
Costs Decision

Site visit made on 17 February 2025

by **SE Hughes BA (Hons) PGDip MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 March 2025

**Costs application in relation to Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/Z/24/3352417
Bournemouth Sign Co, Unit 6, Christchurch Business Park, Radar Way,
Christchurch, BH23 4FL**

- The application is made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, sections 78, 322 and Schedule 6, and the Local Government Act 1972, section 250(5).
 - The application is made by Morris SOT Ltd ta Bournemouth Sign Co for a full award of costs against Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The appeal was against the refusal of express consent for a large aluminium advertising panel secured to the roadside of industrial unit.
-

Decision

1. The application for an award of costs is refused.

Reasons

2. Parties in planning appeals normally meet their own expenses. However, the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that costs may be awarded against a party who has behaved unreasonably and thereby caused the party applying for costs to incur unnecessary or wasted expense in the appeal process.
3. There is one matter to assess: whether vague, generalised or inaccurate assertions were made by the Council about the advertisement's impact, without any objective analysis or the production of evidence to substantiate its reason for refusal.
4. The applicant contends that in refusing planning permission the Council failed to provide evidence to substantiate its reason for refusal and made a vague and generalised assertion that the advertisement has amounted to visual clutter without objectively considering the advertisement's effect on visual amenity, including the local character of the area.
5. The Council has not responded directly to the application for costs. However, looking at the Council's officer report I can see that under the heading "visual amenity" the Council describe the advertisement site's context and the positioning of existing advertisements, concluding that the sign is poorly placed. The Council has also considered the proposal against development plan policies, national policy and other considerations. It has surmised that due to the advertisements size, height and siting, it has a detrimental impact on the visual amenity and character of the locality, contrary to policy HE2, the Framework and PPG. Thus, the Council have articulated its concerns, identified conflict against its policy, and summarised these in the reason for refusal.
6. It will be seen from my decision that I agree with the Council and that there were sufficient grounds for refusing express consent. It follows therefore that I am

satisfied that the Council has shown that it was able to substantiate its reason for refusal. As a result, I do not consider that the Council acted unreasonably in refusing consent.

7. Therefore, unreasonable behaviour resulting in unnecessary or wasted expense has not occurred and an award of costs is not warranted.

SE Hughes

INSPECTOR