

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL
CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Proposal: Conversion of former public house to a flexible use under class v of the general permitted development order (2015) for use class c1 hotel and for use as a sui generis hmo

Address: 5-6 High Street, Cleator Moor

Reference: 4/26/2032/0F1

Date: 23/02/26

Description: 5-6 High Street, formerly known as The Commercial public house, is a Victorian building situated on the corner of North Street and High Street.

Conclusion: Request further information

Assessment:

5-6 Cleator Moor is a non-designated heritage asset, but has a minimal level of heritage value within that category. As such, impact on its significance should be taken into consideration in decision-making.

It is also located within Cleator Moor conservation area, and within the settings of several listed buildings (13-20 High Street, Cleator Moor Library, Former Local Government Offices, Memorial Fountain, and 5 Jacktrees Road).

The building is in exceptionally poor condition externally, and exerts a strong impression of dilapidation. Refurbishing it will bring about a significant enhancement to the appearance of this locale.

Externally, little change is proposed. To the east side, which is the “rear” of the building, hidden from surrounding public areas, it is proposed to remove a single-storey lean-to structure and form a single-storey volume with a terrace at first floor level, accessed from two doors where there are currently windows. Additionally, it is proposed to replace a window with a pair of doors at ground floor level, and replace two windows with a single dormer window at first floor level.

These changes can be expected to have a negligible impact on the significance of the building, little to no impact on the conservation area and settings of the abovementioned heritage asset.

By contrast, conversion will have the potential to provide a long-term out-of-use building with a viable new use.

- Of note, the Conservation Area Design Guide urges use of timber for external doors and windows. In this location, sliding sash windows for the main frontage windows would have an appropriate appearance. I request information be included in the application on the external doors and windows.

Relevant Policies and Guidance:

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes a need “in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works [for the Local Planning Authority to] have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest” [Section 16(2)]. This requirement also applies to the granting of planning permission affecting a listing building or its setting [Section 66(1)].

Section 72 of the 1990 Act states that “special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of [a conservation] area.”

Paragraph 139 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that “Development that is not well designed should be refused”.

NPPF para. 210 states that “In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation...”

NPPF para. 212 states, in the case of designated heritage assets, “great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation”, irrespective of whether potential harm is substantial, less-than-substantial, or total loss. Where harm to a designated heritage asset is less-than-substantial, it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (para. 215).

Paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account when making decisions.

Opportunities should be sought for new development within conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets that enhances or better reveals their significance. (para. 219)

Referring to assets in a conservation area, NPPF para. 220 states that loss of an element that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area should be treated as either substantial (under para. 213-14) or less-than-substantial harm (under paragraph 215).

The Copeland area’s Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

- BE1 provides for the preservation and enhancement of built heritage assets by:
 - Requiring a heritage impact assessment or heritage statement where the proposal would affect a heritage asset;
 - Giving great weight to the conservation of Copeland’s designated heritage assets when decision making;
 - Ensuring that new development is sympathetic to local character and history;
 - Supporting proposals for the appropriate reuse of vacant historic buildings, recognising that putting buildings into viable uses consistent with their conservation can help sustain and enhance their significance;
 - Supporting proposals that increase the enhancement, promotion and interpretation of Copeland’s architectural and archaeological resources;
 - Strengthening the distinctive character of Copeland’s settlements, through the application of high-quality design and architecture that respects this character and enhances the setting of heritage assets.
- BE2 states that development should preserve or enhance designated heritage assets (or important archaeological sites) and their settings. The more important the asset, the greater weight that will be given to its conservation. Proposals that better reveal the significance of

heritage assets will be supported in principle. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification.

- BE4 refers to non-designated heritage assets, saying that development should preserve or enhance such heritage assets and their settings. Proposals that better reveal the significance of heritage assets will be supported in principle. Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets or their settings should demonstrate that consideration has been given to their significance.
- DS4 outlines the Council's expectation that all new development will meet high-quality design standards that contribute positively to the health and well-being of residents.
- DS5 refers to the importance of achieving good standards of design in both hard and soft landscaping.

The Conservation Area Design Guide is a supplementary planning document adopted in 2017 that is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within conservation areas in the legacy Copeland area. It is therefore applicable to this application.

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