

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

Dear Ms Hurton,

**DM/22/01343/FPA Durham University Elvet Riverside 2, New Elvet Durham DH1 3JT**  
*Installation of palisade fence*

The Trust wishes to object to this application based on negative impact within the Conservation Area on street character. The need for a secure closure is noted but the solution chosen is inappropriate.

### **Context**

The University Riverside buildings have a negative impact on the street scene because of their bland and unrelieved facades, out of keeping with the scale of the street and nearby buildings. There is some quality, however, in the brickwork and finishes. That quality of finish can be eroded by unsympathetic change or additions. The street is an important feature of the Conservation Area, and its character can also be impacted upon negatively by such changes.

The anti-social behaviour in the gap between buildings is recognised as a problem, one perhaps that is due to the layout. Although not a planning issue, it is very concerning that the anti social behaviour problem is occurring opposite the Police Station. As the root cause of the problem is not identified, it is possible that closing off this gap will simply move the problem to another part of the street. It would have been helpful if the University were able to identify more about this issue and refer it to those that might assist in reducing the problem.

### **Proposal**

The choice of basic palisade fencing is a very crude, simplistic solution – suitable only for rear security on business parks. Notwithstanding the anticipated lifespan of the Riverside buildings, a better quality solution using railings is needed. The palisade choice will have a negative impact on the street scene as well as the adjacent buildings. It is not suitable for Conservation Area use on an historic street. It is not a positive contribution.

### **Policies**

In detail, as submitted, the proposal fails against the following policies:

#### ***County Durham Plan***

#### **Policy 44 Historic Environment**

#### **Conservation Areas**

The proposals fail to:

f. Demonstrate understanding of the significance and character and appearance of the conservation area and how this has informed proposals to achieve high quality sustainable development, which is respectful of local distinctiveness and the conservation or enhancement of the asset (historic street);

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h. Respect, and reinforce the established, positive characteristics of the area in terms of appropriate design (including, features, materials, and detailing).

## ***City of Durham Neighbourhood Plan***

### **Policy S1: Sustainable Development Requirements of all Development and Redevelopment Sites Including all New Building, Renovations and Extensions**

#### **Conservation, preservation, and enhancement of Our Neighbourhood**

The proposal fails to:

- c) Harmonise with its context in terms of materials;
- d) Conserve the significance of the setting, character, local distinctiveness, and the contribution made to the sense of place by Our Neighbourhood's non-designated heritage assets.

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

The proposals fail to:

- a) Sustain and enhance the architectural qualities of a building,
- b) Sustain and enhance a continuous frontage,
- e) Avoid harm to an element of an asset (the street) which makes a positive contribution to its individual significance and that of the surrounding area.
- j) Have materials and detailing appropriate to the vernacular and context.
- k) Use high quality design sympathetic to the character and context of the local area and its significance and distinctiveness.

The Trust objects to the application, based on the above points.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe,  
Chair, City of Durham Trust