

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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c/o Blackett, Hart & Pratt, LLP  
Aire House  
Mandale Business Park  
Belmont  
Durham, DH1 1TH  
13th February 2022

Clare Walton,  
Durham County Council Planning Development  
PO BOX 274  
Stanley Co Durham  
DH8 1HG

Dear Ms Walton,

**DM/24/02110/FPA 22/23/24 Hawthorn Terrace Durham DH1 4EL**  
*Replacement of existing sash windows with UPVC sash windows.*

The Trust objects to the replacement of timber windows with uPVC sash windows based on negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

## **Context**

It appears to be the case that the application assumes that being approximately 20 years old is a reason to change from the existing timber sash windows to uPVC. The Trust considers that there is sufficient merit in the nature of the three terraced houses and their fit into the Victorian terrace and the character of the Conservation Area to require continuing use of timber.

Planning application 05/01016/FPA was approved in 2006 and allowed the construction of these three units and, importantly, the refurbishment of two original houses on either side as a matching subset of five terraced houses. Dispensations were granted for otherwise discordant dormers and intensification of accommodation with a rear garage and room above for each property. However, in agreeing details timber sash windows were fitted as recommended by a City of Durham Conservation Officer. This maintained and improved the character of this subset of a similar terrace.

The Conservation Officer at that time noted that *‘the key character of this part of the City Centre Conservation Area is the rhythmic nature created by the brick built terraces.’* The need for assessment and improvement of the detailing of these terraces has been subsequently reinforced by the Article 4 Direction. The Trust agrees with the Conservation Officer’s description – this block with their oriel windows and timber sash windows are an important contribution to street character.

Ensuring similar treatment to identical buildings is essential in maintaining the character of this street and the City Conservation Area. The Durham City Neighbourhood Plan also reinforces the requirement to ensure positive treatment of such assets Its policies particularly stress the need to *‘Sustain and enhance a continuous frontage.’*

It is unfortunate that objections at the time of the original application concerned about multi occupation of the increased density of accommodation proved well founded – all five are now on the HMO register.

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## **Proposal**

The applicant considers that uPVC sash windows are a '*like for like*' replacement of timber. The Trust considers that this is incorrect and that the use of uPVC will result to a clumsier, thickened construction obviously different to the timber sashes presumed remaining of the two original house of the subset of the terrace. This is especially the case for the oriel windows.

The proposals are directly counter to the requirements of the Article 4 Direction, the County Council's own policies. It fails against the requirements of the Durham City Neighbourhood Plan policies. (Policies are shown below in the Appendix).

The Trust objects to the application, based on the above points.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe,  
Chair, City of Durham Trust

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## **Appendix - Policies**

In detail, as submitted, the proposal fails against the following policies:

### ***County Durham Plan***

#### **Policy 44 Historic Environment**

##### **Conservation Areas**

The proposals fail to:

- f. Demonstrate of understanding of the significance and character and appearance of the conservation area and how this has informed proposals to achieve high quality sustainable development, which is respectful of local distinctiveness and the conservation or enhancement of the (unlisted) asset.
- h. Respect, and reinforce the established, positive characteristics of the area in terms of appropriate design (including, features, materials, and detailing).

### ***City of Durham Neighbourhood Plan***

#### **Policy S1: Sustainable Development Requirements of all Development and Redevelopment Sites Including all New Building, Renovations and Extensions Conservation, preservation, and enhancement of Our Neighbourhood**

The proposal fails to:

- c) Harmonise with its context in terms of materials.
- d) Conserve the significance of the setting, character, local distinctiveness, and the contribution made to the sense of place by Our Neighbourhood's non-designated heritage assets.

#### **Policy H2: The Conservation Areas - Durham City Conservation Area**

The proposals fail to:

- a) Sustain and enhance the historic and architectural qualities of a building,
- b) Sustain and enhance a continuous frontage.
- e) Avoid harm to an element of an asset which makes a positive contribution to its individual significance and that of the surrounding area.
- j) Have materials and detailing appropriate to the vernacular and context.
- k) Use high quality design sympathetic to the character and context of the local area and its significance and distinctiveness.