

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

22nd May 2023

Dear Ms Hurton,

DM/23/00814/FPA 85 Gilesgate Durham DH1 1HY

Roof lantern to rear and 2no solar panels to front

1. The Trust objects to this application based on the negative impact of the proposed solar panels to the front elevation of the roof.
2. Gilesgate is an historic thoroughfare and is important for the quality of its buildings and linear streetscape formed from individual buildings and short terraces. The roofs of the buildings are an important part of the street character. They are predominantly clear of later intrusions and dormers.
3. The Trust is mindful of the need to increase sustainability of domestic properties and in particular their energy use. However, it considers that additions such as solar panels need to be carefully assessed for their impact and this set against their benefit.
4. The Trust considers that in this instance the proposal causes greater harm than its benefit. It has a negative impact set against the significance of Gilesgate and its importance for the character of the conservation area.

Proposal and Impact

5. As noted, the roofs lining Gilesgate are important as part of the street character. They are free of intrusions that work against the historic character of the street. The solar panels represent a new contemporary and discordant element. They will be on clear view from the historic street.
6. Solar panels are generally prominent and contrast with traditional roof materials in an historic setting. In this instance they differ in size and are likely to be discordant in material finish as well as being raised.
7. The Trust considers that the negative impact of the solar panels is not offset by sufficient benefit, and they are an inappropriate change to this building and its roof that is prominent in the street facade lining Gilesgate.

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

Policies

8. The Trust considers that the proposals fail against the following planning policies:

County Durham Plan

Policy 29 Sustainable Design

- a. The proposals fail to contribute positively to an area's heritage significance and townscape.

Policy 44 Historic Environment

Conservation Areas

f. The proposals fail to demonstrate understanding of the significance, character, appearance and setting of the conservation area and how this has informed proposals to achieve high quality sustainable development, which is respectful of historic interest, local distinctiveness and the conservation or enhancement of heritage assets.

g. The proposals fail to demonstrate the manner in which the proposal responds positively to the findings and recommendations of conservation area character appraisals and management proposals.

h. The proposals do not respect reinforcement of the established, positive characteristics of the area in terms of appropriate design (including, features, materials and detailing).

Durham City Neighbourhood Plan

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

The proposal fails because it does not:

- 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 designated and non-designated heritage assets.

Policy H2: The Conservation Areas, Durham City Conservation Area

The development proposals negatively affect the Durham City Conservation Area by not taking into account, and meeting, the following requirements,

- a) Sustaining and enhancing the historic and architectural qualities of buildings
- b) Sustaining and enhancing continuous frontages, street patterns,
- e) Avoiding harm to an element of an asset which makes a positive contribution to its individual significance and that of the surrounding area.
- i) Having appropriate form.
- j) Having, detailing appropriate to the vernacular, context, and setting.
- k) Using high quality design sympathetic to the character and context of the local area and its significance and distinctiveness.

Based on these policy failures the Trust objects to the proposals as currently submitted.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe,
Chair, City of Durham Trust