



## KEY ACTIVITIES: 20 January to 16 February 2021

PLANNING APPLICATIONS considered	OBJECTIONS submitted	SUPPORT submitted	COMMENTS/CONCERNS submitted
13	3	0	1

### NEWS ITEMS

**Milburngate House development.** The Parish Council has criticised “*totally unacceptable*” temporary traffic arrangements at this site. A condition variation has been submitted by the developer seeking an alternative junction design for the development. The Trust is putting in an objection.

**Government condemns DCC over £50m HQ.** Robert Jenrick (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government) has been labelled a hypocrite following his criticism of DCC approving “*a new 3,500 sq. ft. roof terrace on its £50 million county hall*”, when the SoS role had refused to call-in the application in 2019.

**County Hall demolition costs.** DCC spending plans for the next financial year have set aside £500,000 for initial preparatory work for the demolition at the Aykley Heads site.

**National planning consultations.** In January, the government launched two major planning consultations: “*Right to Regenerate: reform of the Right to Contest*”, and a double consultation: “*National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code: consultation proposals*”. Trustees are drafting responses.

**Durham Bus station.** Preparation for demolition of the old bus station began in mid-February, with construction of the new one expected to start in May and take up to 18 months to complete. Bus stops and taxi ranks have been relocated to the eastern side of North Road and nearby Milburngate.

**DCC Corporate Environmental Statement (CES).** DCC’s Cabinet endorsed (10 February) an overarching CES designed to unify DCC commitments/coordinate initiatives. It also includes the introduction of a corporate Net Zero Carbon Board to drive delivery along with the existing Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP).

**COVID-19.** The national lockdown continued, with the next review announcement expected on 22 February.

### KEY BUSINESS

**Sands common land inquiry.** Trustees are drafting a proof (documentary evidence) to be submitted in advance of the inquiry to be held 27-29 April.

**Parking and accessibility consultation.** The Trust are drafting a response to this SPD revision by DCC.

**Local heritage list campaign.** The Trust plan to get involved with DCC regarding this new government funding call to support projects developing/improving local heritage lists.

**Student accommodation (PBSA).** The Trust submitted a substantial objection to the proposed 70-bed PBSA (including a 2-storey roof extension) above the old M&S building on Silver Street, including WHS concerns.

**Article 4 Direction consultation.** The Parish Council (PC) has backed these proposals and the Trust is also planning to support both the Direction and the PC’s thorough evidence report.

**Aykley Heads planning application.** The Trust received a ministerial response to their request for a call-in and have drafted a further response pointing out the inconsistencies of the Government’s call-in policy.

**Spring Bulletin.** The final draft of Bulletin 91 was agreed by Trustees and the copy sent for printing - for distribution late February/early March.

**Website.** The Trust’s new website went live at the end of January, with most of the content in place and a comments facility available for the posts. New Comment Moderation and Data Privacy policies were drafted.

**Talks Programme 2021.** The next virtual talk is lined up for 8 April (7 pm) - “*Rebuilding the Ancient Ruins; Rebuilding Community - The Story of Beaufort Medieval Manor House, Co. Durham*” by Rebecca Watkins founder of Dream Heritage. Speakers are also pencilled in for an AGM in June and another talk in October.

**Sustainability Award.** Trustees are discussing ideas for an award for outstanding ‘green’ developments.

**CIO legal status.** The Trust is still awaiting word from the Charity Commission regarding the status change.

**Payment methods.** Trustees are investigating methods of simplifying on-line payments to the Trust.

**Publications.** Due to water ingress, some of the Trust’s stock of publications had to be moved from Alington House pending roof repairs. Stock losses will be assessed.

**Recruitment.** Membership currently stands at 369, with over 30 new members gained in the last six months.