



PLANNING SOLUTIONS EDINBURGH (PSE)

PLANNING APPEAL

APPEAL AGAINST THE DECISION OF THE CITY OF ABERDEEN COUNCIL NOT TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF AIR/WATER/VACUUM UPSTAND AND REPLACEMENT OF 3 PARKING SPACES WITH 3 ADDITIONAL EV CHARGING BAYS, ERECTION OF ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING ENCLOSURE AND UPSTANDS (RETROSPECTIVE) UNDER THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997.

Proposal: The installation of Air/Water/Vacuum Upstand and Replacement of 3 Parking Spaces with 3 Additional EV Charging Bays, Erection of Associated Infrastructure Including Enclosure and Upstands (Retrospective) Ref 230675/DPP

Address: Esplanade Filling Station North Esplanade West Aberdeen AB11 5RN

Applicant: Motor Fuel Ltd

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Introduction

This appeal is submitted on behalf of Motor Fuel Ltd, headquarters located at 36-38 Gladstone Place Upper Marlborough Road St Albans England. This report provides the grounds of appeal against the decision not to grant retrospective planning permission for additional EV chargers vacuum cleaner/water pumps and associated infrastructure.



Site Description

The application site comprises an area within the forecourt of a petrol filling station located to the west of, and accessed from, North Esplanade West. It is to the north of the Queen Elizabeth Bridge Roundabout and the site is bounded to the west by the C-Listed South College Street and Palmerston Road Railway Viaduct and Arches and to the north by a vacant commercial building. The site includes both car and HGV fuel points, associated retail unit, electric vehicle charging and vehicle washing infrastructure and two water, air and vacuum units.

Reason for Refusal

Due to the specific circumstances of the site, whereby the site layout is very constrained and the site access is in very close proximity to a highly trafficked road immediately after a junction, the removal of all standard non-electric vehicle charging spaces and the siting of the water, air and vacuum unit in a location that blocks visibility at the access of the site adversely impacts road safety. The removal of all

standard parking spaces introduces ambiguity and hesitation for drivers entering the site regarding whether they will park in an area of the forecourt which is in very close proximity to the site access and could result in vehicles queuing onto a highly trafficked road. The Council's Roads Development Management Team have objected to this application on road safety grounds.

In reaching this determination, the planning service has placed significant weight on considering the benefits of additional electric vehicle charging infrastructure in terms of contributing to the decarbonisation of transport and tackling the global climate crisis. Indeed, the addition of electric vehicle charging points would accord with the aims of Policies 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises) and 2 (Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation) of National Planning Framework 4 and the principles of supporting sustainable transport infrastructure in Policy 13 (Sustainable Transport) and T2 (Sustainable Transport) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023. However, Policy 13 requires low or zero-emission vehicle charging points to be in 'safe and convenient locations'. Because of the specific circumstances of this site and its constrained layout, the benefits that would arise from the addition of three charging spaces (beyond what has been granted by Planning Permission Ref: 211462/DPP) in terms of climate mitigation would not outweigh the road safety impact that would arise from this development proposal. The development would not provide electric vehicle charging points in a safe location, in conflict with the aims of Policy 13 (Sustainable Transport) of the National Planning Framework 4 and, on balance, the decision is to refuse the application.

Grounds for Appeal

Due to the specific circumstances of the site, whereby the site layout is very constrained, and the site access is in very close proximity to a highly trafficked road immediately after a junction, the removal of all standard non-electric vehicle charging spaces and the siting of the water, air and vacuum unit in a location that blocks visibility at the access of the site adversely impacts road safety.

The site has functioned successfully for many years without any serious incidents. Since the inclusion of the water air and vacuuming unit there has not been any additional accidents recorded. (Please see the roads consultant's road safety report)

The removal of all standard parking spaces introduces ambiguity and hesitation for drivers entering the site regarding whether they will park in an area of the forecourt which is in very close proximity to the site access and could result in vehicles queuing onto a highly trafficked road. The Council's Roads Development Management Team have objected to this application on road safety grounds.

With the increasing availability of Electric Vehicle Charging points around Scotland and their associated parking bays there has been an inevitable reduction in overall parking provision in many carparks linked to petrol stations and other businesses. In many cases particularly on smaller sites where there is already limited dedicated parking bays drivers will often park none electric vehicles on EV parking bays without incident or causing any road safety issues.

In reaching this determination, the planning service has placed significant weight on considering the benefits of additional electric vehicle charging infrastructure in terms of contributing to the decarbonisation of transport and tackling the global climate crisis. Indeed, the addition of electric vehicle charging points would accord with the aims of Policies 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises) and 2 (Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation) of National Planning Framework 4 and the principles of supporting sustainable transport infrastructure in Policy 13 (Sustainable Transport) and T2 (Sustainable Transport) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023.

As stated in the report of handling the additional electric vehicle chargers will contribute to the Council's stated aim of reducing carbon emissions and fostering the use of more sustainable modes of transport and in particular electric vehicles. One of the biggest issues with encouraging greater use of electric vehicles is the lack of charging points both locally and nationally. The client has significantly increased the provision EV charging facilities on the site thus reducing this issue and encouraging the greater use of electric vehicle use in Aberdeen.

However, Policy 13 requires low or zero-emission vehicle charging points to be in 'safe and convenient locations'. Because of the specific circumstances of this site and its constrained layout, the benefits that would arise from the addition of three charging spaces (beyond what has been granted by Planning Permission Ref: 211462/DPP) in terms of climate mitigation would not outweigh the road safety impact that would arise from this development proposal. The development would not provide electric vehicle charging points in a safe location, in conflict with the aims of Policy 13 (Sustainable Transport) of the National Planning Framework 4 and, on balance, the decision is to refuse the application.

Despite the additional EV Charging Bays and the water, air and vacuum station at the entrance there has not been any recorded accidents on the site. As can be seen in the photos in Appendix 1 there is only minimum loss of visibility at the entrance to the site where the new water, air and vacuum are located. Additionally the site still retains 5 shared generous sized parking bays with 1 disabled parking bay. All of which can easily and safely be accessed by vehicles entering the site.

Summary

The additional EV charging bays significantly increases the provision of Electric Vehicle charging facilities in the area which will encourage the greater use of electric vehicles in the future. It is not uncommon for none electric vehicles to park on EV charging bays where there is limited parking on site. This does not necessarily impact on road safety. Additional signage could inform drivers of the dual use of the parking bays. The additional water, air and vacuum station at the entrance does not pose a significant risk to road safety as the entrance to the site is still clearly visible. We would therefore respectfully request that the retrospective planning application be **granted** planning permission.

Appendix 1 Site Photos



Site access is 15 metres from the roundabout.



The additional charging points still allow for adequate parking on the site.



Access to the site is still clearly visible despite the additional water, air and vacuum unit being installed at the entrance.



Approved water, air and vacuum units installed at the north of the site.



The Additional EV charging bays can easily be used as temporary parking bays for none electric vehicles