



Blyth Town Council

Statement to be read by Cllr John Potts, Chair of Blyth Town Council's Planning Committee at Northumberland County Council's Meeting on Wednesday 11 September 2019

Planning application 19/00882/COU

Change of use from A1 retail to the rear area and upper floors to an HMO.

27-29 Waterloo Road, Blyth.

We all want to see Blyth developed and improved.

Properties such as the new Commissioners Quay Hotel, the Workspace building, Frameworks and Northumbria House show what good development can be.

Blyth has a tremendous history and we have all enjoyed recent events such as the Tall Ships, Cycle races, Carnivals and Christmas light switch-on run by the councils and centred around the town square. It shows we can attract people to Blyth with the right developments.

There are new initiatives coming such as the relief road and the rail link.

The Blyth Town Forum, which is a group run by Northumberland County Council with representatives from Blyth Town Council and local businesses, has attracted a starter grant of £150,000 from the High Streets Fund to put forward developments for Blyth and there will be a showcase event on the town square on 28 September to consult the public on how they want to see Blyth develop.

There are a number of empty properties in our high street, a phenomenon common in most towns, and as it is unlikely that they will all return to retail use we must think of alternate uses. We would not be opposed to having living accommodation above retail units, but it must be high quality accommodation.

Some of these proposed units will be less than nine square meters in total. That's three meters by three meters. And that's to include the bedroom,

toilet and shower. There will not be any problems with loss of light or overlooking, because there won't be any. At least twelve of the rooms will have a view of a brick wall on the next building about two meters away across the arcade. Not what I would call high quality living spaces.

The proposed development at the old Pal Joey shop in Waterloo Road is not what we want. It will deter people from coming into Blyth. We all appreciate that we need more single person accommodation but not in this location. Has the developer considered any other more suitable locations? Putting nineteen strangers together to live in relatively cramped conditions is bound to generate problems. Problems that the people of Blyth do not want.

The residents of Bondicar Terrace will remember the previous HMO in the street where there was a serious fire, which is a matter the Fire Services will need to consider for the licencing application.

We must listen to the concerns of the residents of Blyth. This proposed development is not what we want in this location.

Blyth Town Council will urge the Planning Authority to refuse this application.