



## KEY ACTIVITIES: 14 December 2022 to 17 January 2023

PLANNING APPLICATIONS considered	OBJECTIONS submitted	SUPPORT submitted	COMMENTS/CONCERNS submitted
21	3	1	3

### LOCAL MATTERS

**Residential Amenity Standards SPD.** DCC have now formally adopted this revised SPD, which came into effect from 1 December 2022.

**William Robson House.** The application to convert part of this building off Claypath to a 28-bed student accommodation was approved at Area Planning Committee on 20 December 2022.

**New community hub.** The name of the new community centre currently being built at the Lowes Barn recreation ground has officially been announced as Merryoaks Community Hall (due to open in April 2023).

**Devolution deal.** DCC's Cabinet met on 18 January to discuss a report on the opportunities and impact of a devolution deal on the County. The members endorsed in principle the "minded to" LA7 devolution deal. If all seven councils agree to the deal, plans will be developed, followed by a regionwide public consultation.

**Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).** DCC's Cabinet also approved proposals for improved bus services as part of a regional BSIP, with the government having committed more than £160m in funding.

**Durham railway station.** The station is closing for 10 days over five consecutive weekends in January and February to allow improvement works on the railway infrastructure.

**Land for sale around Durham.** Plots of agricultural land/woodland in the Green Belt have come up for sale at Whitesmocks (11.76 acres), and at Hartside (52.18 acres) just to the north west of the Sniperley Park site.

**Former council offices.** Essential works have started at 17 Claypath following a survey which highlighted issues with the building. The bus stop has been temporarily relocated and a safety fence erected.

**Nature Positive.** Durham University has joined the Nature Positive Universities Alliance as a founding member. The alliance pledges to prioritise nature on university campuses and in their supply chains.

### KEY BUSINESS

**Revisions to the NPPF.** On 22 December the government launched a public consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, with a closing date for comments of 2 March 2023. Trustees are assessing the revisions.

**North East Active Travel Strategy.** Transport North East launched a public consultation on this strategy document which includes an initial list of regional schemes up to 2035. The closing date for comments is 5 March 2023. Trustees are drafting a response.

**Sniperley Park.** The two site developers have submitted three new applications to DCC (closing date for comments is 2 or 11 February). Trustees feel there is little improvement so will be drafting further objections.

**Elvet Clean Air Group.** Some Trustees attended a public meeting on 14 January to gather ideas for tackling air quality, street safety and climate change issues in the 'Elvet triangle' area. A follow-up report will be made available on the Trust's website.

**STACK hub development.** The Trust submitted an objection to the licensing application and Trustees spoke at the licensing sub-committee meeting on 19 January, but the premises license was approved (with conditions). Trustees will be submitting an objection to the full planning application, citing issues of loss of retail, noise and evacuation safety.

**StuRents.** Following a press release by the Trust in December to counter inaccurate reporting on the Durham student housing 'crisis' in the national press, a staff member from StuRents (an accommodation search website) contacted the Trust to request clarifications. The Trust has responded and requested a meeting.

**Conservation Area Management Plan.** A meeting with DCC's Rebecca Taylor has been rearranged for 17 February 2023.

**University housing group.** Neither the Trust nor the Parish Council have yet been invited join this group.

**Website.** New interactive planning application webpages are now live, along with new pages on the Trust's talks and one listing the many and varied plaques around the city.

**Talk's programme.** The date for Martin Roberts' talk on Durham's historic staircases is Saturday 20 May 2023.