

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

c/o Blackett, Hart & Pratt, LLP
Aire House
Mandale Business Park
Belmont
Durham, DH1 1TH
1 January 2024

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

Steve France
Durham County Council Planning Development
County Hall
Durham DH1 5UL

Dear Mr France,

DM/23/02622/FPA | Full planning application for the erection of a 74 bed care home facility (Class C2 Use), with associated access road, car parking, cycle storage, landscaping, boundary treatments and refuse facilities. | Land South Of South College The Drive Durham DH1 3LD

The City of Durham Trust supports your recommendation that the above planning application be approved. In so doing, there are two further points we consider add weight to your recommendation. These are:

Objection from the Principal of South College, Durham

This is not an official objection from Durham University, nor is the Principal claiming in any way that it is. The college bar is in the Pitcairn Building, which we note also holds the college library. If “students sometimes socialise on the Balcony of the Pitcairn Building” this is 125 metres from the proposed care home building. It is rather closer to the proposed gardens and car park. We agree with the conclusions in paragraphs 140 to 148 of the Committee report.

Other University colleges are closer to housing. St Aidan’s College is about 80 metres from the nearest houses in Chevalier Court, and Ustinov College is surrounded by the houses of Sheraton Park. While not a University college, the PBSA *Crossgate Lofts*, with 109 beds, is 25 metres from St Margaret’s Nursing Home. We are not aware of any issues being reported from any of these sites.

As noted by the Spatial Policy Team in their response, the principle of this development was accepted through the original outline application. There has been no comment from Durham University itself. Students do not have an unlimited right to enjoy a lifestyle without regard to their neighbours. It is one of the jobs of a college principal to keep student behaviour within bounds. It is patronising to talk of “families placing their aged relatives in residential care”; in many cases it is residents who chose a home, no doubt with the help of their families. This objection should carry very little weight.

Objection from the Claypath and University Medical Group

We recognise the pressure on the capacity of this practice and indeed on other practices, notably Chastleton which for historic reasons also has a considerable number of patients in Durham City. However, this lack of capacity is a broader issue for the wider NHS and needs to be addressed at a higher level than that of one medical practice. The Sustainable Urban

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Extensions authorised by Policy 5 of the County Durham Plan will add 1,700 houses at Sniperley Park and 470 houses at Sherburn Road, possibly 6,000 to 9,000 extra patients for the medical practices in the Durham area. The impact of the 74 extra patients, even with additional needs, pales into insignificance.

Research carried out during the preparation of the City of Durham Neighbourhood Plan and specifically its Policy C4 indicated that by 2035 there would be approximately 500 more people aged over 75 living in the City of Durham Parish. Based on data from the Census, the Office for National Statistics and the Care Quality Commission this would mean an extra 50 places would be needed in care homes. The closure of the Hallgarth Nursing Home (incidentally from rising costs not lack of demand) has exacerbated the problem. Approval of the current application would go a long way to meeting this increasing need.

We therefore urge the Committee to approve this application.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN LOWE

Chair, The City of Durham Trust