

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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Durham, DH1 1TH  
2 October 2020

## **DM/20/02585/AD and DM/20/02665/LB: 76 Saddler Street Durham DH1 3NP**

Individual internally illuminated built-up letters on existing fascia, non-illuminated Heritage Projecting Sign and printed, frosted M-Pattern window vinyl and printed ATM vinyl surround.

Dear Ms Stephenson,

The City of Durham Trust objects to the new Virgin Money replacement shopfront based on its high negative impact and failure to accord with the policies of the County Durham Plan, Neighbourhood Plan and City of Durham Saved Policies.

The building is Grade II listed, principally for its group value with adjacent listed buildings and its upper story details are noted in the listing. It is on a key approach to the World Heritage Site (WHS) and in combination with other Saddler Street buildings is a key historic asset within the Conservation Area.

The existing shopfront includes an ATM and the existing signage and the shopfront treatment, although not low impact or designed for a historic building or street, is relatively proportionate in its advertising size and impact. As a result of new corporate branding the new proposal is lit and includes a hanging sign intruding on the first storey. The new signage substantially increases its impact through colour, size, lighting and window treatments. It blocks the traditional view into the shop interior by imposing window transfers.

This has a highly negative impact on the listed building, the hanging sign intrudes on the first storey detailing noted in the building listing. It has a negative impact on the setting of other listed buildings and detracts from the group value noted on the listing.

Although about to be superseded by the County Durham Plan, the Saved Policies of the City of Durham 2004 Local Plan apply as follows:

**E22 – Conservation Areas 1** – The proposals are insensitive in scale, design and materials.

**E23 – Listed Buildings** - The proposals are very unsympathetic in their scale, design and materials.

**Q11 – New Shopfronts** – The proposed shopfront fails to respect the historic scale, proportion, materials and character of that building and of the heritage area in which it is located.

The County Durham Plan, after receipt of the Examiner's Final Report is gaining in materiality and the following Policy applies:

### **Policy 30 Sustainable Design.**

- a. The proposals fail to contribute positively by having a negative impact on character, identity, historic significance and townscape. They reduce local distinctiveness.

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- q. The proposals are not appropriate or sympathetic to the local setting by scale, lighting and materials
- r. The adverts are detrimental to visual amenity.

The Durham City Neighbourhood Plan has also gained materiality after the Inspector's report and the following policies apply:

**Policy S1: Sustainable Development Requirements**

The proposals are development that fail to protect heritage assets.

**Policy E3: Retail Development**

- e) – The proposals fail by not being compatible in respect of their impact on setting, character, local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- f) – The proposals are not of a scale, design and character appropriate to the City Centre and a traditional view of the City.
- g) – The proposals fail to improve the street by detracting from the public realm.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe  
Chair, City of Durham Trust