

Gavin Evans

From:
Sent:
To:
Cc:

Subject:

Application Reference: 161022/DPP

To: Aberdeen City Council Planning

I am writing to lodge my objection to the above referenced planning application for the formation of a new hotel at the former Hamilton School, 55-57 Queen's Road.

My objection is based upon a number of points.

Conflict with Policy70

The development of a hotel at this site is in conflict with the guidelines stated in Policy 70: West End (Class 4 Business) Policy Area WE70.

This policy favours change of use to business office premises and also residential occupation. In particular I wish to bring attention to item 2. of the Policy which states: **"Proposals for other commercial uses will be treated on their individual merits. Commercial uses which would be in conflict with the residential amenity of householders within and adjacent to the West End area will not be acceptable."**

Noise and Loss of Privacy

The experience of the residents in the area with the two existing hotels has clearly demonstrated that the operation of a hotel in this area results in conflict with the amenity of the householders. The management of these hotels covers the range of possible management types – one, a national chain and the other a small locally owned and managed property. Both have consistently displayed a lack of respect for neighbours or perhaps simply lack of expertise with resultant anti-social behaviour and noise from their guests both from arranged functions and individual guest groups.

There has been a loss of privacy due to the elevated balcony of Malmaison where guests overlook the gardens of residential property and have entertained themselves by taking photographs of properties, shouting abuse at residents, throwing objects and displaying themselves in the nude. The Chester has failed to curb profanity and excessive noise from its outdoor parties and has been unwilling to do so in spite of telephone and face-to-face requests by residents.

There is no truly effective means for residents to stop these anti-social activities at the time or prevent them in future in the absence of courteous cooperation from hotel management. No undertaking from the applicants of the new hotel can ensure that they would respect the amenities of the neighbourhood any more than the existing hotels.. Neither the Council or the Police are equipped to deal with these issues at the time so residents are exposed to sleepless nights. Reporting these incidents at the time by email or after the event has not resulted in cessation of these activities. The Police will attend a residential noise dispute but will not attend a commercial property related complaint. Consequently, residents are left with disturbed sleep and extreme frustration.

Mechanical noise

Modern hotels operate HVAC systems on a continuous 24 hour basis for the comfort level of guest bedrooms and catering ventilation. The Chester as an example operates a system that emits a low frequency noise. The decibel level may not exceed the illegal limit. However it is an anti-social nuisance at night being especially noticeable on fine evenings.

Traffic

The Council has designated the lane a Cycle Path. Adding vehicular traffic will compromise this use. The traffic issues on the lane have been discussed at length in association with multiple access applications from the Chester

Adding another hotel, particularly one that incorporates parking in the rear of the property would only add to this and offer the Chester grounds for renewed applications. Additional hotel traffic both from guest vehicles or service vehicles will add to the congested and dangerous traffic situation already present in the lane.

Alcohol Licensing

The addition of another licensed premises adjacent to two existing licensed hotels will certainly represent 'oversupply' which will be counter to Council policy.

Surely the experience related above along with additional points define the type of conflict with residential amenity that was considered when creating Policy 70. Unfortunately the Chester and the Malmaison are hotels formed from hotels that existed prior to the creation of the Policy. To approve a new hotel would be a breach of good practice and to ignore the anti-social situation that these hotels generate for residents.

Respectfully,
Mark Vorenkamp
24 Harlaw Road
Aberdeen