

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

Steve France  
Planning Development Strategic  
Room 4/86-102  
County Hall  
Durham City  
DH1 5UL

Dear Mr France,

**DM/24/00883/FPA St Leonards Catholic School North End Durham DH1 4NG**  
*Demolition of existing disused school buildings*

The Trust understands the urgency and need for the demolition and does not wish to stand in the way of that proposal. However, it considers that the full removal of trees along one side of the site as unwarranted and that it will have a negative impact upon the site, its neighbours, and the Conservation Area. It therefore objects to their removal.

### **Context**

The trees form a partial screen between the school and the adjacent Cottage and the rear of houses on Fieldhouse Lane and North Crescent. They soften the impact of the school buildings on those residential properties. They also contribute to the setting of the Conservation Area. Their loss would cause negative impact. They are not part of the existing TPO but are covered by the Conservation Area Tree regulations (Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) and felling requiring a requiring a Section 211 Notice.

### **Proposal**

There is insufficient evidence to justify the felling in this application. The demolition methodology does not explain why the trees cannot be kept and there appears to be no reference to a Section 211 Notice. This is a planning application for demolition, not for construction, and if the new buildings to be proposed would require the felling of these trees this cannot be seen as a reason for tree removal in the context of the current application. It is instructive that demolition works are phased to minimise acoustic nuisance on the remaining school buildings, but the amenity of neighbouring properties does not feature. The demolition will be high impact, especially for the adjacent Cottage.

The baseline for the Biodiversity Net Gain requirement that will attach to the new school proposal should include the trees and their loss will make it difficult to fulfil the gain requirement. The trees should be an asset incorporated in any new proposals to the benefit of neighbouring properties, the Conservation Area, and pupils.

The Trust considers that the loss of the trees will cause a negative impact on the Conservation Area and expose neighbouring residences to dust nuisance and visual impact from the

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demolition works. Any future buildings will be exposed to a clear view from the neighbouring properties.

The Trust strongly suggests that a TPO is made as quickly as possible, and a requirement made to protect these trees during the demolition works. It therefore objects to the felling proposals within the demolition application.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe,  
Chair, City of Durham Trust