



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2025

by **L Wilson BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F4410/W/25/3372446

Wheatley Hotel, Thorne Road, Wheatley Hills, Doncaster DN2 5DR

- 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 Ali Soor against the decision of City of Doncaster Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/01438/FUL.
 - The development proposed is change of use of vacant land behind Public House to a hand car wash, including installation of an office temporary modular building (static caravan) and 2 modular storage units and the removal of bollards to allow for a one way traffic system.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The information presented indicates that the application is part retrospective, and the site contains storage units and a static caravan. At the time of my site visit these were not present. For the avoidance of doubt, I have assessed the appeal proposal and based my decision on the plans before me.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - The character and appearance of the surrounding area;
 - Drainage; and
 - Flood risk.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. At the time of my site visit, the site consisted of an open, hard surfaced piece of vacant land with access from Thorne Road and Barnby Dun Road. Adjacent to the site is a public house/ hotel, a carpet sales premises and beyond a motor engineers business. There are also residential dwellings in the vicinity of the site, but these are primarily on the opposite side of Thorne Road and Barnby Dun Road. Furthermore, wide grass verges (which contain mature trees) separate the site from these dwellings. Thus, whilst there are residential properties nearby, there are a mix of uses within the vicinity of the site.
5. The development would include limited structures. The adjacent carpet sales building is large, and the public house/ hotel building is also substantial.

Furthermore, the adjacent roads are relatively busy as they are main arterial roads. The development would therefore not be prominent within the streetscene, including from residential houses and from the public house's beer garden.

6. The proposal would introduce a high acoustic and visual barrier, increase comings and goings of vehicles as well as some noise. However, given the characteristics of the area (including mix of nearby uses, scale of nearby buildings, and wide grass verges), distance to residential dwellings, limited built development is proposed as well as the proposed operating hours, the proposal would maintain the character and setting of the area.
7. For these reasons, the car wash operations, portacabin, storage units, acoustic fence, comings and goings of people (including customers and vehicles) would integrate visually and functionally with the established character of the area. The proposal would not result in negative visual impacts or clutter in this location or represent an unsightly development. Consequently, it would not introduce an unacceptable loss of visual amenity to neighbouring occupiers nor the wider street scene.
8. In conclusion, when drawing the above points together, the proposed development would have an acceptable effect on the mixed character and appearance of the surrounding area. Accordingly, it would comply with Policies 10, 41 and 46 of the Doncaster Local Plan 2015-2035 (2021) (LP). These collectively seek, amongst other things, to ensure development proposals respond positively to their context and integrate visually and functionally with the immediate and surrounding area.
9. The proposal would also comply with paragraphs 129 and 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which collectively seek to ensure developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

Drainage

10. The site drainage plan shows drainage details and shows a marsh silt and grease trap. The appellant states that the system is capable of taking 3400l of water and removes silt and grease from the wastewater.
11. The Council's Pollution Control officer sets out that their records show that the site is over a principal aquifer and adjoins a historic depot/garage. Thus, there is concern that the aquifer could be put at risk by the development. It is unclear how surface water runoff will be adequately managed. It has not been demonstrated that surface water from the car wash would not run off site, and if any measures are proposed/ in place to prevent this happening. This could potentially result in surface water being contaminated and reaching the aquifer as well as causing surface water flooding.
12. There is also no annotation of dips/gullies around the wash areas or perimeter of the site. Furthermore, there is insufficient information to show that the water will flow into the silt/grease trap area. An oil interceptor is also required in addition to the proposed silt/grease trap. Moreover, the drawing appears to show foul water drainage would be connected to public sewer, but this contradicts what is set out on the application form.

13. The appellant suggests that this matter could have been dealt via a planning condition, and have drawn my attention to conditions attached to a similar development. Whilst conditions can be used in some cases, I am not satisfied that a condition in this case would adequately address the reason for refusal. This is because the appellant has not robustly addressed the Council's Flood Risk Engineer's and Pollution Control officer's drainage concerns set out in their consultation responses.
14. For these reasons, the proposal fails to provide a satisfactory drainage strategy to prevent contamination of the underlying aquifer. The development could result in an unacceptable risk of pollution of groundwater and surface water. Consequently, in the absence of sufficient evidence to the contrary, the proposed development would have an unacceptable effect on drainage as it has not been demonstrated that the proposal incorporates satisfactory measures for dealing with its drainage impacts.
15. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policies 54, 55 and 56 of the LP. These seek, amongst other things, to ensure development sites incorporate satisfactory measures for dealing with their drainage impacts to ensure waste water and surface water run-off are managed appropriately and to reduce flood risk to existing communities.

Flood risk

16. The site is within Flood Zone 1. However, it is in an area which is a surface water flow route or at high risk of surface water flooding (known as flash flooding when rainwater cannot drain away through normal drainage systems).
17. Based on the evidence submitted, the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) does not include sufficient details of the existing/predicted flood levels or existing/proposed site levels. Furthermore, it does not fully consider the increase in run off from the site nor does it set out a robust drainage strategy in respect of surface water. The appellant has not adequately addressed the Council's Flood Risk Engineer's or Planning Policy and Environment (Flooding) consultation responses. Accordingly, the FRA is deficient and the development fails to provide a suitable basis for an assessment to be made of the flood risks arising from the proposed development. Whilst the appellant highlights that they did not receive communication indicating that the FRA was insufficient, that does not provide justification for the proposal.
18. For the reasons given above, in the absence of sufficient evidence to the contrary, the proposed development would have an unacceptable effect on flood risk as it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposal would not increase flood risk. Consequently, it would conflict with Policies 56 and 57 of the LP. These state, amongst other things, that proposals should not increase flood risk on site and ensure no flooding to land or buildings elsewhere.
19. The proposal would also conflict with paragraph 181 of the Framework which seeks to ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
20. The reason for refusal refers to the Council's Flood Risk Supplementary Planning Document (2023) and Preparing a Flood Risk Assessment: Standing Advice. However, it is not clear which specific section of these documents the proposal conflicts with. In any event, this is not a determinative factor in this case.

Other Matters

21. The appellant considers that the application was pre-determined, and the Council has not worked in a positive and proactive manner. Furthermore, my attention has been drawn to other hand car washes in Doncaster. Limited information has been provided regarding the other hand car wash businesses to be able to make a direct comparison. Thus, it is unclear whether the matters relating to drainage and flood risk are comparable. In any case, I have determined the appeal on its own merits. There is no clear evidence before me to demonstrate that the Council is being inconsistent in its decision making.
22. The proposal would provide benefits such as employment. However, the benefits of the proposed development, and other matters raised, would not outweigh the harm and conflict I have found above.

Conclusion

23. For the reasons given above, having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the Framework, and all other material considerations, the appeal does not succeed.

L Wilson

INSPECTOR