



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2025

by **C Butcher BSc MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P2114/W/24/3344340

Park Green Farm, Park Green Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 5QJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr David Grannum (Solent Fuels Ltd Depot) against the decision of Isle of Wight Council.
 - The application Ref is 22/01320/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as the continued use of land as a fuel storage depot by Solent Fuels Ltd.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on highway safety.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is accessed via a narrow rural lane, known as Park Green Lane, which at its northern end has a junction with the A3054 Forest Road. The appellant has noted that the site has been used for fuel storage since 2021 and that this involves deliveries by an articulated tanker five times a month, as well as an average of just over two daily two-way movements by smaller tankers.
4. Given that the articulated tankers arrive from the ferry ports at either East Cowes or Fishbourne, all incoming movements involve travelling westbound along Forest Road before turning left into the lane. In support of their case, the appellant has provided a Technical Note, dated July 2022, which shows tracking information for the left-hand turn. Photographic evidence of the same manoeuvre has also been submitted separately as part of this appeal. According to both forms of evidence, the narrow entrance to the lane means that it is necessary for articulated tankers to fully enter the oncoming lane of Forest Road in order to make the turn.
5. Forest Road is subject to the 60mph national speed limit. The Council has provided accident data for the stretch of Forest Road that is within the vicinity of the site. This data identifies that there were sixteen accidents within a five-year period, one of which involved a fatality. Over half of these accident records state that the failure to give way or look properly was a contributing factor. I acknowledge that deliveries by articulated tankers are few in number, that they take place early in the morning when the roads are likely to be quieter and that the manoeuvres only take a matter of seconds to complete. I also note that the appellant has put in place various safety measures such as the use of marshals.

However, no matter what measures are put in place, I am of the view that the need for the tankers to enter the oncoming lane on Forest Road represents a very significant safety risk to all highway users. The fact that tankers have been making that manoeuvre for several years without incident does not alter my assessment. Given the speed limit of the road, if there were to be an accident, it would potentially be very serious.

6. With regards to Park Green Lane itself, it is clear from the evidence that the tankers are able to travel along it despite its narrowness. The lane forms part of the Public Right of Way footpath N70. However, vehicles are already able to use the lane, and it seems unlikely that the relatively small number of additional movements associated with the use of the appeal site for fuel storage would lead to additional harm in this regard.
7. I note that the site benefits from a previous planning permission which has been partly implemented. However, from the evidence before me, and from what I observed on my site visit, it does appear that there is currently sufficient space within the site for articulated tankers to turn around.
8. Nevertheless, due to the safety issues associated with the left-hand turn into Park Green Lane, I conclude that the development could lead to harm in relation to highway safety. As such, it conflicts with Policies DM17 and SP7 of the Island Plan Core Strategy 2012, the relevant aspects of which seek to ensure that new development does not risk the safety of any highway users. It is also contrary to paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework which sets out that development should be refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Other Matters

9. I note that several representations have been received in support of the development, particularly from customers of Solent Fuels. I also acknowledge that the development would have some economic benefits. However, these benefits are clearly outweighed by the risk to highway safety that I have identified.

Conclusion

10. I have found that the appeal scheme has the potential to result in harm to highway safety. Consequently, the development conflicts with the development plan when taken as a whole. There are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweigh the identified harm and associated development plan conflict. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

C Butcher

INSPECTOR