

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

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

29th November 2023

Dear Ms Woodruff,

DM/23/03179/FPA & DM/23/03180/LB, 6 - 7 Market Place Durham DH1 3HL

Externally existing signage and alarm box to be removed and made good; existing night safe's face plate to be removed and existing aperture to be infilled with stonework to match existing; existing ATM to be removed and existing aperture to be infilled with stonework to match existing; existing letter boxes to be sealed internally; existing "BARCLAYS BANK" chambers texts to be removed and made good. Internally remove cashiers counters from the ground floor; remove all furniture and Barclays fittings from all floors; removal of metal cage from basement level; removal of 1no existing glazing partition and 1no existing glazing door from ground level. |

1. The Trust objects to both these applications based on harm to the frontage of a listed building. The removal of important name references is the basis for this objection.
2. The Trust appreciates that it is unable to comment on the loss of another Bank from the centre of Durham. It restricts itself to the part of the application that proposes removal of the Barclays Bank text inscribed above the entrances – Barclays Bank on the original building and Barclay Chambers on the extension.
3. The Heritage Statement submitted is very misleading in seemingly thinking of this building as one that Barclays simply moved into and is now moving out of. As far as the Trust can establish, the original 1887 building was built by a prominent Victorian architect for Barclays. The architect was A. Waterhouse – also responsible for the Natural History Museum in London and many other prominent buildings.
4. The proposal to carve out the 'Barclays Bank' lettering is exceptionally clumsy as a way of de-branding the building. There is no need; many buildings with significant original naming can be repurposed successfully. An example is to be found locally where the former Burtons store on Silver Street is being adapted for new use and has retained its carved central name plaque. The Barclays Chambers lettering on the 1924 extension should also be retained. To allow their removal would be to sever the historic connection with the building's origins and use. They should be protected. The Trust's case is reinforced by the direct references to the Barclays Bank/Barclays Chambers inscriptions in the official listing of the building as Grade II.

This casts doubt on the successful restoration of the night safe and ATM removal. It is essential that these are carried out with care as the facade is both important to the listed building and also to the Market Place, an integral part of the character of the Conservation Area.

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

5. The Trust suggests that façade work to remove the ATM and night safe is controlled by a planning condition and held back until use is permitted to be changed. This would ensure that work is not carried out unnecessarily and before it is clear how the building is to be used while giving comfort to a prospective user that change will be allowed. The Trust does not object to the removal of the other more recent signage.

(See below for Appendix with policies references)

Yours sincerely

John Lowe,
Chair, City of Durham Trust

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Policies Appendix

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

Designated Assets

The proposals do not demonstrate that this listed asset is to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to less than substantial harm to its significance.

Listed Buildings

- b. The proposals fail to show respect for the historic form, materials, detailing, and curtilage, which contribute to the significance of the building.
- c. The proposals fail to demonstrate the retention of the character and special interest of the building.

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 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 scale, and height.
- 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 considering, and meeting, the following requirements,

- a) Sustaining and enhancing the historic and architectural qualities of buildings
- e) Avoiding harm to an element of an asset which makes a positive contribution to its individual significance and that of the surrounding area.
- 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.