



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 July 2025

by Mr R Walker BA HONS DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M4510/W/25/3361511

76 Shields Road, Byker, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE6 1DS

- 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 Anthony Lang against the decision of Newcastle Upon Tyne City Council.
 - The application Ref is 2024/2003/01/DET.
 - The development proposed is change of use of upper floors from vacant offices to hotel (Floors 1 2 3 4, with ground floor commercial unit retained).
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs was made in writing by Mr Anthony Lang against Newcastle Upon Tyne City Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effects of the proposed development on community cohesion, crime and disorder.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located within an area which the Police have identified as having a high level of reported incidents. In this regard, the Police have provided statistics and a heat map to corroborate their concerns. The appellant has not challenged the statistics provided by the Police and I have no reason to dispute the figures.
5. The proposed hotel is designed with its access to the rear of the building along the back lane. The lane is used to access the rear of premises along this part of Shields Road. However, there is little passive surveillance along the lane, particularly along the ground floor. In this regard, positioning the only entrance to the proposed hotel here, would increase the vulnerability of guests staying at the hotel, particularly in the evening and at night when footfall, and activity associated with the commercial units would be less than during the day. Given the lack of areas to socialise or provide food and drink within the hotel, guests would come and go regularly to the rear, in an area that is more secluded and vulnerable, increasing the risk of crime and disorder.
6. The Police have referred me to a nearby hostel and the high calls and crime statistics that have resulted from this premises despite a management plan. The appellant has not disputed the Police's accounts of the nearby premises. I do not have full details of this hostel such as its internal layout, and I am mindful that

hostels typically include shared sleeping accommodation. This would not be the case in the appeal scheme where each bedroom contains space for a bed and seating area. However, guests would use shared toilet and shower facilities, and so there would still be some residual risk of disorder if guests clashed as a direct consequence of the design of the scheme. This adds to the harm I have identified from the design before me with its entrance to the rear.

7. Even if most guests residing at the hotel do not contribute to crime and disorder, the effects from even a small number of incidents would still be substantial given the potential seriousness of the consequences of such incidents. In this regard, the design of the appeal scheme would, in my view, contribute unacceptably to this increased risk of crime and disorder, harming community cohesion as a result.
8. I have given consideration as to whether a management plan would overcome my concerns. However, there are no firm details of what this would entail, and given my concerns relate to the design of the scheme impacting on the likelihood of incidents, I am not satisfied that this could be effectively mitigated by a management plan. For these reasons, the presence of CCTV would not be a sufficient mitigating factor either.
9. To conclude on this main issue, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on community cohesion, crime and disorder. As such, I find conflict with the requirements of Policies CS14 and CS15 of the Council's Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan and Policies DM10 and DM20 of its Development and Allocations Plan, when taken together and in so far as they relate to this main issue. These say, amongst other things, that development will contribute to good place-making through the delivery of high quality and sustainable design, and the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment by development being required to create safe and inclusive environments.

Other Matters

10. The proposal would bring benefits from bringing the building back into an active use helping with the regeneration of the area by making an efficient use of the building in a sustainable location. There is no substantive evidence regarding the need for the proposed use. Nonetheless, I accept that it would have social and economic benefits including from, increased choice, employment and spend from guests staying. This would garner support from the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and local planning policies.
11. I have been referred to the overarching objectives of the planning system to achieve sustainable development set down in the Framework. However, the scheme would not create a well-designed safe place, and as such would erode the social objective and taken as a whole the proposal would not therefore represent sustainable development as sought by the Framework.
12. My concerns are not the principle of a hotel use, but the specific design of the scheme before me. The appellant has suggested that they would be open to amend the scheme to include a revised entrance to the front or ensuite rooms. However, to do so would alter the plans significantly from what is before me, and I cannot be certain that doing so would not prejudice any other party. As such, in the interests of fairness and natural justice, it would not be appropriate to require such level of alterations by way of a condition and I have determined the appeal based on the plans which formed the basis of the Council's decision.

Conclusion

13. The material considerations do not indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

Mr R Walker

INSPECTOR