

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

Dear Ms Jennings,

DM/21/02952/FPA and DM/21/02953/LB 24 - 25 Market Place Durham DH1 3NJ

Conversion of upper floors to create a 6-bed HMO (Use Class C4), installation of rooflights and new door within frontage

The Trust is concerned about the impact of bin storage, interior works and bike access method. It objects to this proposal as submitted.

Context

The building is Grade II listed, 18thC in origin but contains a 17thC staircase. This was noted in the City of Durham Trust's 1970 publication 'Historic Staircases of Durham'. The frontage is an important component of the Market Place, maintaining its original burgage plot width. The rear is steep and drops away to Back Silver Street, its wall forming an important part of the setting to the Market Hall and Fowlers Yard, a County Council owned attraction. Back Silver Street is often subject to bin storage on street at this location and is further marred by a large bin grouping at the road turning head. The shopfront retains its basic structure but has a discordant modern range of window and door fixings. The upper floors appear to have extensive previous alterations, noted as 1980's work.

Proposal

The conversion of the upper floors to student accommodation is not objected to despite not offering the more mixed use the Trust wishes to encourage. The means of bin access for collection by electric sack truck isn't seen as a workable solution and the Trust considers likely to add to on-street bin clutter. Similarly the cycle access isn't workable. Treatment of the rear yard and wall isn't detailed. There is minimal assessment of the interior – especially the 17thC staircase. Methodology for dealing with alterations in terms of assessment of original material and its subsequent care is missing. This is compounded by reports of advance work possibly affecting the listed building. A door is formed into the shopfront that remains discordant.

Objection.

The Trust's concern is with negative impact on the listed building (contrary to CDP Policy 44, b & c) and DCNP Policy H2, a), failure to improve the shopfront (contrary to DCNP Policy H2, b) and unworkable bin and cycle arrangements (contrary to CDP Policy 16.3, d & e).

The Trust therefore objects to the application based on the above points and policies.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe,
Chair, City of Durham Trust