



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 January 2026

by A Wright BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/W/25/3375137

456 Southchurch Road, Southend-on-Sea SS1 2QA

- 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 Krasniqi against the decision of Southend-on-Sea City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00729/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as 'temporary consent for use of part of the site as a hand car wash, erect enclosed canopies, fence to front and retain temporary pre-fab buildings until May 2029 (part retrospective)'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The site is already being used as a hand car wash, including outside washing and valet areas, with pre-fab office and storage buildings in situ. My decision is based on the plans before me which show the washing and valet areas within proposed new structures and the pre-fab buildings remaining in the same position.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with particular regard to noise and disturbance.

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies on the corner of the A13 Southchurch Road and Chase Road in an urban area. There are residential properties nearby in Chase Road, Bellevue Place and on the opposite side of Southchurch Road.
5. In terms of the existing car wash operation, the appellant's Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) indicates that during a site visit, high-frequency noise emissions from the jet washing were clearly perceptible over road traffic when in operation, with the Hoover audible during lulls in road traffic flow. The exception to this was in the rear garden of 10 Chase Road where road traffic and jet washing were less audible due to garden wall screening, and Hoovering was more perceptible.
6. The NIA considers the impacts of the scheme to house the proposed washing and valet areas within new canopy structures, enclosed on three sides, on residential receptors in Chase Road, the A13 and Bellevue Place. It concludes that at all noise sensitive receptors, the rating sound levels are not predicted to exceed the background sound levels. The NIA states that the noise emissions from the jet

washing and associated pump may still be audible, but it is highly likely that the road traffic noise emissions in the area would adequately mask them. It predicts that the Hoover and soap pump noise emissions would be at least 10dB below the background sound level at the worst-case receptor and would be inaudible.

7. Nevertheless, the Council's Environmental Health Officer (EHO) outlines that the NIA relies on the traffic noise that is said to be dominant and the high residual noise climate to mask the emissions. The EHO states that the evidence obtained by the team so far, having received continual complaints of noise from the existing operation, does not indicate that this would be true. On this basis, the EHO considers that without the operation being housed within a soundproofed building, it would not prevent harm to the amenity of nearby residential occupiers.
8. At my daytime site visit, there was some traffic noise from passing vehicles on the A13, but notable lulls in the traffic meant that this noise was not constant. I concur with the EHO that this is not a dominant source of noise in the locality. In any event, intermittent high-frequency noise emissions from jet washing equipment and low-middle frequency humming from hoovers and pumps is very different to road traffic noise.
9. The proposed structures would help to reduce noise levels compared to the existing operation, and despite many businesses and residents being notified of the proposal only one objection was received. Nevertheless, as the structures would be open on one side, sporadic high-frequency and humming noises from the proposed washing and valet operations would emanate from them, particularly towards residential properties on the opposite side of the A13 and Chase Road. I am not persuaded that these sounds would be masked by road traffic noise. As such, I am not satisfied that the proposed hand car wash operation would not cause undue noise disturbance to nearby residents.
10. Consequently, I conclude that there has been a failure to demonstrate that the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with particular regard to noise and disturbance. This would be contrary to Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy 2007 and Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Council's Development Management Document 2015. Together, these require development to avoid detrimental impacts on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, having regard to noise and disturbance, amongst other things.

Other Matters

11. The hand car wash provides an active small commercial use on an underutilised site, creating employment opportunities for local people and contributing to the local economy. It offers a convenient and affordable vehicle cleaning service to residents and passing motorists on this section of Southchurch Road. However, these matters do not outweigh the harm that I have found above.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, the proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

A Wright INSPECTOR