

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

c/o Blackett, Hart & Pratt, LLP
Aire House
Mandale Business Park
Belmont
Durham, DH1 1TH
21st December 2022

Dear Ms Woodruff,

**DM/22/03471/LB & DM/22/03470/FPA University College Durham Castle Palace Green
Durham DH1 3RW**

Re-landscaping of existing North Terrace to Durham Castle to provide suitable outdoor student space for the wider student experience. Creation of a well being garden and walkway adorned with period appropriate plantings and benches.

The City of Durham Trust supports this application to re-landscape the North Terrace of Durham Castle.

Durham Castle is a Grade I Listed building, and core to Durham's World Heritage Site. The terrace walks and historic gardens provide the setting for the Castle, overlooking Palace Green and the City of Durham. The Castle boasts an intact set of historic garden terraces, as created by Bishop Cosin and Bishop Crewe between c.1660 and 1720. These gardens were intended to provide a Renaissance scholars' garden alongside Bishop Cosin's Library (built 1660s) and for Bishop Crewe's enjoyment of his episcopal palace, with views out over the River Wear and City of Durham. The Trust recognised its significance by submitting it as a suggestion for Durham County Council's heritage listing pilot scheme.

The Terrace had a particular and historically significant function in opening up views outside the castle defences. This and the views from it need to be identified and explained fully in the submitted statement of significance. The gardens were well maintained a generation ago – with aerial photographs from the 1960s showing neatly manicured lawns and daffodil plantings. More recently these gardens have been neglected, with overgrowth and ivy eating into the historic brickwork. The City of Durham Trust welcomes this planning application as part of a move to restore the gardens.

This application proposes to restore the North Terrace as a well-being space for university students. This is laudable, but must be consistent with any longer term plans for visitor access to the garden terraces as a whole. University College must be an outward looking custodian of the Castle, as well as serving its current student community.

The application materials indicate that the new landscaping is sensitive to its historic context. However, it is of concern that the repair work found necessary for the Terrace retaining and parapet walls during the 2011 survey of the Castle Walls and Terraces is not included or referenced (Purcell Miller Tritton, Sheet 076). It is not known whether this has been carried out, but if not, given that it was identified 11 years ago, it will be now be more urgent

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The application materials also indicate that the horticulture and planting is sensitive to its historic context.

The City of Durham Trust endorses this application, and looks forward to the full rejuvenation of the Castle gardens as an amenity for the college and as an amenity for residents and visitors to Durham.

Yours sincerely,

Francis Pritchard
Secretary, City of Durham Trust