

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No: S6/2014/2066/AD

SITE ADDRESS: Ramada Hatfield, St Albans Road West, Hatfield

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT: Installation of three free standing curved flag advertisements

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL WITH REASON

1. SITE AND APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:

The application site comprises a Ramada Hotel complex situated on the on the western side of Comet Way and the southern side of St Albans Road West on an irregular shaped corner plot. The site fronts onto a busy road network including two roundabouts with traffic lights. The rear site boundary to the south-west adjoins the rear gardens of residential properties in Ashbury Close and Selwyn Crescent. The University of Hertfordshire and Hatfield Business Park are located to the north, the Galleria retail and leisure complex is situated to the north-east and the A1 motorway passes in a cutting to the south-east. A car park wraps around the front of the site with access from St Albans Road West and Comet Way.

The Ramada Hotel is a Grade II listed building dating from the 1930's. The listing description, which identifies the building as The Comet Public House, is as follows:

Hotel. 1933. By E B Musman. Red brick with stone dressings on steel frame. The plan is supposedly in the form an aeroplane. Two storeys. Projecting centrepiece with rounded end, the ground floor projects beyond the first. Wings on either side, also half round, single storey only. Five window side elevations. Largely original steel framed windows, the two modern ones in the front elevations are openings in originally blank walls. Clipsham stone dressings strip above and below windows and to parapets. Flat roofs not visible, the original roof lantern has been removed. The interior has been altered. A pioneer hotel in the modern style.

The proposal is for the installation of three free standing curved flag advertisements.

The flags will be 2.9 metres high and located at three points surrounding the Hotels boundary.

The flags will be made from nylon, and have red text 30 cms in height and have a yellow background

2. SITE DESIGNATION:

The site lies within Hatfield as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

There is an extensive planning history at the site. The applications relevant to this current application are as follows:

S6/2014/1895/FP - : Change of use of land to car washing, valeting (sui generis), works to include erection of a canopy, approved 12/11/14)

S6/2013/2530/FP Change of use of land to car washing, valeting (sui generis), works to include erection of a canopy, refused 23/01/2014 and Appeal Dismissed 06/06/2014)

4. CONSULTATIONS:

Hertfordshire County Council, Transport, Programs and Strategy have objected to the proposal on the following grounds "I therefore request details of the positioning, orientation, height and scale of the proposed flag advertisements, in particular to check that no obstruction shall occur within the provided visibility splays in order to provide a recommendation to this application. Until such time as this information is available, I am required to object to the proposals on the above grounds".

5. NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS:

No representations have been received from the public.

6. TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS

Hatfield Town Council have commented that "Is it possible to see an example of the proposed free standing flags. Councillors are a little concerned they may not be appropriate on a listed building site".

7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES AND RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES:

The main planning issues with this application are:

- a) Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts (NPPF, Policy D1 Quality of Design and D2 Character and Context of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance 2005).

8. ANALYSIS:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that control over outdoor advertisements should be efficient, effective and simple in concept and operation. Only those advertisements which will clearly have an appreciable impact on a building or on their surroundings should be subject to the local planning authority's detailed assessment. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. This approach is reflected in the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 (SDG) which sets out general guidelines for the design of advertisements. The SDG supplements Policy D1 Quality of Design and D2 Character and Context of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

The SDG states that all advertisements requiring express consent must accord with the following criteria: (1) proposals should be well-designed and should relate to the

character, scale and design of the building on which they are displayed; (2) the size and position of the signs should respect the architectural features of the buildings on which they are displayed; (3) proposals should not create visual clutter; (4) illumination will only be permitted where it would not be visually intrusive and is provided by discreet means.

No details have been supplied in regards to the actual design, size and colours of the proposed advertisements. The application form outlines the size of the poles and proposed colour. No plans show these details so the application cannot be accessed. The information was requested but the agent was unable to supply.

From the information supplied the three free standing curved flag advertisements would advertise a car wash that would be located to the rear of the Hotel. The flags would be located at the frontage of the hotel where the site borders with the highway.

It is also noted that the plan submitted shows the proposed car wash. This plan has since been amended and submitted for planning permission, but is not relevant to the advertisement application so has not been considered as part of this application.

9. CONCLUSION:

Regrettably there has been insufficient information provided to demonstrate that the proposal would not result in detrimental impact on both amenity and public safety, in particular the setting and special interest of the adjacent listed Ramada Hotel (Grade II), taking account of cumulative impacts.

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL AND REASON (S)

1. There has been insufficient information provided to demonstrate that the proposal would not result in detrimental impact on both amenity and public safety, in particular the setting and special interest of the adjacent listed Ramada Hotel (Grade II), taking account of cumulative impacts, and as such the proposal would therefore be contrary to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (Section 7. 'Requiring Good Design at Paragraphs 67 & 68/ Section 12. 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment at paragraphs 128-132), Policy D1 'Quality of Design' and D2 'Character and Context' of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance 2005.

REFUSED DRAWING NUMBERS:

RH CW 01 REV B received 26 September 2014.

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