

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
15 September 2020

Dear Mr Dalby

The City of Durham Trust is concerned about the number of planning applications seeking to convert properties to houses in multiple occupation. This is increasing the imbalance between the student population and the long-term resident population of Durham City and reducing the diversity of available properties. In this case there would be a loss of valuable city-centre office space, something the County council is seeking to provide. Instead we need to promote and preserve inclusive, mixed and balanced communities (NPPF, 8b).

Accordingly, Trustees wish to object to application **DM/20/02277/FPA** which proposes to change the use of parts of the Crossgate Centre to student accommodation. The percentage of Council Tax exempt properties within 100 metres radius of this property is **64.6%** and so the proposed change of use of the existing building to HMO is unacceptable due to being located in an area already identified as exceeding the threshold set out in the Interim Policy on Student Accommodation. The proposal would therefore result in further imbalance to the detriment of achieving mixed and balanced communities and have an adverse impact on surrounding residential amenity in contravention of Policy H9 and H13 of the City of Durham Local Plan, the Interim Policy on Student Accommodation and paragraph 127 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe
Chair, City of Durham Trust