

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2010/1169/AD
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NOTATION:

The site lies within 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 & Renault. There is currently a 4 metre high totum sign located towards the front of the site stating Peugeots name. There are also an existing number of company signs on the existing building.

The character of the area is commercial, with Kentucky Fried Chicken drive thru directly to the north and the Galleria shopping centre to the south east. Comet Way runs adjacent to the site.

Along the eastern and southern boundary are a number of flag poles with flags advertising the Peugeot brand.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

This application seeks advertisement consent to create two new hoarding signs, one double sided post mounted (Hoarding A) and one single sided wall mounted (Hoarding B).

Hoarding A is proposed to be located along the northern boundary of the site adjacent to the KFC drive thru. Hoarding Board A measures 6.1 metres in width and 3.2 metres in height located on 5 steel black posts giving hoarding A a total height of 4.9 metres.

Hoarding B is proposed on the SE elevation of the main Renault office building. The wall mounted sign measures 3.2 metres in height and 6.2 metres in width.

The hoarding boards will be used for promotional purposes, typically changing every three months.

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

S6/2007/1701/AD – Installation of one 4 metre high externally illuminated totem sign
and four illuminated signs on existing building. Granted 07/01/08

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:

PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment

PPG19: Outdoor Advertisement Control

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

GBSP2: Towns and Specified Settlements

D1: Quality of design

D2: Character and context

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005

CONSULTATIONS

None

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Hatfield Town Council object to the size of the hoardings considering both to be a
distraction to road users.

REPRESENTATIONS

This application has been advertised by neighbour notification letters and site notice.
No representations have been received. Period expired 01/07/2010.

DISCUSSION:

The Supplementary Design Guidance of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, 2005,
states in paragraph 6.1, 'For those advertisements that need consent, the Council as
Local Planning Authority, can only exercise its powers of control in the interest of
protecting amenity and public safety'. Therefore, the main issue in assessing this
application is the impact on visual amenity.

Impact on visual amenity

Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, 2005 states that, 'The Council will
require the standard of design in all new development to be of high quality'. This also
relates to the design of advertisements. The supplementary design guidance on
advertisements states in paragraph 6.5 (i), 'proposals should be well-designed and
sensitively positioned and should relate to the character, scale and design of the
building on which they will be displayed'. Policy D2 requires the character and

context of the development to respect the area in which it is proposed, improving or enhancing the character of the area where possible.

The application site is located along Comet Way. The character of the surrounding area is mainly commercial with a shopping parade to the south and a fast food drive thru and eatery to the north. A number of advertisements signs exist along Comet Way which advertise the commercial activity of the surrounding businesses. The majority of the signs are wall mounted containing both illuminated and non-illuminated signs. The application site itself has a 4 metre high externally illuminated totem sign located to the front of the site along with a number of flag poles located along the eastern and southern boundary of the site. The main building which is located centrally within the application site has a number of company signs including 2 'Peugeot' signs in white lettering, 1 'Waters' sign in white lettering and a Chrome Lion logo sign located above the entrance door on the eastern elevation of the building. The site is used as a dual franchise and the proposed signage is for the purpose of promotional advertising.

The proposed signage comprise of two hoarding boards, one wall mounted and one post mounted. The post mounted sign will be located close to Comet Way along the boundary wall with the drive thru to the north of the site. The hoarding board measures 4.9 metres from ground level at a width of 6.1 metres. Taking into consideration the open nature of this area with office and commercial buildings set back approximately 20-30 metres from Comet Way, the post mounted hoarding board will appear visually prominent in the streetscene and therefore will not positively contribute to the open character of the surrounding area which contravenes with policy D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, 2005. The adjoining food outlet is a Grade II Listed Building. The location of the hoarding and its size when viewed from certain directions does have an impact on the setting of this part of the listed building. Whilst the main considerations in relation to an advertisement application are the impact on visual amenity and highway safety, this can include wider factors such as conservation areas, natural landscapes and listed buildings. The signage because of its size affects the setting of the adjoining Grade II listed building and overall the visual interests of its surroundings.

The hoarding board which is wall mounted on the main building measures 3.2 metres in height and 6.2 metres in width. No advertisements currently exist on this building. This hoarding board is not considered to appear overly prominent when viewed in relation to the building as it will be subordinate in scale and taking into consideration the building measures approximately 35 metres from the edge of Comet Way it will not appear overly prominent within the streetscene.

Overall, the proposed signage combined with the advertisement signs which exist already on site would be overly prominent and poorly sited, which would be to the detriment of the visual amenity of the street scene.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed signage would have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the locality. The proposed signage would be unacceptable due to its scale and siting which would detract from the visual amenity of the street scene. The proposed signage has therefore failed to meet the relevant requirements of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL AND REASON (S)

1. By virtue of the scale, size and siting of the proposed free standing hoarding sign this would result in a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area and visual interests of its surroundings, including the setting of the adjoining Grade II listed building. The proposal is therefore contrary to PPS5, PPG 19 and Policies GBSP2, D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DRAWING NUMBERS:

Site Location Plan (1:1250) & Q10278 Hoarding A & Q10278 Hoarding B received and dated 4th June 2010.

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