:

D1 - Quality of design

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005

CONSULTATIONS:

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

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS: None

REPRESENTATIONS:

None

Period expired 21/12/07.

DISCUSSION: The main issues are:

1. The impact on visual amenity.
2. The impact on highway safety

1. The impact on visual amenity.

Policy D1 and the guidance contained in the Supplementary Design Guidance are relevant.

This application should be considered in conjunction with a previous application for Renault which will be implemented as part of the dual franchise project granted planning permission by application S6/2007/1143/FP.

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 6.0 m high and 1.1750 m wide) has been reduced to 4m in height with a width of 1.17m. This reduction is much more in keeping and scale with the character of the streetscene, particularly as the blue colour of the base is visually prominent. 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.

It is considered that this proposal, when combined with the other advertisement consent for Renault approved last year, would still respect the visual amenity of the streetscene when viewed together and would not appear unduly prominent in the streetscene.

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 lighting 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. The impact on highway safety

The Highways Authority has raised no objections to the proposal subject to a condition limiting the lighting levels and this would be a reasonable request in terms of highway safety.

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).

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

INFORMATIVES: None

DRAWING NUMBERS: 1:1250 Site Location Plan & 91069/D01 & 91069/D02 & mefrd35r.B (Totem Sign Base Detail) & 91069/P03 – Rev A – all received and date stamped 12/11/07 & 91069/D03 rB & 91069/P01 Rev A – both received date stamped 3/1/08

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