

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

Web site: <http://www.DurhamCity.org>

25 May 2022

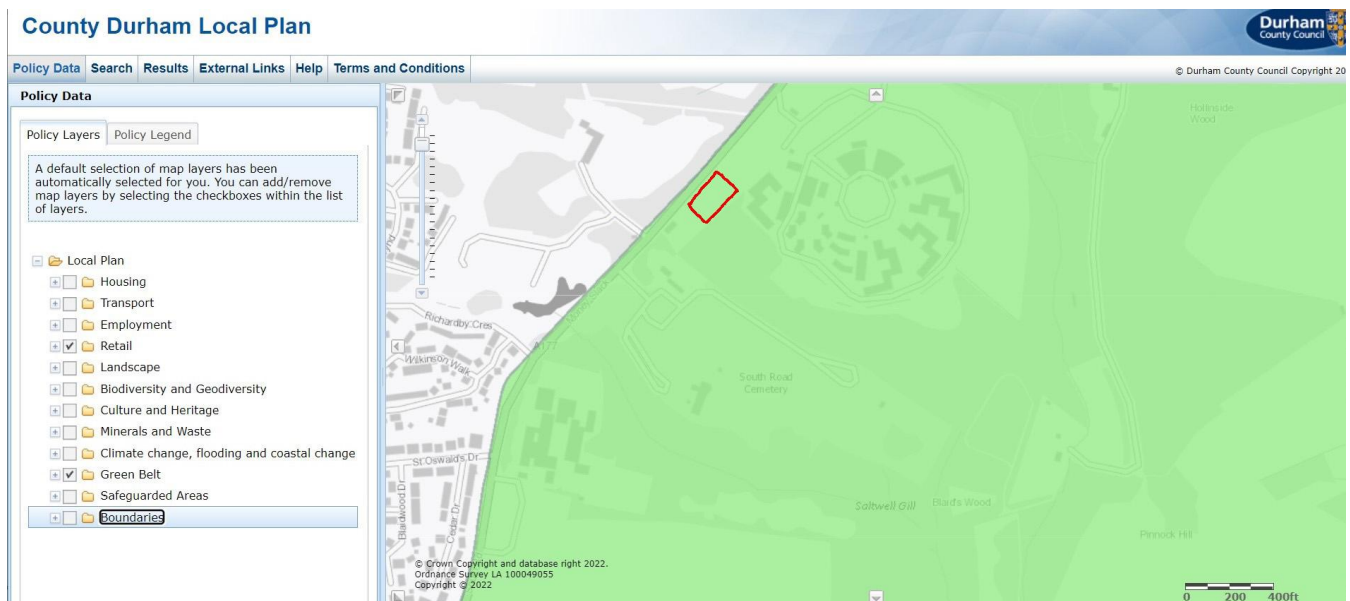
Ms Lisa Morina  
Planning Development Central/East  
Room 4/86-102  
County Hall  
Durham City  
DH1 5UL

Dear Ms Morina,

## **DM/22/01272/FPA: Erection of 2 No. dwellings, land to the north east of Blaidwood, South Road, Durham City DH1 3TQ**

The Trustees of the City of Durham Trust considered the above planning application at their meeting on 17 May 2022 and decided to object on the following grounds.

The applicant's Design, Access and Heritage Statement acknowledges that the site is in the Durham City Green Belt but offers no grounds for making any exception to the national and County Durham Plan policies that protect designated green belt from development. The site also lies in the County Durham Plan's designated Area of Higher Landscape Value around Durham City. The applicant's only suggestion that the proposed development might not be constrained by green belt policy is the statement that "*It should be noted that this represents something of an infill site rather than what will be expected of a typical Green Belt site.*" In fact, the Green Belt is extensive in this area, see extract from the County Durham Plan Proposals Map below with the application site outlined in red.



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The extent of the Durham City Green Belt was considered in detail at the County Durham Plan Examination in Public; not only its exact boundary but also several proposals to remove certain areas from the existing Green Belt boundary were discussed. No representations were made to remove this site from the Durham Green Belt, and the Approved Plan has the “permanent” boundary for the Green Belt as shown above. There can be no dispute, the site is firmly in the Green Belt and must be subject to the relevant policies.

Policy 20 of the County Durham Plan simply states that:

***Development proposals within the Green Belt will be determined in accordance with national planning policy.***

The National Planning Policy Framework declares that:

***147 Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.***

It goes on to state that:

***149 A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt.***

Permissible exceptions are listed under Paragraph 149, for example buildings for agriculture and forestry, or outdoor leisure, or affordable housing in specific, plan-led circumstances. None of the exceptions bear any relation to this application for two 4-bed executive houses on a site in the Durham City Green Belt. The application is directly contrary to County Durham Policy 20 and NPPF Paragraphs 147 and 149.

The site also falls inside the Durham City Area of Higher Landscape Value where County Durham Plan Policy 39 requires that:

***Development affecting Areas of Higher Landscape Value defined on Map H will only be permitted where it conserves, and where appropriate enhances, the special qualities of the landscape, unless the benefits of development in that location clearly outweigh the harm.***

The proposed construction of two substantial houses would not conserve or enhance the special qualities of the landscape here, and there are no benefits that would clearly outweigh the harm to this completely open, undeveloped pasture land. The application thus conflicts with CDP Policy 39.

The Trust accordingly considers that the application should be refused as being directly contrary to CDP Policies 20 and 39 and NPPF Paragraphs 147 and 149.

Yours sincerely

JOHN LOWE