

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

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Durham, DH1 1TH

25 August 2023

Ms Michelle Penman
Planning Development Central/East
Room 4/86-102
County Hall
Durham City
DH1 5UL

Dear Ms Penman

DM/23/02312/FPA: Change of use and conversion of lower floors (part of basement and sub-basement) to form a 2-bed duplex apartment (Use Class C3) with installation of new window and door to yard elevation, 29 Silver Street, Durham DH1 3RD

The City of Durham Trust has some comments to offer about the above application.

First, the accompanying heritage advice note refers to Durham City Council instead of Durham County Council and to the draft Durham City Neighbourhood Plan. These references do not in themselves adversely affect the planning and heritage merits or otherwise of the scheme but they portray a carelessness which could cast a reflection on the subsequent advice.

The property in question presents a very prominent rear face in the panoramic cross-river view up to Durham Castle and it is vital that any external alterations and proposals sustain and enhance the historic and architectural qualities of the building (DCNP Policy H2a) and meet the other requirements of Policy H2 including protecting important views of the Durham City Conservation Area.

The proposed installation of a new window and door to the rear of the property therefore need to be of an appropriate style and utilise appropriate materials but the latter are simply described as “timber” and the Trust suggests that further details would be valuable.

Rubbish and waste disposal arrangements are long-standing issues in Fowlers Yard and are not fully resolved with this application; the proposal is to share a large wheelie bin already allocated for residential student use. In addition, the applicant has provided an internal bin store in the adjoining building with an over-provision of bins for the occupants of the two HMOs above 29 and 30-31 Silver Street, and states that this bin store can also be made available for the occupants of this proposal. These arrangements genuinely seek to minimise the very negative visual impact of rubbish and waste bins in views from across the river, but student rubbish bins notoriously overflow. There are concerns as to whether the bins will

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prove to be sufficient and so it will be essential to monitor the situation and continue to pursue the aspiration of a purpose-built bin store.

We trust that the above comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely

Francis Pritchard

Secretary of the City of Durham Trust