

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

Michelle Hurton  
Durham County Council  
Planning Development  
Central/East Room 4/86-102  
County Hall  
Durham DH1 5UL

Dear Ms Hurton,

## **DM/22/01597/FPA Land To The Rear Of 63 Crossgate Durham DH1 4PR**

The City of Durham Trust objects to this planning application because it does not meet the requirements of County Durham Plan Policy 29, and specifically *All new residential development will be required to comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)*. The one year transition period has elapsed so this is now fully in force.

We have used the online measuring tool against the 1:200 PROPOSED PLANS AND ELEVATIONS. This scale and the limitations of the fact that the plans are hand-drawn make accurate measurement difficult. However, the dimensions are so far short of the standard that it is clear they are not compliant. We have not been able to check the headroom in the top floor but the drawings suggest there are sloping ceilings.

We have noted that the width of the rightmost house as measured from the plans is 4.2m at the ground floor but 5.2m at the first floor. This casts doubt on the accuracy of these plans which are plainly little more than sketches.

All of the proposed dwellings have at least two bedrooms so at least one of these must be a double or twin (NDSS para 10b) and that room must have a floor area of at least 11.5m<sup>2</sup>. The other bedrooms must have a floor area of at least 7.5m<sup>2</sup>. (NDSS paras 10d and 10c respectively.) There are also minimum width requirements.

Taking the dwellings from left to right as shown on the plans:

**Dwelling 1** is a three-storey, four bedroom house so the required minimum gross internal floor area is 103m<sup>2</sup>. It is only 79.6m<sup>2</sup>. Bedrooms 1 (13.0 m<sup>2</sup>) and 3 (10.2m<sup>2</sup>) meet the standard but 2 (4.0m<sup>2</sup>) and 4 (3.1m<sup>2</sup>) are well short. They also fall short of the required minimum width.

**Dwelling 2** is a three-storey, three bedroom house (bedroom 2 is omitted) so the required minimum gross internal floor area is 90m<sup>2</sup>. It is only 64.0m<sup>2</sup>. None of the bedrooms are large enough to be a double. Bedrooms 1 (8.0 m<sup>2</sup>) and 3 (8.4m<sup>2</sup>) meet the standard for a single room. Bedroom 4 (4.5m<sup>2</sup> and 1.9m wide) is well short of both the required area and minimum width.

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**Dwelling 3** is also a three-storey, three bedroom house (bedroom 2 is omitted) so the required minimum gross internal floor area is 90m<sup>2</sup>. It is only 68.2m<sup>2</sup>. None of the bedrooms are large enough to be a double. Bedrooms 1 (9.4 m<sup>2</sup>) and 3 (9.8m<sup>2</sup>) meet the standard for a single room. Bedroom 4 (4.6m<sup>2</sup> and 1.8m wide) is well short of both the required area and minimum width.

**Dwelling 4** is a two-storey, two bedroom house so the required minimum gross internal floor area is 70m<sup>2</sup>. The area as measured from the plans is 48.9m<sup>2</sup> but as mentioned above this must be in doubt as the first floor is 1 metre wider than the ground floor. Neither of the bedrooms is large enough to be a double. Bedroom 1 is 8.2m<sup>2</sup> and so meets the standard for a single, but bedroom 2 at 6.4m<sup>2</sup> is too small.

Even if better plans could be produced, at a 1:100 or 1:50 scale, and with the obvious error in dwelling 4 corrected, it is difficult to see how four houses could be fitted in to this tiny plot and meet the requirements of County Durham Plan Policy 29 and the NDSS. The applicant should be invited to withdraw this proposal and resubmit something that meets the standard. If he does not do so this application should be refused. The Trust will also consider commenting on other significant design and landscape failings in the application

Yours sincerely

John Lowe,  
Chair, City of Durham Trust