

Dear Mr France,

DM/24/00653/FPA Land East Of Coxyde, Newton Hall Farm, Newton Hall DH1 5RP

Construction of detached dwelling

1. The Trust wishes to object to the proposed construction of a new dwelling. This is based on negative impact on trees covered by a tree preservation order PN1-302(TPO) and a local heritage asset – Newton Hall Farm Cottages.

2. **Context**

The TPO covers the groupings of trees remaining along Carr House Drive, the old field boundaries, and the surrounds to the site of the demolished Newton Hall. They remain important because of the substantial extent of built development on the Newton Hall estate and relative lack of green breaks in the built area. Substantial care is needed for proposals within the woodland areas covered by the TPO. Although there has been development of two houses within this particular block of trees, this should not be a presumption in favour of further development.

There is very little surviving of the former Newton Hall and its estate, mostly remembered by name only. Any built survival from before the housing estate development is therefore of local significance. The adjacent buildings immediately to the east of the proposed new house are Newton Hall Farm Cottages. Although little information was available to the Trust, they show on historic OS maps as dating at least to the mid 19thC. They may remain in a variable state of repair but are the oldest buildings locally and help form distinctive local character. Their setting should be respected. Together with the TPO trees the block has a role to play in local distinctiveness.

3. **Proposal and Impact**

The proposed house unit occupies a substantial part of this narrow site together with an extensive entrance drive, turning head and parking. The house is placed close to the Farm Cottages and to trees along their boundary. The drive and parking cut through a tree grouping. Although the trees are of variable condition it is their overall grouping and the lack of building within the group that are important factors. The continuation of the tree block is important and space is required for this to happen. The proposal requires tree removal and this is a direct loss of tree planting space. The driveway construction will potentially harm tree root areas and again reduces space available for trees. The trees next to the Farm Cottages are particularly close to the building and have been pollarded and placing another building close to them on the other side is going to prejudice their future retention. The presence of the house will restrict future free tree growth and lead to requests to restrict tree size and development. The proposal is contrary to purpose of the TPO. The proposed use of piling of the house foundations

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is not enough to protect existing trees and their future health from the whole development and also allow future tree development. It should be noted that government advice is that the woodland designation is *'to safeguard the woodland as a whole, which depends on regeneration or new planting.'* Clearly the proposal fails to do this.

The surrounding new estate has encroached on the farm cottages- remnants of the original Newton Hall outbuildings. The value of them and their relationship with the area of woodland has been underrated in the past and is due for reappraisal. They were unappreciated in the 70's development of the site and ignored as a factor in allowing the previous consent for building on the submission site. This was granted in 2008 and lapsed in 2011 and should not be considered as a precedent. Appreciation of local heritage and the important role of green space has increased, certainly since the 1970's, and should now be a greater part of consideration of the new proposal.

The proposal is contrary to the purposes of the TPO and a threat to the integrity of the tree grouping. It also fails against **County Durham Plan (CDP) Policy 40 Trees, Woodlands, and Hedges** because it does not *'retain existing trees where they can make a positive contribution to the locality or to the development, maintain adequate stand-off distances between them and new land-uses, including root protection areas where necessary, to avoid future conflicts.'*

The proposal fails against **CDP Policy 29 Sustainable Development section a** in that it does not *contribute positively to the area's character, identity, heritage significance, townscape and landscape features* and does not help *to create and reinforce locally distinctive and sustainable communities*. It also does not meet **section g** as it does not *respond creatively to features of landscape and heritage interest*.

In addition, the proposal fails to accord with the requirements of **CDP Policy 44** because it does not *sustain the significance of a non-designated heritage assets, including the contribution made by its setting*. The *development proposals do not contribute positively to the built and historic environment*.

4. The Trust considers the buildings and the tree grouping are due more consideration than has previously been given. It cannot see any overriding public or other benefits from the proposal. The Trust therefore objects on the basis of these identified TPO and policy failures.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe

Chair, City of Durham Trust