

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

2 June 2024

Elinor Woodruff
Durham County Council
Planning Development
County Hall
Durham DH1 5UL

Dear Ms Woodruff,

DM/24/01222/FPA 5 Hawthorn Terrace Durham DH1 4EL

Replacement of existing dormer roof extension with larger catslide roof dormer extension to rear.

1. The Trust objects to this application based on dormer enlargement and inappropriate design causing negative impact on the Conservation Area.

Context

2. The rear of Hawthorn Terrace is overlooked by the rear of houses on The Avenue, being situated on lower ground. The roofs are very visible. On this section of the Terrace there is only one other dormer and, similar to the existing dormer on this property, it is a small, pitched roof design. There are conservation skylights that cumulatively cause some intrusion. The roofscape is an important component of character of these terraces, most of which do not have dormers.

The quoted example of a catslide dormer on No 26 Hawthorn Terrace demonstrates the inappropriate roofscape impact and appears to be a one-off and not a standard treatment.

Proposals and Impact

3. The heritage statement submitted fails to identify fully the context of the building and the character and roofscape of the terraces. The enlargement in an inappropriate style of the dormer will cause negative impact to the otherwise generally unified terrace rear roofscape. The dormer is clearly visible.

The property is covered by the earliest of the Article 4 directions intended to draw applications like this to a more successful outcome through the installation of appropriate designs or the omission of dormers. This is one of the terraces considered to be at threat and needing protection. The increased size of dormer is discordant and fails to harmonise with roof and rear elevation. The catslide roof style is inappropriate and the existing pitched dormer should be retained.

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Conclusion

4. The Trust concludes that the impact of these proposals is negative, and that the application should be refused.

(The policies the proposal fails against are listed in the following appendix.)

Yours sincerely,

John Lowe,
Chair, City of Durham Trust

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Appendix - Policies

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 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.
- h. The proposal fails to show respect for, and reinforcement of, the established, positive characteristics of the area in terms of appropriate design (including, features, materials, and 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, materials, and soft landscaping.
- 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 taking into account, and meeting, the following requirements:

- a) Sustaining and enhancing the historic and architectural qualities of buildings; and
- g) Protecting important views of the Durham City Conservation Area from viewpoints within the Conservation Area; and
- j) Having, materials and detailing appropriate to the vernacular, context, and setting; and
- k) Using high quality design sympathetic to the character and context of the local area and its significance and distinctiveness.