



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 September 2024

by Elaine Benson BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D1835/Z/24/3346720

Nunnery Park Service Station, Hornhill Road, Worcester WR4 0SX

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Motor Fuel Group Limited against the decision of Worcester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00238/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is 7m EV Totem Pole Sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. Advertisements should be controlled only in the interests of amenity and public safety. There are no public safety concerns in this appeal. Therefore, the main issue is the effect of the proposed totem sign on visual amenity.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a service station/petrol filling station comprising a sales building, fuel pumps, forecourt and a jet wash. There is a recently erected electric vehicle (EV) charging station facility along the southern boundary of the site which the totem sign would advertise. The totem would be internally illuminated and located on the grass verge adjacent to the site entrance of the service station.
4. The service station is located alongside the A4440. Although I have not been provided with the relevant development plan policies, I am informed that the site stands within an area designated as Green Space and that the more immediate area around it is also designated for mixed-used development. The nearby development includes a business park with various commercial, business and service uses. Within this context is a range of associated adverts.
5. There are already several advertisements at the entrance to the service station, including an existing totem and other illuminated signage. Due to the height and scale of the proposal and its illumination, an additional totem sign viewed in the context of the existing totem and the other adverts would appear excessive in this location. The proposal would also contribute to the existing clutter, resulting in a visually intrusive effect and thereby adversely affecting the amenity of the area. Moreover, in longer views the totem sign would be

viewed together with the many signs related to the business park, including a totem sign close to the road-side boundary. Their cumulative effect would further adversely affect visual amenity.

6. It is stated that the appellant is minded to remove the banners and flags around the site entrance to reduce their visual impact and perceived clutter. However, I am required to determine the appeal proposal on the basis of its current context.
7. I am not convinced by the evidence that the proposed sign would degrade the environmental value of the remaining elements of this part of the Green Space. In my judgement, the character of the locality is more immediately defined by the existing commercial uses.
8. It is noted that the Council has suggested incorporating the EV charging signage into the existing totem sign. Therefore, notwithstanding that there may well also be other suitable proposals, there appears to be alternative means by which to advertise this service in a less visually intrusive manner than is currently proposed.
9. I conclude that the display of the illuminated totem advertisement in the proposed location would have detrimental impact on the amenity of the wider area. Furthermore, when considered alongside other existing advertisements, the scheme would result in a cluttered appearance at the entrance of the appeal site and when viewed alongside the separate business park advertising.
10. Although it is not determinative, the proposal is therefore contrary to Policy SWDP21 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (2016) which, in summary and among other things, only permits illuminated signage where lighting is unobtrusive or not considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the site or surroundings. There is also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance which, in respect of advertisements, indicate that in assessing amenity the local characteristics of the neighbourhood should be considered.
11. For the forgoing reasons, the appeal is dismissed.

Elaine Benson

INSPECTOR