

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

Dear Mr Dalby

## **City of Durham Trust Objection**

**DM/20/01094/FPA Arts Block Durham Sixth Form Centre, The Sands Durham DH1 1SG**  
*Single storey ground floor extension to existing visual arts building*

The Trust objects to this application based on its impact on the design of the existing building and its relationship to its setting causing negative impact on the conservation area.

The analysis of the significance of the sixth form centre historic buildings combined with the newer additions and the impact on the conservation area is weak or missing. While the historic unlisted school and lodge buildings are dealt with, the school grounds and the setting they provide for the modern buildings is not. The school grounds have increased in their significance as greenspace with buildings in a designed complex. This is because of the quality of the arts block and also the erosion of its surrounds by the new Durham County Council (DCC) headquarters building and the knock-on effect of changing the school tennis courts to car parking due to displacement. The arts block was a City of Durham Trust award winner in 2005 based on its design quality and Le Corbusier design references: see Trust Bulletin reference below.

*‘Appropriately sited towards the end of the drive through the grounds from Freeman's Place, its satisfying curved form guides one towards the entrance of the main College building, which is itself thereby enhanced. (Before arriving at the Centre, the first sight of its distinctive outline of sloping monopitch roof and perforated white rendering may well recall to mind Le Corbusier's famous chapel at Ronchamp.)’*

In attaching the single storey extension to the face with the Le Corbusier design reference it substantially weakens the original building and its important relationship with the surrounding landscaped areas. Both the original buildings and new building are important assets in upholding the character of this area and its significance for the conservation area.

The Trust therefore objects based on negative design impact on the existing building, the school and its grounds and the conservation area. This is amplified by cumulative negative impact caused by the combination of DCC headquarters, the multi-storey car park and the change of use of the school tennis courts to a car park.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe  
Chair, The city of Durham Trust