

**N&N Planning and Development Team  
Supplementary planning submission – July 2023**

Application Reference	Application Type	Location Details	Proposal
<a href="#">23/01002/FUL</a>	Full Application	Geisha Asia And Geisha Italia Front Street Benton Newcastle Upon Tyne NE12 8AE	Retention of fairy lights on front elevation of the Geisha Restaurant, Front Street, Benton.
<b>Planning officer</b>	Maxine Ingram		
<b>Comment</b>	<p><b>The Northumberland and Newcastle Society objects to the grant of planning approval for this application on the following grounds.</b></p> <p>We note this application is related to a recent retrospective full application (<a href="#">23/00588/FUL</a> ) in respect of: <i>'Alterations including painting render and brickwork, installation of 'fairy' lights, railway sleepers, decorative artificial planting and erection of signage'</i>.</p> <p>The Society has previously highlighted a generic need for local planning authority policy statements in order to protect conservation areas. These areas are established and important local heritage assets with a substantial place-making role in their own right. In the specific context of development schemes relating to Benton Conservation Area, these must be sympathetic and respectful to this environment.</p> <p>As a general principle the N&amp;N enthusiastically welcomes repurposing and reuse of vacant buildings and particularly where they can have a positive impact on heritage assets. We recognise the need for this business to attract customers to its new location through a distinct identity and we believe the signage to the Front Street elevations is ample to achieve this.</p> <p>We understand the applicant has previously been in dispute with Newcastle City Council in respect of carrying out works elsewhere which we also understand were undertaken prior to seeking planning approval. As a result it is evident the applicant is familiar with the need to engage in dialogue with the planning authority to avoid a recurrence of this situation. It appears the work subject of this current application was undertaken before planning consent was sought via North Tyneside Council. This implies the applicant is aware that planning approval may be refused and they may subsequently be required to remove some or all the additions to the building.</p> <p>The Society notes that despite local opposition, most of the original scheme was given retrospective approval apart from the fairy lights which apparently remain an issue for nearby residents. Whilst the applicant had subsequently engaged in dialogue with the planning authority our expectation was this dialogue had resolved that scheme's contentious elements. Notwithstanding this, the lighting element was recognised by North Tyneside Council as inappropriate and unacceptable. Furthermore, it appears the retrospective approval was contingent and conditional on agreement between the conservation officer and applicant to this effect. In this subsequent application the Council's recognition is reinforced in comments submitted by the Urban Design and Conservation consultee whom recommends refusal and the Society endorses these comments.</p> <p>We would expect businesses setting up within a conservation area to comply with conditions applied to the grant of planning approval both to</p>		

## Northumberland and Newcastle Society (N&N)

avoid legal challenge but equally to contribute positively to local community place-making efforts. It is profoundly disappointing to note what appears to be the applicant's implication that if conditional use of the lighting within certain time periods from October to April is withheld, they may use a "fall back" option for the use of festive lighting which has no limitations.

In summary the Society reinforces the rationale for designation of conservation areas as guiding and informing development rather than to prevent change. We strongly feel North Tyneside Council has made significant compromises within the scope of the previous application and would ask that this application be refused.