

Antoine Commenville

From: Maria Kitts, Senior Built Heritage Consultant <Maria.Kitts@essex.gov.uk>
Sent: 30 May 2019 16:43
To: Jamie Wilton
Cc: Antoine Commenville
Subject: RE: 6/2019/0953/ADV & 6/2019/0957/LB - Comet Hotel, Hatfield

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Hi Jamie

Apologies for not getting back to you sooner – I've been out and about in meetings and on visits so missed some of your calls.

Although I didn't deal with the applications relating to the development at the rear of the site, it is my understanding that such a large scale development was considered to be acceptable because of the heritage gain it brought in sensitively restoring and refurbishing the listed hotel. Falling at the final hurdle by not getting the signage right would undermine the heritage benefits and reason the new buildings were deemed to be acceptable within the setting of the building. Whilst the previous signage was allowed in 2002, this was before the wholesale refurbishment of the hotel and the construction of the new buildings behind.

I note your comments regarding the differences between the Stride Treglown drawing and the Ascot brochure. I am wary of approving a drawing showing signage that is different to what is actually proposed, but this is a matter for the planning officer. In any case, the typeface, spacing and thickness of the letters in the Ascot brochure is still quite different to the original signage. A more accurate copy should be attempted. The internal illumination isn't original, although it has been seen on the building in the past. External illumination in the form of ground-mounted uplighters would be more sympathetic.

I'm happy to agree that the signage can be on three sides, with the restaurant signage relocated to the north west elevation although it would be preferred if it could be located at first floor level (the same as the other two elevations) rather than at the top of the elevation. This would also allow it to be lit externally.

I hope this helps.

Kind regards
Maria

Maria Kitts BA (Hons) MA PGCert
Senior Built Heritage Consultant for Place Services

telephone: 03330 322 020
email: maria.kitts@essex.gov.uk
web: www.placeservices.co.uk



From: Jamie Wilton <JWilton@alderking.com>
Sent: 28 May 2019 15:00
To: Maria Kitts, Senior Built Heritage Consultant <Maria.Kitts@essex.gov.uk>
Cc: 'Antoine Commenville' <a.commenville@welhat.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 6/2019/0953/ADV & 6/2019/0957/LB - Comet Hotel, Hatfield

Hi Maria

To provide some justification for the signage proposals put forward in the applications with regard to the hotel I wanted to add a few comments. Please see the below images taken from Google streetview to give a representation as to how the building looked prior to the current redevelopment works. As can be seen here the previous operators installed signage on three elevations to the north west, east and south east which constituted internally lit signage. While I appreciate this was not original to the building it had previously been in place for a number of years having been given planning consent back in 2002 (ref: S6/2002/0056/AD). I note this consent was actually for four illuminated signs to cover all elevations. The placement of the currently proposed signage in addition to the fact it is internally illuminated echoes that which was previously considered acceptable on the hotel and so question why this is no longer acceptable.

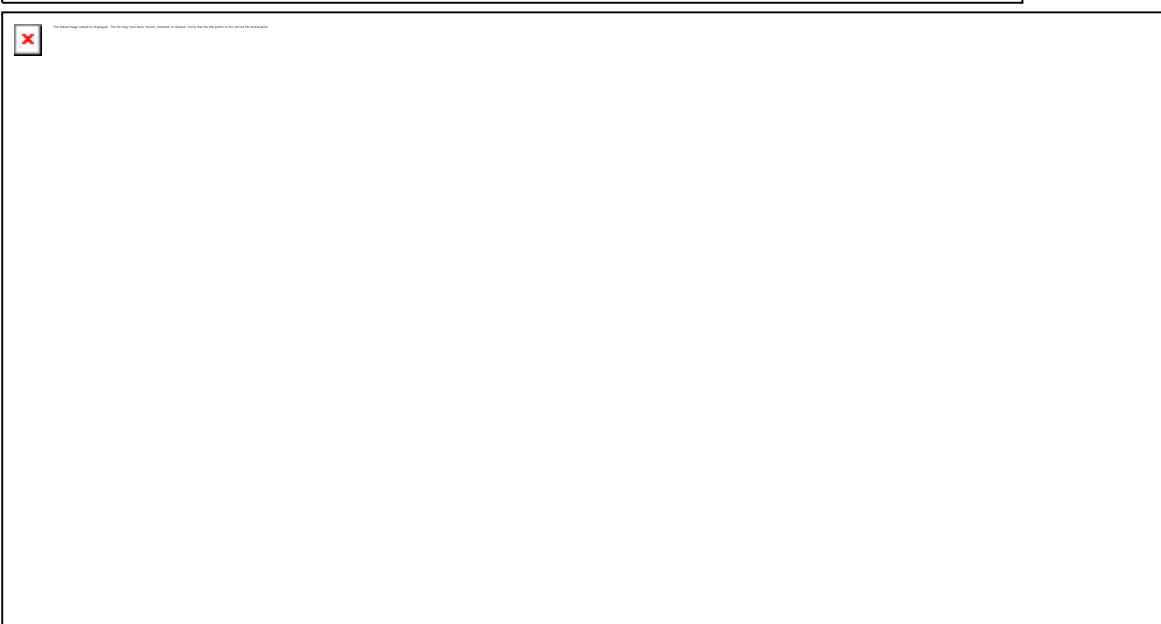
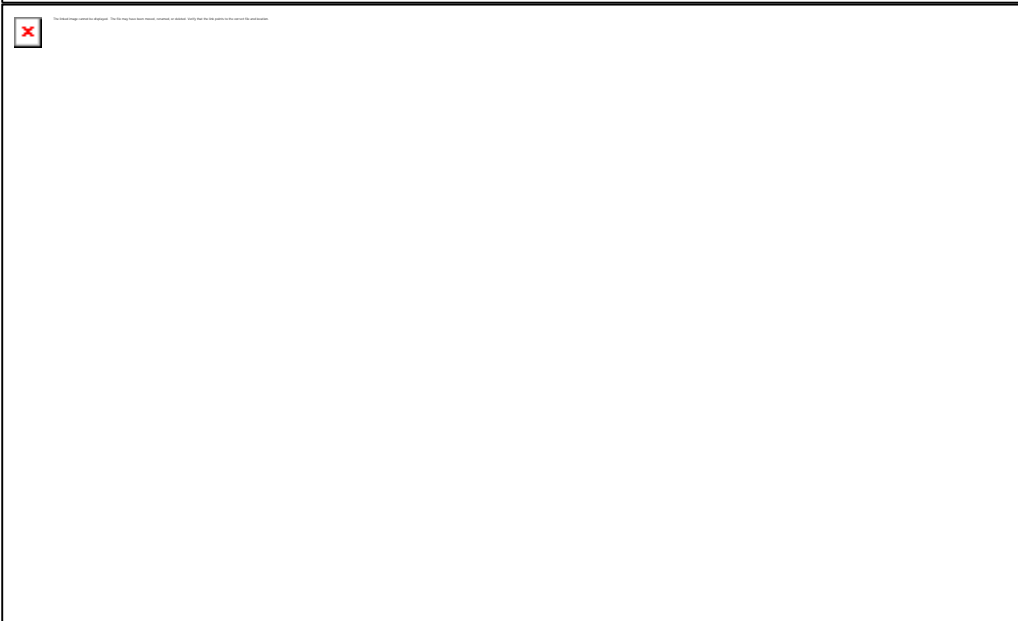
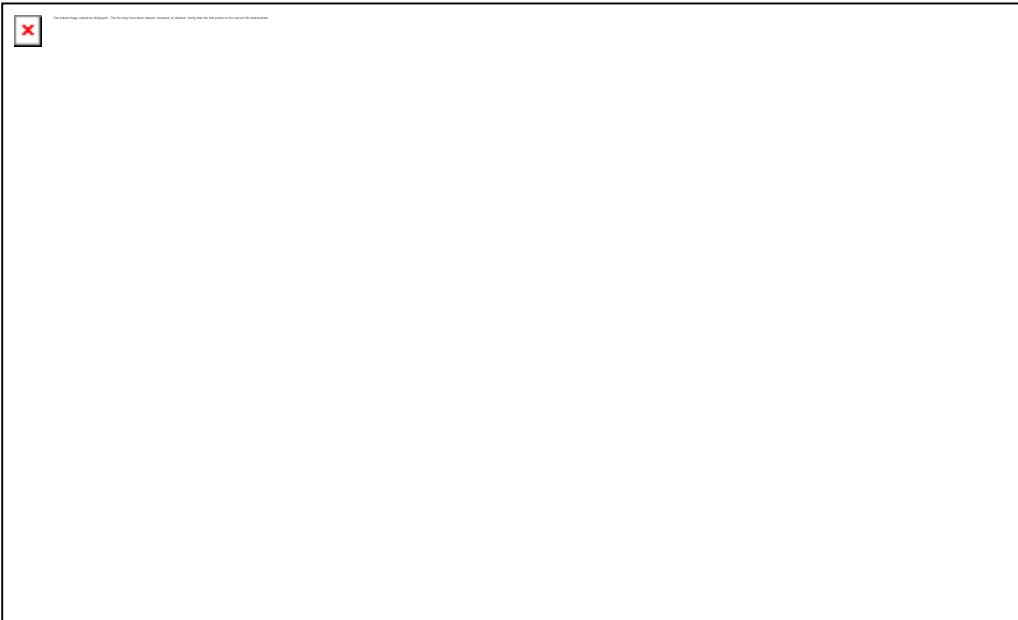
To clarify the point on typeface, the signage as shown in the Ascot brochure submitted reflects the proposed font to be installed. I appreciate this is not consistent with the submitted plan produced by Stride Treglown however the latter only shows this indicatively with 'final finish and sizing in keeping with original signage'. A lot of work has been done to ensure the new font echoes what was originally in place and this shall be central to the whole branding of the newly refurbished hotel.

It is considered that the main issue you have raised relates to the positioning of the restaurant signage on the curved frontage of the building with this being an 'iconic element' of the original design. To that end, as a compromise, I would propose reinstating 'The Comet Hotel' on this frontage and moving the restaurant signage to the north west elevation. This would leave the south east signage the same as originally proposed but now bring the curved frontage more in line with the original building.

I would appreciate your comments on this approach and whether the redesign is enough to address your initial concerns as production on the new signage has now been stopped until the design can be finalised.

Kind regards

Jamie



JAMIE WILTON

Planner

Tel: 0117 317 1178

www.alderking.com



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From: Jamie Wilton
Sent: 28 May 2019 13:59
To: 'maria.kitts@essex.gov.uk' <maria.kitts@essex.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 6/2019/0953/ADV & 6/2019/0957/LB - Comet Hotel, Hatfield

Good afternoon Maria

Could you please give me a call when you are free to discuss your below comments with regard to the proposed signage on the Comet Hotel in Hatfield currently under redevelopment?

Many thanks

Jamie

From: Antoine Commenville [<mailto:a.commenville@welhat.gov.uk>]
Sent: 21 May 2019 17:00
To: Jamie Wilton <JWilton@alderking.com>
Subject: FW: 6/2019/0953/ADV & 6/2019/0957/LB - Comet Hotel, Hatfield

Good afternoon Jamie,

Thank you for your email sent out today.

Please find below the initial comments received from the Conservation Officer.

Best regards

Antoine

Antoine Commenville
Senior Planning Officer
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
Tel: 01707 357392
Email: a.commenville@welhat.gov.uk

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www.inwelwynhatfieldbusinessmatters.org.uk
@WHBizmatters
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

From: Maria Kitts, Senior Built Heritage Consultant [<mailto:Maria.Kitts@essex.gov.uk>]
Sent: 21 May 2019 16:29
To: Antoine Commenville <a.commenville@welhat.gov.uk>
Subject: 6/2019/0953/ADV & 6/2019/0957/LB - Comet Hotel, Hatfield

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Hi Antoine

As discussed, I have some concerns regarding the proposed signage for the hotel.

The curved frontage of the building is an iconic element of the design with the original 'The Comet Hotel' sign being positioned on the band above the ground floor window (see photos within the first part of the Heritage Statement attached). The installation of signage in the same location for the new restaurant is considered to detract from the building, whereas the reinstatement of the original design of the signage would be an enhancement. As far as possible, the original detailing and typeface should be adopted.

It would also be beneficial to adopt a more minimalist approach and restrict the signage to just the front and one side elevation to respect the building.

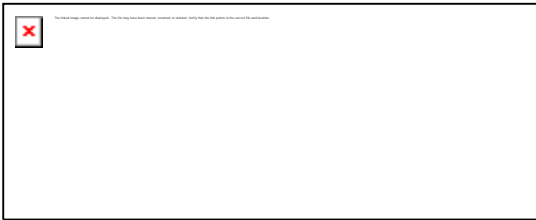
There are also concerns regarding the internal illumination of the letters and whether this approach is complementary to the building. Non-illuminated lettering lit with ground-mounted uplighters could be a more sympathetic approach.

I would be grateful if you could pass my concerns onto the agent for comment.

Many thanks
Maria

Maria Kitts BA (Hons) MA PGCert
Senior Built Heritage Consultant for Place Services

telephone: 03330 322 020
email: maria.kitts@essex.gov.uk
web: www.placeservices.co.uk



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