

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

Dear Ms Morina,

**DM/21/01566/AD Riverview Kitchen 20 Silver Street Durham DH1 3RB**  
*Retention of various signage.*

The Trust does not object to the side or frontage signage. However, the river frontage signage is considered negatively intrusive in relation to the World Heritage Site and consequently the Trust objects to that.

## 1. Context.

The situation has changed for this property because it is included in the proposed increase in the World Heritage Site (WHS) area intended to capture all of Framwellgate Bridge. This has yet to be approved by UNESCO, but irrespective of that, it indicates the high value of the Bridge area related to the WHS and conservation area. The building is especially prominent in the view of the Castle from Framwellgate Bridge. The heritage significance of this view and the Bridge relative to the WHS is now more fully understood and appreciated.

Also, the County Durham Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies now both fully apply. The planning and heritage context for this site has therefore substantially changed since the approval of the Bella Italia sign. That sign was especially and inappropriately prominent and was also illuminated. Unfortunately, the submitted heritage statement fails to identify much of this context.

The Trust is sympathetic to the site operator's previous difficulties in upgrading the premises, but the riverside timber treatment of the conservatory wall is inconsistent with the general style of the building. The signage lettering is very substantial compared to the actual need to identify the restaurant from the Bridge. A smaller sign would achieve this. The Trust raised this issue when commenting on the new proposals for the rest of the premises in this building.

## 2. Proposal

The proposal is to retain the Riverside Kitchen signage and its timber backing. The Trust considers that signage lettering of approximately half the height of the proposal would be much less detracting in the key WHS view but still sufficient to identify the restaurant. A height of 250mm is suggested – in line with the comments on the previous 20-21 Silver Street proposals. Although the main planning application for that proposal is approved, the advertising remains for agreement.

The timber backing is the lesser issue but if it had not previously been installed the Trust would have raised a comment about the appropriateness of this to the building as well.

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### 3. Policies

The river frontage signage fails against **County Durham Plan Policy 45 a)** By not sustaining and enhancing the significance of the Castle as a key part of the WHS. And **c)** by not protecting or enhancing the immediate setting and important views into the site.

It also fails against **the Neighbourhood Plan, H1 Protection and Enhancement of the World Heritage Site b) By not** proposing high quality design which contributes to the quality and significance of the World Heritage Site. And **f)** by not protecting important views

### 4. Conclusion

The Trust does not object to the side or frontage signage or the timber cladding to the river frontage. It does object the size of the river frontage lettering.

Yours sincerely,

John Lowe

Chair, City of Durham Trust.