

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2008/632/LB
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NOTATION:

The application site lies within the Hatfield Aerodrome Inset as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005. Within this inset, the two listed buildings within the site are designated partly as 'Aviation Heritage Centre' and partly undesignated.

The Hatfield Aerodrome Supplementary Planning Guidance adopted in November 1999 identifies the listed buildings as a separate zone within the Masterplan.

The overall site of this application includes land to the rear of the listed buildings, which is within Employment Area 6 in the Hatfield Aerodrome Inset and the Business Park area in the adopted Masterplan.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

The site is located on the north-western side of the A1001 Comet Way between the original de Havilland Gatehouse to the south and the T-Mobile offices to the north.

Planning permission and listed building consent were granted in 2006 for the refurbishment and extension of the listed buildings to provide a new Hatfield Police Station.

Work on this scheme is virtually complete, with the original gardens to the front of the listed buildings having been restored, and extensive car parking located to the rear of the buildings.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

The proposals are for a new range of seven signs, two on the listed buildings and five in various locations around the front of the site, identifying the buildings as 'Hatfield Police Station' and presenting the relevant logos for Hertfordshire Constabulary and the Court Service. Advertisement consent has already been granted for the proposals under reference S6/2008/203/AD.

The current application seeks listed building consent to erect two internally illuminated fascia signs to the building, a third sign comprising non-illuminated built-up letters on a section of wall at the road junction with Comet Way, and four non-illuminated free standing totem signs around the site.

The fascia signs would have dimensions of 9180mm x 472mm and 9630mm x 495mm and have internally illuminated lettering in blue colour. One would be erected on the south elevation of the former canteen building and another on the east elevation of that building, to the left of the main entrance to the new police station.

A double-sided directional totem sign would be erected adjacent to the south elevation of the building. It would be non-illuminated and have dimensions of 2000mm x 750mm.

At the south-eastern corner of the site would be a double-sided directional totem sign of 2000mm x 750mm and a sign of 2890mm x 222mm comprising blue built-up letters mounted on the section of wall adjacent to the road junction. These signs would be non-illuminated.

Finally, two more totem signs indicating the pedestrian entrance to the new police station would be erected; one of 1500mm height and 1075mm width on the Comet Way frontage and one of 2000mm height and 750mm width adjacent to the main doorway to the new building. Again these signs would be non-illuminated.

PLANNING HISTORY:

S6/2008/203/AD – Advertisement consent granted (5/3/08) for the signs which are the subject of this application.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:
None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

R25 – Works to Listed Buildings

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005 –
Section 6 Advertisements

Hatfield Aerodrome Supplementary Planning Guidance, November 1999.

CONSULTATIONS

Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust (BEAMS) – Verbal comment 20/5/08;
Satisfied with the location, number and size of signs, but would like to see the thickness of the lettering on the buildings restricted to avoid an overdominant impact on the appearance and character of the listed buildings.

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Hatfield Town Council – have not commented on the proposals.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been advertised in the local press and by means of site notice. The period for representations expired on 14 May. None have been received.

DISCUSSION:

The main issue in determining this application is the effect of the proposals on the historic character and architectural quality of the listed buildings.

As noted above, advertisement consent has already been granted for these signs, and in granting that consent the Council has taken into account any impacts the signs may have on visual amenity and highway safety.

The additional issue to be considered with the current application is the likely effect of the proposed signs on the character and appearance of the listed buildings. In this respect advice has been sought from BEAMS, and it is considered that the number, location and size of the signs proposed are acceptable and will not adversely impact upon the character and appearance of the site or buildings. The totem signs are well-designed and fulfil their directional role without giving rise to unnecessary clutter.

In respect of the two signs on the buildings, the location and size of these generally complies with the Supplementary Design Guidance and Policy R25 of the District Plan. The illumination, in the form of halo-illuminated individual letters, is also considered to respect the character of the listed buildings. There is a concern, however, that the lettering (identified as being in the font Gill Sans) should be of limited thickness so as not to dominate the appearance of the elevations involved. Because the submitted drawings do not give precise information on lettering thickness it is recommended that a suitable condition be imposed on this consent to require an agreed specification before erection of the signs.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed signs are of an acceptable design, which respects the historic character and architectural quality of the listed buildings. This complies with Policy R25 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the material contained within Section 6 of the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

CONDITIONS:

- 1) C.2.2 – Time Limit for Commencement of Development – Listed Buildings
- 2) Prior to the erection of the signs on the listed buildings, for which consent is hereby granted, a detailed specification of the individual letters, including thickness, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing.

REASON: In the interests of maintaining the historic character and appearance of the listed buildings.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF CONSENT:

The proposal has been considered against development plan policies (i.e. Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, Policy R25 and Supplementary Design Guidance 2005), in addition to the Human Rights Act 1998, which indicate that the proposal should be

approved. Material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the Development Plan (see Officer's report which can be inspected at these offices).

INFORMATIVES:

None

DRAWING NUMBERS:

Site Location Plan & 94515 1-9 & 94515 2-9 94515 3-9 & 94515 4-9 & 94515 5-9 & 94515 6-9 94515 7-9 and date stamped 27 March 2008.

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