

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

Dear Mr Dalby

City Of Durham Trust Objection
DM/20/01100/FPA Durham Sixth Form Centre

Change of use of former Caretaker's Lodge to art workspace and gallery space and the erection of a two storey extension to the rear

The Trust objects to this proposal based on its design impact on the Lodge, its surrounds and negative impact on the conservation area.

The reuse of the Lodge and potentially achieving it through a contemporary extension are principles that the Trust would more usually support. The analysis of the setting and significance of the Lodge is weak and specifically fails to take account of the changes around it. There is negative cumulative impact from the Durham County Council (DCC) headquarters building opposite and the change of the adjacent school tennis courts to car parking. The latter was caused by displacement of school car parking by the construction of the new multi storey car park that was in turn made necessary by the new DCC building.

The Lodge extension chooses a very dominant form including highly prominent and visible copper cladding and substantially alters the relationship of the Lodge to the grounds as an entry building. Greater respect for the existing building is needed allowing it to take its rightful place as the dominant entrance focus within a landscape setting. In failing to note the impact of the new adjacent car parking and entrance and also the positive significance of the swimming pool landscaping to the other side, the crucial role of landscaping has also been missed. The new Lodge ramp and railings could be made unnecessary by redesigning the change in level within a landscape ensemble. What is needed is a composite design for the extension to take proper account of the Lodge, creating something of quality such as the nearby arts building and embedded in associated landscaping to match the quality of the swimming pool fence and landscaping. The relationship with the new car park and the approach in this direction need also to be dealt with in new integral landscape proposals.

The Trust therefore objects based on the poor design relationship of the extension to the Lodge, its surrounds and the negative and cumulative impact on the conservation area.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe
Chair, The City of Durham Trust