

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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c/o Blackett, Hart & Pratt, LLP
Aire House
Mandale Business Park
Belmont
Durham, DH1 1TH
11 January 2021

Dear Ms Jennings,

**DM/20/03538/FPA | Land To The West Of Poplar Tree Garden Centre Hall Lane Shincliffe
DH1 2NG**

Full planning application for the siting of 4no. holiday accommodation units with associated parking and landscape at Land west of Poplar Tree Garden Centre, Hall Lane, Shincliffe.

The City of Durham Trust wishes to object this application.

It is noted that there is substantial local concern at the impact of this development on the village and its setting. The Trust understands that that may be unwelcome increased use of the access Lane out of conventional trading hours. Associated servicing works are not made clear and the overall environmental impact unexplained beyond the screening checklist. Sustainability impacts and justifications are absent or not fully explained. The heritage impact assessment concentrates on listed buildings rather than the totality of the conservation area and specifically, given the location of the proposal, its setting. Issues with the 'creep' of associated storage for the Garden Centre and overflow parking are not dealt with. The current planning position of both is not explained.

The design is very basic, consisting of simple wood cladding to shipping containers. Cumulative impacts are not dealt with.

The proposals will have the impact of extending the built area of the village beyond the Garden Centre into the open field. The chalet design may be for holiday use but will be experienced as a permanent built extension. It is clearly on view from Hall Lane and the Weardale Way as well as the other riverside footpaths.

The use for rather unsightly storage is a negative impact, presumably some is essential and will remain at the rear of the Centre next to the chalets. If some storage can be sacrificed for the chalets why can't the area be tidied up and landscaped now and the overflow car parking better dealt with? There is also 'bleed out' of overflow parking

The Trust conclusion is the proposal has significant negative impact on the setting to the Conservation Area and also on the Green Belt. It has negative cumulative impact in combination with ongoing storage needs and with existing formalised and overflow parking. Landscaping will be insufficient to disguise this given the time it will take to develop. The proposal extends the built area, removing green space/low level use. If properly assessed the proposal represents 'sprawl'. It is on view from public viewpoints where the green edge and conservation area setting defining the village are to the fore. It clearly interferes with the visual openness of the Green Belt. The Trust finds no substantive justification economically to support

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permanent loss of green setting. It is not a minor change and would establish a very poor example of Green Belt loss, reduction in quality and introduction of sprawl..

It therefore fails against County Durham Plan Policies:

Policy 20 Green Belt – As referring to **NPPF para143** – the proposal constitutes discordant and inappropriate development, **Para 144** – Very Special Circumstance are clearly not established, **Paras 145 & 146** - The proposal does not fall into any of the exceptions categories,

Policy 21 Delivering Sustainable Transport – the proposal is reliant on car travel and no mitigating sustainable proposals are submitted.

Policy 26 Green Infrastructure – the proposals impact negatively on the landscape character and on the quality of a Public Right of Way.

Policy 29 Sustainable Design – The proposals fail under **para a** – by not contributing positively to the character, identity, heritage (setting) and landscape. **Paras c & d** are not met – there are no sustainability proposals. **Paras g to i** – There are no appropriate landscape proposals and there is cumulative landscape harm,

Policy 44 Historic Environment, Conservation Areas, Paras f, g and h – The proposals fail to demonstrate understanding, respond positively or reinforce the character and significance of the area and will have a negative impact.

For these reasons the Trust objects to the proposals.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe

Chair, City of Durham Trust