

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

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

Clare Walton
Planning
PO Box 274
Durham County Council
Stanley
County Durham
DH8 1HG

30 August 2024

Dear Ms. Walton,

DM/24/01875/FPA 28 Herons Court, Gilesgate, Durham, DH1 2HD

Change of use from a C3 Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to an HMO (Use Class C4)

The City of Durham Trust considered the above at its meeting on 20 August 2024 and agreed to object to the application since it fails against Policy 16, Policy 29 and the Parking & Accessibility SPD.

1. The proposed first-floor layout plan shows an interconnecting door between Bedrooms 1 and 4. The Trust considers that this compromises the privacy, safety and security of the respective occupants and as such fails Policy 16, Part 3, g) (which requires that the applicant has shown the security of the building and its occupants has been considered) and Policy 29 e) which requires high standards of amenity and privacy.
2. The Housing Multiple Occupation consultee observes that a 30 minute fire door must be fitted to the combined kitchen/dining/living room in order to ensure compliance with relevant HMO fire safety standards. In fact, the submitted ground floor plan shows two openings without doors leading into this room, and hence two fire doors are necessary to comply with the Council's "Standards for Housing in Multiple Occupation – Shared Houses". Accordingly, the application fails to comply with Policy 29 (Sustainable Design) which requires all development proposals to achieve well designed buildings and places having regard to supplementary planning documents and other local guidance documents. The Trust considers it particularly important that the plans should be updated to indicate the provision of these fire doors so that, should the application be approved, any attached condition requiring development to be carried out 'in strict accordance with the plans' is accurate.
3. The 'Bins and Cycle Storage' plan indicates that the necessary bike storage will be accommodated within the existing garage, effectively removing provision of one car parking space. However, the IDOX measurement tool indicates that the garage fails to meet the necessary dimensions of 6m x 3m to count as a parking space in the first place.

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Consequently, the property has only 2 acceptable in-curtilage parking spaces thus failing to comply with the Parking & Accessibility SPD which requires 3 spaces for a property with 4 bedrooms. The SPD also requires the provision of 1 active EV charge point, but none is indicated within the application.

4. A final ground for concern is that the ground floor plan shows a large room without any indication of intended use, the nature of the room being such that it could easily be used as a further bedroom. The Trust suggests that the plan should be updated to show intended use before the application is determined; and, should the application be recommended for approval, a condition should be attached limiting the number of occupants of the property to that put forward in the application.

For the reasons given above, the Trust requests that this application should be refused planning permission.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN LOWE
Chair, City of Durham Trust