

c/o Blakett, Hart & Pratt, LLP
Aire House
Mandale Business Park
Belmont
Durham, DH1 1TH
7 March 2022

Dear Ms Morina,

**DM/21/00431/FPA Diocesan Board Of Education Carter House Pelaw Leazes Lane Durham
DH1 1TB**

Construction of rooftop extension.

The Trust wishes to object to this application based on discordant design and negative impact on the building, the Conservation Area, the World Heritage Site (WHS) inner setting and a view of the WHS.

Context

The building is adjacent to the Hild Bede campus, within the hillside setting overlooking the River Wear and the Racecourse area. The wooded hillside is a key component of the WHS inner setting, and the current building shares some character similarities to the older Hild Bede buildings. The building has been extended both into the roof area and to the side. The side extension is the more unsuccessful of these, it is flat roofed and out of scale with the adjacent building. The main building and particularly the flat roof to the extension, are present in a panoramic view to the Cathedral from the A690 and in views across the campus. The building is considered to contribute to the Conservation Area and is described as an unlisted heritage asset by the County Council.

Proposal

The current extension is in an uncomfortable relationship with the original building, it awkwardly joins the building just below dormer height, distorts the symmetry of the original and the flat roof draws away from the prominent larger pitched roofs. The proposal is to top this with a box-like basic extension will exacerbate all these impacts and create an awkward junction with the original building's pitched roof. This is especially increased because it will also extend beyond the front of the existing extension to be supported on pillars. This forces it into greater contention with the main building and creates a clash with the gable. The proposal does not work as a contemporary extension to an older building succeeding through design contrast. The upper and lower parts bear no architectural relationship to each other. The new extension thrusts into the original building and roof – negatively impacting the important roofscape. The increased height pushes it into the view from the A690 – blocking a cross view through the trees down to the racecourse area. It impacts negatively on the WHS view. There will be glimpse views to the building from the racecourse and this proposal will increase the presence of buildings in the hillside tree belt and the campus area. Lighting through the large windows will add to its negative impact.

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

Policies

1. The proposals fail against the following policies:

County Durham Plan

Policy 29 Sustainable design Fails against **a.** by not contributing positively to character, identity, heritage significance and townscape. Is not locally distinctive **Extensions and Alterations** – Fails to be sympathetic to existing building and character and appearance of existing area by poor design and scale.

Policy 44 Historic Environment. Conservation Areas **f. and h.** Failure in understanding significance and setting, fails to respect and reinforce positive characteristics particularly design quality, mass and height.

Policy 45 Durham Castle and Cathedral WHS – **a.** Fails to maintain the significance. **b.** Fails to understand OUV and regard WHS Management Plan. **c.** fails to protect or enhance immediate setting and views to the WHS.

Durham City Neighbourhood Plan

Policy S1 – Fails against **c) and d)** by not harmonising with context or conserving and enhancing setting, character, local distinctiveness and view.

Policy H1 – Protection of World Heritage Site – b) Is not high quality design which contributes to the quality and significance of the World Heritage Site. **c)** Fails to use materials and finishes appropriate to the vernacular, context and setting **d)** Fails to seek balance terms of scale, density, massing, form, **e)** Has failures in assessment, including a failure to avoid cumulative impact – through height and mass and space between buildings **f)** Fails to protect views

Policy H2 Conservation Area – b) Fails to retain roofscape **g)** fails to protect views in Conservation Area **i)** lacks sensitivity to scale, height **j)** Has inappropriate lighting **l)** fails to avoid cumulative impact through size, mass and design.

The Trust therefore objects based on the proposed extension's negative impact and failure against the above policies.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe

Chair, The City of Durham Trust