

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2019/3244/ADV
Location: Comet Hotel St Albans Road West Hatfield AL10 9RH
Proposal: Installation of 2x Illuminated signage (2 no. locations)
Officer: Mr Antoine Commenville

Recommendation: Refused

6/2019/3244/ADV

Context	
Site and Application description	<p>The site is a triangular-shaped parcel of land facing onto the roundabout junction of Comet Way and St Albans Road West in Hatfield. It contains the original Comet Road House which is shaped in a geometric representation of an aircraft and faces onto the roundabout. It is a Grade II Listed, two-storey, brick clad, flat-roofed building with a strong horizontal emphasis, designed by E B Musman and built in the 1930's. It is listed for its Art Deco architectural merit and its historic association with Hatfield New Town and the De Havilland factory and airfield.</p> <p>Planning permission was granted under 6/2016/1739/MAJ for the extension and refurbishment of the Grade II listed building (Use Class C1) following demolition of existing rear and side extensions, the erection of 7,253.7sqm student accommodation (Sui Generis), landscaping and associated works. This has been followed by a recent application for various signage display under LPA ref 6/2019/0953/ADV.</p> <p>This application seeks advertisement consent for the display of 2no. additional illuminated signage on the rounded ends of the "wing" projections.</p>
Constraints	<p>LBC - LISTED BUILDING Hotel. 1933. By EB Musman. Red brick with - Distance: 0 PAR - PARISH (HATFIELD) - Distance: 0 Wards - Hatfield Villages - Distance: 0 A4HD - Article 4 HMO Direction - Distance: 0 SAGB - Sand and Gravel Belt - Distance: 4.91 HHAA - Hatfield Heritage Assessment Area(Wilkin's Green) - Distance: 0 BLR - Brownfield Land Regisrty (Hatfield - Comet Hotel, St Albans Road West) - Distance: 0</p>
Relevant history	<p>Application Number: 6/2016/1739/MAJ Decision: Granted Decision Date: 03 February 2017 Proposal: Extension and refurbishment of the Grade II listed building (Use Class C1) following demolition of existing rear and side extensions. Erection of 7,253.7sqm student accommodation (Sui Generis), landscaping and associated works</p>

	<p>Application Number: 6/2019/0953/ADV Decision: Granted Decision Date: 06 August 2019 Proposal: Various Signage display Signs 1 & 2: 2 no. Halo illuminated Fusion Students logo on student accommodation (sign type 1); Signs 3-6: 4 no. Student block identification lettering on student accommodation (non-illuminated) (sign type 2A); Signs 7-12: 6 no. Student block identification halo illuminated lettering on student accommodation (sign type 2B); Sign 13: 1 no. Hotel entrance sign on Comet Hotel (sign type 3); Sign 14: 8 no. Student accommodation glazing manifestation on student accommodation (sign type 4b); Sign 15: 1 no. South east elevation Comet Hotel identification signage on Comet Hotel (sign type 6); Sign 16: 1 no. Restaurant identification sign on Comet Hotel (sign type 5); Sign 17: 2 no. Comet Hotel entrance totem signs (sign type 8); and Sign 18: 1 no. North east elevation Comet Hotel identification signage on Comet Hotel (sign type 7).</p>		
Consultations			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
Publicity	Site Notice Display Date: 10 January 2020 Site Notice Expiry Date: 31 January 2020		
Summary of neighbour responses	No representations have been received.		
Consultees and responses	Place Services, Essex County Council (Conservation Advisor) - Objection		
Relevant Policies			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPPF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D2 <input type="checkbox"/> Supplementary Design Guidance			
Main Issues			
Impact in regards to amenity (includes aural and visual)	<p>In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, a local planning authority shall exercise its powers under the Regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety taking into account the provisions of the development plan, insofar as they are material, and any other factors.</p> <p>The Regulations state that factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality including the presence of any features of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest. In taking account factors relevant to amenity, the local planning authority may, if it thinks fit, disregard any advertisement that is being displayed.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 notes that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.</p> <p>The Supplementary Design Guidance also notes that advertisement 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. They must not detract from the character of the building or the street scene. The size</p>		

	<p>and position of signs should respect the architectural features of the building on which they are displayed and consent will not be granted for proposals that would create visual clutter, thereby breaking up the rhythm of the street scene. Illumination will be carefully controlled, particularly in sensitive areas.</p> <p>It is now proposed to install 2 no. illuminated signage on the rounded ends of the “wing” projections to the Comet Hotel. The streamlined appearance, simple details and sharp lines of the building are fundamental aspects of its style and character. The installation of further signage is considered to clutter the elevations and detract from its architectural interest.</p> <p>Accordingly the proposal would conflict with Policy D1 which seeks to ensure that schemes achieve a high quality design. The proposal would also not follow the Council’s Supplementary Design Guidance on advertisements, which seeks to encourage sensitively positioned advertisements that do not detract from the character of the street scene nor result in visual clutter or appear in an uncoordinated manner. It would also not meet the aims of paragraph 132 of the NPPF, where it states that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. Finally, the proposal would also fail to meet the requirements of S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act. Therefore, the proposal would be materially harmful to the visual amenity of the area.</p>
<p>Impact in regards to public safety? (e.g. safety of people; obscure or hinder traffic sign/ railway signal etc.; or hinder security or surveillance device or device measuring vehicle speed)</p>	<p>The Hertfordshire County Council - Hertfordshire Transport Programmes & Strategy did not comment on the proposal and having regard to the position of the proposed signage, size and distance from the highway it is not anticipated that the proposal would have an unreasonable impact on the safety and operation of the highway or pedestrians.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	
<p>Overall it is considered that the signage would clutter the elevations and detract from the architectural interest of the hosting building, contrary to Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005; Supplementary Design Guidance; the National Planning Policy Framework 2019; and S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act.</p>	

Reasons for Refusal:

1. The signage would clutter the elevations and detract from the architectural interest of the building on which it is displayed. Accordingly it would fail to make a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the area contrary to Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005; Supplementary Design Guidance; the National Planning Policy Framework 2019; and S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act.

REFUSED DRAWING NUMBERS

2.

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
Comet Stl 00 Zz Dr A P1002		Existing Elevations	24 December 2019
Comet Stl 00 Zz Dr A P1004		External Signage Proposals	24 December 2019
Comet Stl 00 Zz Dr A P1003		Proposed Elevations	24 December 2019
Comet Stl 00 Zz Dr A P1001		Block Plan	24 December 2019
Comet Stl 00 Zz Dr A P1000		Location Plan	24 December 2019

1. POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be viewed on the Council's website or inspected at these offices).

Determined By:

Mr Mark Peacock
27 February 2020