

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

---

Phone (0191) 386 2595  
Email: [chair@durhamcity.org](mailto:chair@durhamcity.org)  
Web site: <http://www.DurhamCity.org>

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

Dear Ms Morina,

**DM/21/02038/FPA 8 High Wood View Durham DH1 3DT**

***Construction of double dormer window to rear and conservation roof light to front to allow loft conversion.***

The City of Durham Trust is concerned about the number of planning applications seeking to increase the size of existing HMOs. This is increasing the imbalance between the student population and the long-term resident population of Durham City. Instead, we need to promote and preserve inclusive, mixed, and balanced, communities (See NPPF, Para.91). Also, NPPF Para 127 deals with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Accordingly, Trustees wish to object to this application which proposes to extend the size of 8 High Wood View and create an unacceptable roof construction.

As the proposal involves an increase in the number of bed spaces to this existing C4 HMO from 4 to 6, it should be assessed under part 3 of Policy 16 of the County Durham Plan (CDP). Echoing the previous reason for refusal of expansion of bedspace in this property, the Trust's objection is that the additional bedroom spaces are unacceptable due to being in an area already identified as exceeding the threshold set out in Policy 16. The proposals will result in further imbalance in the community and have a detrimental impact on surrounding residential amenities through noise and disturbance in contravention of Policy 16(3a), 29(e) and 31 of the City of Durham Local Plan, and paragraph 127 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework."

The double dormer is a 'standard' development device used by this developer. It is emphatically not a traditional form and exists only to squeeze more space out of loft areas whilst mimicking something of vernacular design. In reality, it punches a large hole in the traditional slate roof, approximately one third of the slating is removed. It is replaced by the awkward double dormer/raised roof configuration – largely in Sarnofil – a manufactured material with little of the appearance of real slate. It is clearly not 'two dormers' but a large construction with two windows. Further, the large roof extension is out of keeping with other nearby properties in this Conservation Area or immediate locality. Both it and the front conservation rooflight fail to line up with existing windows – an essential characteristic of these terrace properties. It is not high quality design or a positive contribution to the character of the area. It is becoming an issue through the Conservation Area for its repeated use. The County Council Design and Conservation advice fails to pick up the context and failures of this design, taking a 'if it can't be seen, it isn't a problem' approach in reaching a conclusion.

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

---

It is also matched by a poor floor configuration of the new loft floor that drops the ceiling of the first floor into view through the windows. This is damaging to the appearance of the building and its traditional internal layout. It is further debasement of the building to accommodate more students. It is a long term issue for future reuse for more conventional residential use.

The proposals also fail against County Durham Plan Policies as follows:

**Policy 44 Historic Environment** does not demonstrate understanding of the significance and character of the Conservation area and does not respect the positive characteristics of the area.

The proposals fail against the Durham City Neighbourhood Plan Policies as follows:

**Policy H1: Protection and Enhancement of the World Heritage Site,**

d) Does not seek balance in terms of scale, density, massing, form, layout.

**Policy H2: The Conservation Areas - Durham City Conservation Area**

a) Fails to sustain and enhance the historic and architectural qualities of buildings,

b) Fails to sustain and maintain roofscape

j) Fails to have appropriate scale and mass

k) Does not use high quality design sympathetic to the character and context of the local area and its significance and distinctiveness.

l) Adds to cumulative (*negative*) impact of development schemes through domination and mass.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe  
Chair, City of Durham Trust