



**WEST YORKSHIRE  
POLICE**

**West Yorkshire Police  
Kirklees District**

**Architectural Liaison Officer**

West Yorkshire Police  
Kirklees Council Planning Services  
Civic Centre 1  
Huddersfield  
HD1 2EY

Tel: 01484 221000

Email:

gerald.gallagher@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk

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| To: Louise Bearcroft<br>Investment & Regeneration Service<br>Kirklees Council<br>Civic Centre 1, Huddersfield, HD1 2EY | Ref: 2016/62/91887/E<br>Date: 10 <sup>th</sup> August 2016 |
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**Crown Hotel, Chickenley, Dewsbury  
Demolition of existing public house and erection of 9 dwellings with car parking**

I am unable to support this application for the following reasons.

**Communal footpaths running at the rear of properties**

There should be no enclosed shared footpaths that give access to the rear of a large number of dwellings.

In the layout as shown, it appears that five of the houses would have such a footpath running adjacent to their rear or side, enclosed and unobserved between tall, timber rear garden fencing.

The remaining houses would also back on to a publicly accessible footpath, which, whilst not enclosed, would itself be inadequately overlooked.

Shared rear access paths inevitably raise the opportunity for burglary, and at the very least are likely to become littered, neglected areas with forbidding passageways of tall timber fencing that gets damaged. In addition, the fear of crime amongst residents would be heightened, and this alley could become a hidden congregating area where various antisocial behaviour activity takes place.

An alternative arrangement should be designed.

See below for illustration:



Forbidding, enclosed appearance, typical of communal rear access footpaths, with inadequate surveillance from adjacent dwellings.



Alternative option, with access through the building, restricting rear access to the sole dwelling needing it, or at the most to one dwelling at either side.

### **Car parking area**

The area shown for car parking is effectively a rear parking court which would be largely hidden (by rear garden fencing) from the view of residents. The only overlooking from houses is likely to be from first floor (bedroom) windows, which do not provide active, routine surveillance.

Such rear parking courts can be vulnerable to crime and antisocial behaviour as they can introduce uninhibited access to the rear of houses, raising the opportunity for burglary as well as car crime.

An alternative arrangement, giving in-curtilage parking would be preferable.

### **Other general crime prevention design requirements include**

### **Dwelling front boundaries**

Where possible, front gardens should have a marked boundary that clearly distinguishes the private space of the garden, from the public space outside it. This should consist of hedge / low wall / fence / railings of around 1m in height.

Open plan frontages often contribute to complaints of nuisance and anti-social behaviour. By having a robust form of boundary treatment, there will be no dispute over ownership and maintenance of particular plots, and it will reduce the probability of desire lines being created across front garden areas.

### **Rear gardens. Side boundaries dividing plots from each other**

Plot dividers need to be tall and substantial enough to provide both privacy and security. Closed boarded timber fencing should be provided to a minimum 1.5m in height, and include privacy screen (a section of higher fencing) of 1.8m in height projecting out from the building for about 2m, to provide a private amenity area adjacent to the home.

### **Public spaces to be well overlooked**

All publicly accessible areas, and public open space should be designed to allow as much supervision as possible from nearby dwellings. This means including windows in gable elevations where appropriate.

### **Supporting guidance**

My above comments are made in the knowledge that the area in question has suffered historically from high levels of crime and antisocial behaviour. The advice given is intended to ensure that the opportunity for crime is reduced in future development there.

In addition the following guidance is relevant:

#### **From '*National Planning Policy Framework*':**

Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion.

#### **From '*Planning Practice Guidance*' (2014):**

Designing out crime and designing in community safety should be central to the planning and delivery of new development.

#### **From *Policy BE23 (Crime Prevention) of the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan*:**

New development should incorporate crime prevention measures to achieve:

- ii) Natural surveillance of public spaces from existing and proposed development
- iii) Secure locations for car parking areas

This report is submitted in the interests of crime prevention, and addresses our collective responsibilities under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, 1998

Gerry Gallagher AdCert ED & CP  
Kirklees District Architectural Liaison Officer  
West Yorkshire Police