



KEY ACTIVITIES: 23 March to 18 April 2023

PLANNING APPLICATIONS considered	OBJECTIONS submitted	SUPPORT submitted	COMMENTS/CONCERNS submitted
16	5	2	1

LOCAL MATTERS

Drunken Duck pub. Following suspension of their premises licence in March, at the licensing sub-committee meeting (28 March) the owner blamed the security firm (now dismissed), so the pub is now back in business.

Exemplar housing scheme scrapped. Permission was granted (17 April) for the Banks Group to build 9 (less-sustainable) executive houses on the Mount Oswald greenfield site, in place of the previously approved plans for “a unique and exemplar housing scheme” consisting of 5 Trivelhus low-energy homes.

Parish Councillor surgeries. The Parish Council has agreed a protocol for holding regular surgeries for residents to raise issues. Appointments need to be booked in advance via the Parish Clerk, with the next surgery planned for 29 April in Clayport library.

Carbon reduction grant. Durham University has been awarded a £1.13m grant to install heat pumps, solar panels and improved insulation/windows as part of the refurbishment of the Boldon House offices in Pity Me.

Coronation events. The Parish Council announced a programme of Durham City events for His Majesty King Charles III’s coronation: an Afternoon Tea Dance (4 May), a Spark! dance music event (5 May), Coronation on the Big Screen plus livestreaming of the Beacon lighting (6 May), Big Coronation Picnic (7 May), the Big Help Out volunteering event (8 May) and a Special Evensong service (9 May). Durham Cathedral will also be lit up in red, white and blue over the bank holiday weekend. Details are available at: www.cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk.

KEY BUSINESS

STACK venue. The mixed-use entertainment venue application for 4-6 Silver Street was granted permission (12 April) despite safety, and other, concerns. It was noticed that the 8 Councillors who voted to approve the application all live in other areas of the county, and the 3 who voted to refuse it live in (or near) the city. A Trustee was interviewed on BBC Radio Newcastle regarding the controversial application and the Trust is raising safety concerns with the city’s MP.

Police radio mast. A Trustee had a letter published in the Durham Advertiser (13 April) regarding the topical, alleged misuse of funds; and Trustees noted the excellent Northern Echo editorial regarding the mast issues.

Sniperley Park. Bellway Homes have now submitted an Outline application for their land north and east of Sniperley Farm. There seems to be little change from their current FPA for the site, which is still under consideration. Bellway say their aim is to get permission to build the access into the site should the FPA application be delayed. Trustees are drafting a further objection to the lacklustre plans.

Consultations on a new Use class. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities is currently consulting on the introduction of a use class ‘C5’ for short-term lets and potential (flexible) permitted development rights for a temporary change of use to short-term lets. Trustees are drafting an initial response for discussion at the May meeting. The deadline for comments is 7 June.

DCC’s new Head of Planning & Housing. Trustees are hoping to arrange a meeting with Michael Kelleher to discuss areas of concern. An initial paper listing topics has been drawn up.

Durham City CAMP. Two members of DCC’s Design & Conservation team attended the Trustees’ April meeting to discuss the Trust’s priorities and thoughts on the proposed Conservation Area Management Plan.

Conflict of Interest (Col) Policy. Trustees have now agreed to adopt the final draft of this policy.

Spring Bulletin. This has been finalised and sent for printing; to be distributed to members in early May.

Fourth PROW Improvement Plan. DCC is putting their “Rights of Way Improvement Plan 4 2023-2033” out for public consultation shortly (from May to July). The Trust will be submitting a response.

Expense claims. Trustees have agreed to draft a more formal written agreement/procedure for claiming expenses on Trust business.

Beacon lighting. The Chair of the Trust has been invited to attend the ceremonial lighting of the Durham Beacon for the King’s coronation (6 May).

Spring Talk. Martin Roberts’ talk “Up the wooden hill: a history of the staircase in Durham and the wider North East” will take place at 14.00 on Saturday 20 May in room CG 85 in the Chemistry Bldg on the Science Site. An on-line viewing link will be available by emailing zoom@durhamcity.org a day or so before the event.