

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

Phone (0191) 386 2595
Email chair@durhamcity.org
Web site: <http://www.DurhamCity.org>

c/o Blakett, Hart & Pratt, LLP
Aire House
Mandale Business Park
Belmont
Durham, DH1 1TH
16 June 2020

Dear Ms Jennings

The City of Durham Trust is concerned about the steady increase in the number of planning applications seeking to convert family dwellings to houses in multiple occupation. This is increasing the imbalance between the student population and the long-term resident population of Durham City. Instead we need to promote and preserve inclusive, mixed and balanced communities (NPPF, 8b).

Accordingly, Trustees wish to object to application **DM/20/01294/FPA** which proposes to change the use of **10 Musgrave Gardens**. The percentage of Council Tax exempt properties within 100 metres radius of this property is currently said to be 9.1%. It is possible that if this permission were to be granted it would tip over the 10% threshold and so the conversion would be contrary to the County Council's own Interim Policy on Student Accommodation and to Policy 16 in the emerging County Durham Plan.

Even if this is not the case, a perfectly good family home would be lost. The dining room would be converted to a fourth bedroom on the ground floor with the only bathroom upstairs shared with three other bedrooms. This would not be a good standard of accommodation.

It is very clear from the petition on the planning portal that the proposal has attracted a great deal of local opposition on the grounds that the conversion would have deleterious impacts on the amenities of existing residents, particularly in terms of noise and parking. The Trust supports this opposition and asks that the application be refused.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe
Chair, The City of Durham Trust