

APPLICATION NO: 22/0897N

PROPOSAL: Manned eco car wash facility and electric vehicle charging, construction of four jet wash bays and four valeting bays, two self serve electric vehicle charging bays. A single, modular, amenity building containing a customer lounge, store and employee welfare area. Change of use as determined.

ADDRESS: Land At, NORTH STREET, CREWE

APPLICANT: Mr Simon Moxon, Carvana Limited and Monktondean Investment

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The applicant has submitted correspondence following the publication of the Committee agenda to address some of the issues raised in relation to the reason for refusal. The applicant states they are keen to agree a way forward, and propose the hours of operation are amended to;

Saturday: 9am – 6pm

Sunday and Bank Holidays: 10am – 5pm

Monday – Friday to remain: 8am – 8pm

The applicant considers that the amended hours of operation would reduce the impact on neighbouring residents and allow them the ability to sit in their gardens on summer evening without disturbance. They state that normal working weeks, operational hours of 8am – 8pm are reasonable given the plethora of other operational uses at this time and including peoples normal working patterns.

The applicant also states that the application site is an established commercial car park use permitting comings and goings of vehicles 24/7, with no operational hour restrictions. They consider that the juxtaposition between the existing situation against the reduced operational hours should be considered. They consider that there is already an amenity impact on neighbours from the existing commercial car park use and that the proposal (as amended) would pose a significant improvement on neighbouring residents against the existing situation which is uncontrolled.

The applicant stated that they consider their planning application is robust, has received no objections from 'professional consultees' and they have acted reasonably towards the Council in relation to the 21 week delay, (and counting), and now offer of the reduced operational hours.

The applicant also states that the reduced hours are proposed to enable an approval at committee; however, should the application be refused, and it is

appealed they reserve the right to revert back to the original proposed operation hours of 8am – 8pm every day.

The applicant states that they consider the site is in commercial use and cannot remain vacant, significant costs have been expended to date to support a perfectly reasonable change of use for an existing commercial site.

OFFICER COMMENT

As stated in the main officer report it is considered that the proposed use of the site as a car washing facility would have an adverse impact on the living conditions of the adjacent neighbours due to the proposed change of use from a car park to a car washing facility.

The hours of operation originally proposed of 8am – 8pm every day were considered to be those typically expected of the proposed use, and would likely be most busiest during the weekends, and evening.

Whilst the proposed amended hours of operation on Saturdays 9am – 6pm and 10am – 5pm Sundays and Bank Holidays would have some benefit in the evenings, this is not a significant change to the proposed use, and operationally the noise impact would still remain during a large proportion of the time. As set out in the main officers report the main issue is the type of use in close proximity to neighbouring properties. The use of vacuums and jet washers generate significant noise levels for short periods of time. The intermittent operation of the equipment which would produce bursts of high-powered noise throughout the day would be particularly disturbing. This would still be the case for the majority of the time.

The existing lawful use of the site is a staff and customer car park, its last use was in relation to a car showroom, which is no longer there. (replaced with a local retail unit). From historic planning applications and photos the site appears to have been used partly as an overflow area for the storage of sales cars and mainly as a private car park for employees and customers. The Planning History shows the site has been granted permission for 5no dwellings previously but no other commercial uses on the site have been accepted. Any future commercial use would be subject to a planning application and each use would be considered on its own merits.

The applicant argues that the site could be opened up as a 24 hour a day / 7 days a week private car park which would have a detrimental impact on the adjacent neighbours as it would be unregulated. Whist this is acknowledged, and could be implemented without any further permission, the use of the site as a public/private car park would not have the same level of noise impact as a car washing facility, as noted above, it is the intermittent use of noisy equipment during operational hours which is the main concern raised, and this is considered to have a significant detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity, contrary to planning policy.

Furthermore, whilst the provision of Electrical Vehicle Charging points is a benefit of the scheme, it is a policy requirement of most commercial and residential schemes now and therefore does not significantly outweigh the harm outlined above and in detail within the officer's report.

It is therefore considered that, although the reduced hours at a weekend and on bank holidays would be beneficial this does not address the fundamental issue of the use proposed on the site and how it would negatively impact on the living conditions of the adjacent neighbours. Therefore, the officer recommendation of refusal remains unchanged.

RECOMMENDATION – No change to original recommendation of REFUSAL