



PLANNING STATEMENT
SWAKELEYS SERVICE STATION,
ICKENHAM, UB10 8TB.



Supporting the application for a Variation of Condition No.8 to change the opening hours to 24:00 following grant of Planning Permission reference 7109A/78/848

The site is located in a mixed use area comprising residential and commercial on the frontage of Long Lane (B466) at the junction with Swakeleys Road (service road) and Swakeleys Road (B457), and north-east of RAF Northolt.

The forecourt comprising 3 pump islands set in a startergate layout with overhead canopy are located in the centre of the site. The single storey sales building directly faces the forecourt. The boundary is open to the Long Lane frontage including mature tree planting on a deep grass verge. The southern boundary is defined by a 1.2m high close boarded timber fence which continues along the western boundary at a height of 1.8m. The northern boundary is open to a vehicular driveway to the rear of adjoining properties, of approximately 3.0m width. This driveway also gives access to a rear vehicle servicing and repair workshop which also has a similar 3.0m vehicle driveway onto Swakeleys Road. On the opposite side of the entrance is the flank brick wall of the adjoining ground floor retail, above which are two upper floors. The flank wall returns from the frontage at 3 storey height with a single window on the 1st and 2nd floors reducing to 4.5m height behind the petrol filling station shop together with a metal fire escape staircase. The air/water service is located along the end (east) wall of the shop.

Planning History

The petrol filling station was redeveloped around 1978 under planning permission 7109A/78/48 with Condition 8 restricting the hours of operation. A planning application was submitted in 1998 for Variation of Condition 8 (to extend hours of opening to between 06:00 hours and 24:00 hours) which was granted under planning permission 7109N/98.

The main determining issues with this application will be whether or not 24 hour trading would be compliant with Council Policy and whether it would give rise to an adverse impact on the character or amenity of the surrounding area. The 1998 grant of planning permission stated that no work or business shall be carried out other than between the approved hours to ensure that the development does not prejudice the enjoyment by neighbouring occupiers of their properties.

In applying to vary the time when the premises open for 24:00 hours the applicant is responding to lifestyle changes that have taken place since 1998 when the station traded from 6:00am to 12 midnight. These changes have occurred due to the transition to busier, less regimented lifestyles and changes in working patterns, increase in the population and growth of consumerism which has required many service providers to extend their services to the customer.

Responding to these changes, in order to meet customer expectations, is a challenge the applicant must embrace head-on.

Busier lifestyles start earlier in the day than in 1998 but in order to offer an extended service throughout night time hours, the applicant recognises the need for councils, local residents and businesses to work together. So often complaints of noise come about as a consequence of conflict between the proximity of residential property and commercial activities, where there has been no attempt to address concerns beforehand.

In order to address possible concerns that may arise with an application to open 24:00 hours, the applicant proposes a restriction on the use of the premises during the period midnight to 6:00am. This would limit activity to the shop and forecourt pumps only. No other activity would be carried out including deliveries in strict compliance with control measures put in place by the applicant, including staff training on noise pollution, security and health and safety.

It has been commented that consideration should be given to the make up of the local area and the potential impact the business may have on local residents, balancing the need of the business with those of local residents.

To a certain extent, different land uses and activities need to co-exist in modern society. Over the last half a century Planning controls have played an extremely important role in establishing the balance between the benefits of a proposed development and any potential adverse consequences.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is now placed firmly within the context of the Government's policy on sustainable development, with the renewed emphases here on development of previously used land and mixed use areas. The issues raised become more common as there are competing needs that interested parties must seek to balance.

The site's lawful current use and planning history indicates that the site has been in commercial use as a petrol filling station for a substantial number of years. With the demise of petrol filling stations and corner shops over the last 10 years, these stations are now often required to be open for extensive hours due to the merchandise sold and customers' demands, and the NPPF now clearly encourages proposals which would support economic development and growth of businesses. It is in consequence now considered not unreasonable in principle, for a filling station shop to be available with unrestricted hours.

In order to demonstrate responsible management of the proposed night time operation and to allay the concerns of neighbouring residents, it is proposed:

1. That all fuel and shop purchases would take place through the night pay hatch between 24:00 and 06:00 hours
2. Restrict fuel sales to the two outer pump islands closest to Long Lane between 24:00 and 06:00 hours
3. Restrict external lighting to the recessed lights within the underside of the canopy and immediately above the two outer pump islands
4. Restrict the vacuum, air and water hours to between 7:00am and 11:00pm
5. Restrict all deliveries to between 7:00am and 11:00pm
6. Suggest that a temporary period of 12 months would enable the local planning authority to monitor the activity
7. That if minded to grant permission the applicant would set up a noise monitoring procedure to be first agreed with Environmental Health
8. Signage within the forecourt requesting respect from customers for the night time hours, and additional and high visibility CCTV surveillance on the forecourt

Other considerations to be noted:

- A. The site sits on Long Lane which is well used including night time and it is considered relevant that, with the control measures in place, it is unlikely to lead to a difference in unacceptable levels of noise between the carriageway and the forecourt
- B. The approach and exit is screened from the most sensitive uses at the rear of the site
- C. Night time operations would increase employment and would also increase surveillance of the immediate area
- D. MFG is a responsible, independent operator of more than 600 petrol filling stations throughout the country. They seek to achieve a local neighbourhood service from their sites and encourage local residents to report any concerns or ideas in order to improve the service on offer. On sites that operate through night time their staff are given specialist training in all aspects of customer service, customer relationship and communication.

For the reasons provided in this statement, the applicant is of the opinion that having due regard to:

- Proposed limited activity on site between 24:00 and 06:00
- Background noise from traffic using Long Lane
- Lifestyle changes that will already generate activity and some noise during the proposed night time operation

It is fair and reasonable, relevant for the sustainability of the Station and controllable by the local Planning Authority, to allow temporary night time trading in order to be able to fully and properly assess the impact on the local amenity.

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