

7th January 2025

Mr Paul Hopper
Durham County Council Planning Development
PO BOX 274
Stanley Co Durham
DH8 1HG

Dear Mr Hopper,

DM/24/03254/FPA Ansford, Potters Bank Durham DH1 3RR

Change of use from first floor accommodation ancillary to main building, into independent one bedroom flat.

The Trust objected to this garage and accommodation building based on its intrusion onto Potters bank. It would have included into its objection the separation of the first floor rooms for separate letting had this been known at the time. It now objects to the change of use on the basis of unsuitable subdivision of the plot, lack of justification and potential increase in negative impact on the character of Potters Bank.

Potters Bank forms the conservation area boundary at this point and its trees and hedges are integral to its character and form a pleasant leafy approach into the city. The houses are generally substantial plots mostly set back from the road and not subdivided in to smaller plots for tenancy.

The flat appears seems to be more likely for student use given past patterns of letting in Durham. The need for and likelihood of this type of accommodation is not substantiated in the submission with minimal reference to 'professional individual' as the target.

While the ground floor garage appears to remain in use for the main property (a car space on the drive is provided for the flat) the full landscape frontage and residual soft landscape are proposed for the tenancy. The majority of the remainder of the frontage is hard paved driveway. The boundary of the property is already weak although planted with a few additional plants. This exposes the new building fully and intrusively onto Potters Bank. Separating the landscape area from the main building for tenant use seems likely to further weaken the full development of the landscaped boundary. The adjacent property has already created an intrusive stepped pedestrian entrance up the bank from the public footpath and the risk is that this will happen in this instance.

The intensification of development by hiving off part for separate tenancy is disruptive to the character of this property and the general pattern of development, it seems unlikely that it would have been accepted if proposed at the time of original building application. It inserts a very different type of use and disrupts the local residential pattern.

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

In objecting to this application, the Trust relies on **County Durham Plan Policy 29** Sustainable Design, **Section a** that requires a positive contribution to an area's character and identity and reinforcement of local distinctiveness. Similarly, the City of Durham Neighbourhood Plan **Policy S1: Sustainable Development Requirements of all Development and Redevelopment Sites Including all New Building, Renovations and Extensions, Section d** requiring the conserving of character and local distinctiveness and **Policy H3: Our Neighbourhood Outside the Conservation Areas, Section a** that requires a proposal to make a positive contribution to the area's character. The Trust maintains that the change of use does not fulfil these policy requirements.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe
Chair, City of Durham Trust